

PSC 4279 - Advanced Studies in Constitutionalism

Introduction

The aim of this course is to introduce students to advance thinking and theorization in constitutionalism in relation to complex political realities in the contemporary world. Themes of the course are selected with the aim of making students familiar with current debates and leading trends of thought in the disciplines of political theory and philosophy, legal theory, feminist and cultural studies. While the writings of major contemporary thinkers in political and legal philosophy will be introduced in the class, discussions will be from a comparative perspective, drawing on Canada, South Africa, Western Europe, India and Sri Lanka.

Course Objectives

This course is designed to:

- i enable final year students specializing in Political Science to acquire an interest and knowledge in some key areas of constitutionalism that have a bearing on a critical understanding of the political world.
- ii encourage them to think critically on complex issues of political and constitutional change in Sri Lanka and similar other societies.

Course Outcomes

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- i Be conversant with new concepts and theories emerged in the field of comparative constitutionalism.
- ii Appreciate the relevance of contemporary debates in constitutionalism, and
- iii Respond critically to issues in Sri Lanka's public policy debate on constitutional and political reform.

Course Content

The course will be organized on the following themes:

1. Pluralism and Multiculturalism: Problems of constitutionalizing pluralism.
2. Citizenship: Liberal, Pluralist and communitarian perspectives.
3. Self-determination and ethnicity: Theories and constitutional implications.
4. Secession and challenge to constitutionalism.
5. Deeply divided societies and consociational alternatives.

6. Contemporary Republican theory.
7. Cosmopolitan and Deliberative Democracy.

Evaluation

Students will be evaluated on the following scheme :

Two assignments	20%
Mid-term test	10%
Final examination	60%
Class Attendance and Participation	10%

Recommended Reading

Bhargava, Rajiv et al, 1999, *Multiculturalism. Liberalism and Democracy*, New Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Buchanan, Allen, 1985, *Secession: The Morality of Political Divorce*, Boulder : The Westview Press.

Edrisinha, Rohan and Asanga Welikela, 2008, *Essays on Federalism in Sri Lanka*, Colombo: Center for Policy Alternatives.

Ghai, Yash, 2000, *Autonomy and Ethnicity: Negotiating Competing Claims in Multi-Ethnic Societies*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Habermas, Jurgen, 1995, *Inclusion of the Other, Studies in Political Theory*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

Held, David, 1995, *Democracy and Global Order*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Kymlicka, Will, 1985, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford : Clarendon Press.

Lijphart, Arendt, 1985, *Democracy in Divided Societies*, Berkeley: California University Press.