

INSTRUCTION DIVISION
Second Semester 2024-2025

COURSE HANDOUT

Date: 07 Jan 2025

Course No. : GS F211 **Course Title:** Modern Political Concepts

Instructor: Solano Da Silva (IC) **Location:** A-605 (M W F; 3 hr)

1. Scope and Objective:

The course will introduce students to political theory, equipping them with an analytical toolkit to understand political phenomena. It is also intended that students become aware of how 'political' ideas have developed over time and shaped our world.

2. Text Book:

- Heywood, A. (2000) *Key Concepts in Politics*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Reference Materials:

- Tansey, S. D. (4th Ed.) *Politics: The Basics*. London: Routledge.
- Bhargava, R. & Acharya, A. (Eds.) (2008) *Political Theory: An Introduction*. New Delhi: Pearson.
- Goodwin, Barbara (2014) *Using Political Ideas* (6th Edition), Sussex: Wiley.
- Zalta, E. N. *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, The Metaphysics Research Lab Center for the Study of Language and Information Stanford University Stanford, CA URL: <http://plato.stanford.edu/>

Instructions:

- (1) *Before each lecture*, students are expected to have read the introductory text from Heywood (2000) – which is usually two pages – and to supplement the same with at least one reading from either Tansey (4th Ed.) or Bhargava & Acharya (2008) – pages numbers are specified.
- (2) *Students are encouraged to* develop note-making and essay-writing skills.
- (3) *Students who regularly attended the classes and made notes from previous semesters* did well in the examinations and assignments.

3. Course Plan:

No of Lectures	Topics to be Covered	Readings	
		Basic	Further
A) Introduction to the study of Politics			
Objective: To provide a broad background of what the study of politics entails, how it is approached, and how this has changed over time.			
2	A1) A brief overview of political thought	BBC: Story of Science (Part-I)	Bhargava (p. 21)
2	A2) What is politics?	Heywood (pp.33-35)	Tansey (pp. 1-7); Bhargava (pp. 14-16)
1	A3) Why study political concepts?	Heywood (pp. 3-8)	Tansey (pp. 65-67); Bhargava (pp. 5-8)
B) Descriptive Concepts			
Objective: To discuss theories that enable the description of significant political entities and processes.			
2	B1) Power	Heywood (pp. 35-37)	Bhargava (pp. 148-157); Tansey (pp. 3-7)
2	B2) Authority	Heywood (pp. 15-16)	Tansey (pp. 54-57); Bhargava (pp.152-154)
2	B3) State	Heywood (pp. 39-42)	Bhargava (pp. 170-186)
2	B4) Government & Governance	Heywood (pp. 19-21)	
2	B5) Nation	Heywood (pp. 251-254)	Tansey (pp. 107-110)
2	B6) Civil Society	Heywood (pp. 17-19)	Bhargava (pp. 188-204)
2	B7) Political regimes	Heywood (pp. 184-185; 166-167; 170-172; 169-170)	Tansey (pp. 136-168)
C) Political Values			
Objective: To examine important political principles/ideas that have motivated political action.			
3	C1) Liberty/Freedom	Heywood (pp. 129-131)	Tansey (pp. 64-65); Bhargava (pp. 40-57)
3	C2) Equality	Heywood (pp. 128-129)	Tansey (pp. 62-64); Bhargava (pp. 58-72)
2	C3) Justice	Heywood (pp. 134-136)	Bhargava (pp. 57-60)
2	C4) Rights	Heywood (pp. 147-149 & 131-133)	Tansey (pp. 61-62); Bhargava (pp. 88-104)
D) Political Ideologies			
Objective: To understand salient political doctrines.			
2	D1) Liberalism	Heywood (pp. 60-63)	Bhargava (pp. 236-242) Tansey (pp. 89-92)
2	D2) Conservatism	Heywood (pp. 52-54)	Tansey (pp. 92-95)
2	D3) Socialism	Heywood (pp. 75-77)	Bhargava (pp. 244-256)
2	D4) Anarchism	Heywood (pp. 45-47)	Tansey (pp. 52-54)
2	D5) Feminism	Heywood (pp. 58-60)	Tansey (pp. 86-89); Bhargava (pp. 224-233)
1	D6) Right and Left	Heywood (pp.27-28)	Tansey (pp. 71-81)

4. Evaluation scheme:

Component	Duration	Weight-age (%)	Date and Time
Mid-Semester Exam	90 Min.	30	05 Mar 2025 (4:00-5:30)
Group Assignments	Assignment 1	10	TBC
	Assignment 2	20	TBC
Comprehensive Exam	3 Hrs.	40	09 May 2025 (AN)

Note: The tests and the comprehensive examination are open book exams where *only handwritten* notes will be permitted. Both assignments are take-home assignments.

5. Consultation: Only with a prior appointment via e-mail at solano@goa.bits-pilani.ac.in

6. Notices shall be displayed on the course notice board (Quanta).

7. Make-up Policy: Make-up will be granted only on genuine grounds and if prior permission is taken.