

# PSC 3251 - Main Currents in Political & Social Theory II

## Introduction

This course takes off from PSC 3148 in the first semester which introduced students to some of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century masters in political and social theory. The present is designed to introduce to students key ideas of some leading political and social theorists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Most of the theorists discussed are thinkers who have mostly re-worked the classical and social and political theories in relation to post-industrial and post-colonial conditions.

## Objectives

This course seeks to enable students to:

- i understand the main facets and ideas in social and political theories in the twentieth century as presented by their major exponents.
- ii. explore how social and political theory has shaped the way in which political science discipline understands the social and political world.

## Expected Outcomes

At the end of this course student will be able to:

- i value the insights provided by the contemporary political and social theory to understand the way in which social and political worlds function.
- ii appreciate the relevance and usefulness of the categories of social and political theory in understanding the social and political processes better.

## Course Content

1. Innovations in social theory in the early decades of the twentieth century.
  - i. Marxism after Marx, Gramsci and his influence on the Marxist political theory.
  - ii. The Frankfurt School and the Critical Theory.
2. Re-working of the Marxist political theory after the 1960s
  - i. Louis Althusser and the structuralist Marxism
  - ii. Gunder Frank, Samir Amin and the Dependency School.
3. Political Theory beyond Marx and Weber

- i. Bourdieu and symbolic power
- ii. Michel Foucault and discursive power.

4. Post-modern and post-colonial re-working of Political and Social Theory

- i. Francois Lyotard and the post-modern condition
- ii. Edward Said and ‘Orientalism’

5. Innovations in Liberal Political Theory

- i. John Rawls and bringing justice back to political theory.
- ii. Liberalism and multi-culturalism

6. Feminist Re-working of the Political and Social Theory

- i. ‘Personal is the political.’
- ii. Gender, patriarchy and political/social power.

**Assessment**

<b>Method</b>	<b>Weightage</b>
Mid-Semester Test	20%
Assignment	10%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%
Final Examination	60%

**Recommended Reading**

Althusser, Louis, *For Marx*, London: Allen Lane.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1977, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Foucault, Michel, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Edited by Colin Gordon, New York: Pantheon Books.

Giddens, Anthony and David Held, 1990, *Classes, Power and Conflict, Classical and Contemporary Debates*, London: Macmillan.

Gramsci, Antonio, 1972, *Selections from Prison Notebooks*, New York: International Publishers.

Laclau, Ernesto, 1979, *Politics and Ideology in Marxist Theory*, London: Verso.

Lyotard, Francois, 1984, *The Post-Modern Condition*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Miliband, Ralph, 1975, *The State in Capitalist Society*, London: New Left Books.

Poulantzas, Nicos, 1973, *Political Power and Social Classes*, London: New Left Books

Rawls, John, 1972, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Said, Edward, 1985, *Orientalism*, London: Penguin.