

PSC 2137 – Themes in Political Science Inquiry

Introduction

This course is designed to introduce students, especially those who begin a Special Degree course in Political Science, to some of the key concerns and thematic preoccupations of the contemporary political science inquiry. It focuses on five themes that encapsulate both political theory and actual political processes.

Objectives

This course has the following objectives:

- i. To introduce students to diverse perspectives on power, state, democracy and political change which are among the key themes in political science inquiry.
- ii. To enable students to be familiar with some of the key theoretical paradigms in political science inquiry that are necessary in building skills for political analysis.

Outcomes

By following this course, students will

- i. Learn that political science inquiry is guided by theoretical postulates developed within a broad social science framework,
- ii. Acquire the ability to employ theoretical tools in concrete political analysis.

Course Outline

- i. **Power in Different Theoretical Traditions:** A Brief introduction to conceptualization of power in political and social theory in Marx, Weber, Bourdieu and Foucault.
- ii. **State as a Site of Inquiry:** Understanding of the state in three different traditions of political thought: Social Contract tradition, the Marxist approach to the state and the liberal state.
- iii. **Political Change:** Political change in the political modernization and underdevelopment perspectives.
- iv. **Democracy and Democratization:** Issues in democracy in contemporary world – democracy in plural societies, democracy and multiculturalism, democracy and identity politics.
- v. **State and Contested Claims to State Power:** The unitary state, models of power-sharing, issues of autonomy and secession.

Recommended Reading

Almond, Gabriel A and James Coleman, 1960, *Politics of Developing Areas*, Princeton University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, 1990, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, Cambridge University Press.

Frank, Andre Gunder, 1962, *Development and Under-development in Latin America*, New York: Monthly Review Press.

Garth and Mills, *For Max Weber, Essays in Sociology*, New York: Oxford University Press.

Held, David, 1984, *Political Theory and the Modern State*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Lijphart, Arendt, 1999, *Patterns of Democracy*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Marx, Karl and Friedrich Engels, (1848), 1962, *The Communist Manifesto*, Moscow: Progress Publishers.

Ghai, Yash (ed), 2000, *Autonomy and Ethnicity*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kymlicka, Will, 1995, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.