

Miyazaki International College
Spring 2018

Course Syllabus

Course Title (Credits)	POL305 Comparative Political Philosophy (3 credits)
Course Designation for TC	N/A
Time and Location	Mondays & Wednesdays 14:40 – 16:10
Content Teacher	
Instructor	Atsushi Yasutomi, Ph.D.
Email address	ayasutomi@sky.miyazaki-mic.ac.jp
Office/Ext	MIC 1-328/ Ext.
Office hours	Tuesdays 13:00 – 17:15

Course Description

Examines 19th and 20th century political philosophies such as American democracy, British liberalism, German fascism, Russian communism, and French socialism and compares the historical contexts and cultures which gave rise to these political philosophies, as well as the influence these philosophies have had upon other political cultures throughout the world.

Course Goals/Objectives

Students will gain a familiarity with the major *philosophers* and *theorists* of Western political thought. Additionally, students will use key political *concepts* around which political discourse developed in the West. Because political philosophy originates and develops through *discourse*, students will also enter into and critically reflect upon that discourse through their *arguments* in written work and class discussions. Students should accomplish these objectives with a focus on developing their critical thinking and communication skills.

Students' Communication and Critical Thinking Skill Objectives

- Students should try to improve the following communication skills this semester:
 - Write and speak with clarity (communicate without ambiguity or confusion)
 - Write and speak with precision (communicate in definite and exact terms)
 - Write and speak with depth (communicate complex issues effectively)
- Students should try to improve the following critical thinking skills this semester:
 - Identify salient information
 - Determine underlying presumptions or presuppositions
 - Evaluate conclusions from premises
 - Avoid fallacies - authority, expertise, straw man, etc.
 - Ask the right questions to understand a problem
 - Categorize appropriately
 - Evaluate the effects of conclusions/judgments on different parties (moral imagination)
 - Develop a new way to solve an old problem

Course Schedule

Session #	Topic	Content
1	Syllabus & Course Introduction	Western political philosophy is a tradition of discourse that began in ancient Greece more than 2,500 years ago. It is a discourse on problems of human nature, power, interests, and action.
2	Political Theory & the Western Tradition	We examine the connections between political theory and political institutions as well as political theory as an attribute of the Western Cultural Tradition.
3	Ancient Greece 1	We refer to the political discourse of ancient Greece and Rome as classical political philosophy. This discourse centers on the understanding of human nature, life in community, and the good life. Plato's <i>The Republic</i> is one of the classic texts.

4	Ancient Greece 2	We refer to the political discourse of ancient Greece as classical political philosophy. This discourse centers on the understanding of human nature, life in community, and the good life. We will examine Aristotle.
5	Hellenic Philosophers / The Early Church Fathers 1	We examine political discourse of ancient Rome and the Early Christian thinkers, including Cicero, Seneca, Jesus, Paul the Apostle, St. Augustine of Hippo.
6	Hellenic Philosophers / The Early Church Fathers 2	We examine political discourse of ancient Rome and the Early Christian thinkers, including Cicero, Seneca, Jesus, Paul the Apostle, St. Augustine of Hippo.
7	Renaissance and Reformation	We examine political philosophers of Machiavelli, Martin Luther, and John Calvin.
8	Social Contract 1	Social contract theory is a philosophical investigation into the relationship among individuals, society, and the state. In this lesson we examine the social contract theory of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacque Rousseau.
9	Social Contract 2	Social contract theory is a philosophical investigation into the relationship among individuals, society, and the state. In this lesson we examine the social contract theory of Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacque Rousseau.
10	American Independence / French Revolution 1	The American and French revolutions heralded the dawn of liberal democracy. We will examine political thinkers during this time, including Thomas Paine, Edmund Burke, Hegel, De Tocqueville.
11	American Independence / French Revolution 2	The American and French revolutions heralded the dawn of liberal democracy. We will examine political thinkers during this time, including Thomas Paine, Edmund Burke, Hegel, De Tocqueville.
12	Socialism / Marxism 1	Socialism is a theory of collective rights and the social organization of production. Communism is the political theory closely associated with the thought of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. It is a theory of history and critique of political economy that posits the overcoming of capitalism through its own contradictions.
13	Socialism / Marxism 2	Socialism is a theory of collective rights and the social organization of production. Communism is the political theory closely associated with the thought of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. It is a theory of history and critique of political economy that posits the overcoming of capitalism through its own contradictions.
14	Review	Review of the sessions 2-13.
15	Essay	Essay on selected topics covered through sessions 2-13.
16	Liberal Democracy 1	We examine the basic characteristics of classical liberalism and the developments. We focus on the major components of Liberal Democracy: the individual, and the Rule of Law.
17	Liberal Democracy 2	We focus on the major components of Liberal Democracy: Freedom as choice, Equality of opportunity, and Rights
18	Liberal Democracy 3	Students will learn some issues in Liberal Democracy; including, Elitists and Pluralists, Problem of minorities, Democracy and truth, and the will of the people.
19	Authoritarian Ideologies 1	Authoritarianism is oppressive elite rule. We will examine different forms of authoritarian ideologies. This session

		covers Totalitarianism.
20	Authoritarian Ideologies 2	This session covers Fascism.
21	Authoritarian Ideologies 3	This session covers different forms of fundamentalist authoritarianisms.
22	Feminism 1	We identify Western feminists and their views on human nature and gender, and their strategies to combat oppression of women by men.
23	Feminism 2	We identify Western feminists and their views on human nature and gender, and their strategies to combat oppression of women by men.
24	Green Ideologies 1	Students will familiarize themselves with current developments of the Green movements and the associated arguments on ecological thought.
25	Green Ideologies 2	Students will familiarize themselves with current developments of the Green movements and the associated arguments on ecological thought.
26	Nationalism 1	We examine nationalism as one of the important components of political ideologies that have led to many wars and disputes in the last centuries.
27	Nationalism 2	We examine nationalism as one of the important components of political ideologies that have led to many wars and disputes in the last centuries.
28	Globalization as political ideology 1	Globalization has become one of the important features in the 21st Century. We examine the major characteristics of Globalization and its impacts on the political thought. We examine competing arguments over the costs and benefits of Globalization.
29	Globalization as political ideology 2	Globalization has become one of the important features in the 21st Century. We examine the major characteristics of Globalization and its impacts on the political thought. We examine competing arguments over the costs and benefits of Globalization.
30	Review	Review of the sessions 16-29.
EXAM WEEK	Final Exam	Final Exam

Required Materials

Students will not be required to purchase a specific textbook. We will work from a number of handouts to be distributed during the class. All of the handouts that your teachers give you or you download from the course site - including worksheets, readings, and other materials - must be put in your folder or binder together with your notes.

Course Policies (Attendance, etc.)

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. Students with five unexcused absences risk failing the course and will be asked to withdraw. Excusing absences is the prerogative of the instructor. Students must notify the instructor of their absences before the start of class and provide college-approved documentation. Attendance is not part of the grade for this class. Participation is part of the grade, and students must attend class to participate.

Assignment Deadlines: Students must turn in assignments on the due date. Students with an 'excused absence' on the due date should submit assignments on the due date via email unless granted an extension by the instructor. All late submissions of assignments that are not approved by the instructor will be penalized by minus 5% per day (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and national holidays).

Academic Integrity: MIC's Academic Honesty policy prohibits cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism. The Bulletin and Handbook of Student Information explains this policy. Students should understand it and ask the instructor if they have any questions. Violating the Academic Honesty can result in losing all credit (0%) for an assignment, being asked to withdraw from the course, or other appropriate actions.

Student Preparation & Review Time

Students are expected to spend at least one hour preparing for every hour of lesson and one hour reviewing and doing homework. Therefore, because we meet for 90 minutes per week, you should be doing at least 180 minutes preparing and reviewing each week. In principle, graded work will be returned within one week of submission with appropriate feedback, i.e., grade, comments, etc.

Grades and Grading

50% Reflection papers
20% Review quizzes
10% Participation in group discussions
20% Final Exam


The grading system at MIC is as follows:

- A (Excellent) 90-100%
- B (Above average) 80-89%
- C (Average) 70-79%
- D (Below average) 60-69%
- F (Fail) 59% or less

Diploma Policy Standards Satisfied by Course Objectives

Work completed in this course helps students achieve the following Diploma Policy objective(s):

1. Advanced thinking skills (comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) based on critical thinking (critical and analytic thought)
2. The ability to understand and accept different cultures developed through acquisition of a broad knowledge and comparison of the cultures of Japan and other nations
3. The ability to identify and solve problems
4. Advanced communicative proficiency in both Japanese and English
5. Proficiency in the use of information technology

文部科学省から採択された 大学教育再生加速プログラム 		Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Emerging	No Attempt
Critical Thinking	Ability to Identify & Solve Problems	Insightful comments in class discussions Student shows proven ability to analyze data, gather and assess resources, and disseminate opinions in a scholarly manner.	Able to contribute to class discussions, and to perform a basic analysis of data, gather and assess resources, and express opinions in an adequate manner.	Beginning to visualize the ways in which information can be combined and applied to solving a given problem, but struggles with complex and relationships	Student shows motivation but must learn the concepts and mechanisms that apply to critical thinking, such as information gathering, assessment and synthesis	No attempt was made to achieve these objectives.
	Information Gathering					
	Assessment of Credibility					
Advanced Communication Proficiency	Public Speaking	Speaking is clear, using a broad range of vocabulary and relative jargon. Student uses appropriate social cues and nuance.	Able to create a relevant response when asked to express an opinion or respond to a complicated situation, but pronunciation and grammar can often make responses and explanations unclear to a listener and must be interpreted.	Able to answer questions and give basic information. However, inconsistent pronunciation, intonation and stress may sometimes make their responses difficult to understand or interpret.	Student is unsuccessful or finds it very difficult when attempting to explain an opinion or respond to a complicated scenario. The response may be limited to a single sentence or part of a sentence.	
	Social Skills					
	Professional Skills					
Global Perspectives	Cultural Relevancy	Fully engaged in current events and shows understanding of social inequalities and cultural differences.	Student is aware of current events and world cultures, but is unable to apply macro-level situations to her/his own life.	Exhibits interest and intrigue in current events and world culture, but has difficulty understanding relevancy.	Student expresses one-sided ideals from an ethnocentric point of view. Completely lacks awareness of world issues or events.	
	Awareness of Current Events & Global Issues					
English Language Ability	Reading	Exhibits fluency/near fluency in speaking and writing. Grammar and reading ability similar to native English speaker. Able to use context clues when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary.	Proficient English ability; relies mainly on familiar vocabulary. Should be encouraged to advanced beyond comfort zone.	Adequate English ability; must reference dictionary often	Student has some English ability, but lacks confidence in using and understanding. Very limited vocabulary knowledge, struggles with grammar and pronunciation Unable to form questions	
	Writing					
	Oral Communication					
Japanese Language Ability	Reading	Able to express one's self clearly and succinctly both in writing and orally. Able to use context clues when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary.	Proficient oral and written communication; relies mainly on familiar vocabulary. Should be encouraged to advanced beyond comfort zone.	Adequate oral and written communication; tends to have difficulty clearly expressing ideas.	Student shows a lack of confidence in writing, reading, and oral communication. Very limited vocabulary knowledge, struggles with grammar Unable to form questions	
	Writing					
	Oral Communication					