

Selected Indian Political Thought - From Ancient to Contemporary

Program in which it is offered: All UG Programmes

Course Category: Minor

Schedule of Offering: Even Semester

Course Credits: [3]

- **Lecture: [2 Hours per week]**
- **Tutorial: [2 Hours per week]**

Contact Hours per week: [4 Hours per week]

Course Instructor: Dr. Vanisree Ramanathan, Nithin Ramakrishnan,

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1. Introduction

This Course is prepared, keeping in mind the young scholars' interest in understanding the true spirit of the political debates happening around them. Quite often, the categories of political thought, developed by western scholars of politics seem to create conceptual difficulty to an Indian mind. This course shall attempt to fix this deficiency by following narration of Indian Political thought and thinkers from the ancient period to contemporary times. Wherever possible, there shall be a discussion on the political and historical scenario in which such thoughts developed and maintained influence over the society. The course also aligns with the syllabus of the Political Science Paper for UPSC mains examination.

2. Course Objectives:

1. To create awareness among students about Indian Political Thinkers and how they envisioned State and Society.
2. To develop a conceptual clarity among students on how to and how not to use the western categories of political ideologies in understanding and conceptualising Indian Political Thought and Action.
3. To create a general understanding of the subject of political science and theory.

3. Course Outcomes

1. Students shall learn about Indian political thoughts, various thinkers and through them about the nature of Indian Society and State.
2. Students shall learn the basic elements of political theory, and conceptualise their contents.
3. Students will be equipped, in turn, to generate ideas on Indian Political conduct and to participate meaningfully in the political process of the nation

4. Pre-requisites

There are no pre-requisites for this course as it is both introductory and compulsory in nature. However, because of the nature of pedagogy and evaluation pattern, the maximum number of student intake is limited to 20. If the number of applicants is more than 20, then there shall be a screening based on the statement of purpose and previous academic performance.

5. Readings

Readings enlisted as “essential” must be read by the student whether a classroom discussion takes place on that very specific reading or not. From an evaluation point of view, the completion of essential reading materials will be of great importance.

6. Modules and Topics

1. Module 1: Basic Concepts

- i. What is Political Science?
- ii. What is Political Theory?
- iii. What is Political Ideology?
- iv. Why the title ‘Indian Political Thought’?
- v. Selected Categories of Political ideologies - liberalism, Conservatism, Anarchism, and Socialism

2. Module 2: Ancient Indian Political Thought

- i. Barhaspathyam and Ausanasam (Age of Brahmanas)
- ii. Valmiki and Vyasa (Puranas)
- iii. Rama and Krishna (Divine Political Thought)
- iv. Manu and Kautilya (The Sastra of Dharma and Artha)
- v. Ashoka Dharma (Influence of Buddhist Tradition)
- vi. Thirukkural

3. Module 3: Medieval Indian Political Thought

- i. Bharani and Abdul Fazal
- ii. Singana and Ketana
- iii. Rajaniti from Amukhtamalyada
- iv. Shankara Smriti and Keralolpathi
- v. Basava and Kabir

4. Module 4: Modern Indian Political Thought

- i. Early Nationalists: Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda Saraswati, Bankim Chandra
- ii. Moderates to Extremism: Dadabhai and Tilak
- iii. Gandhi and Tagore
- iv. Ambedkar and Nehru
- v. Jayaprakash Narayan
- vi. V D Savarkar and M N Roy

5. Module 5: Analyzing Contemporary Political Statements (Activity mode)

- i. Narendra Modi
- ii. Sashi Tharoor
- iii. Arvind Kejriwal
- iv. Prabhat Patnaik
- v. Gopal Guru
- vi. Neera Desai
- vii. Anna Hazare
- viii. Any other Politician or Political Theorist of your choice, subject to the approval of Course Instructor.

7. Pedagogy

The teaching will be primarily lecture-oriented but in a participatory brain-storming mode. Proper emphasis shall be given to prior reading, reflection notes, in-classroom discussion, as they are essential to the course-work and evaluation.

The list of political thoughts and thinkers has been prepared on a basis of careful selection process undertaken by the Course Instructors and the departmental team. In order to avoid any unintended political bias occurring from the above selection, students are welcome to find out more thinkers and their works, and then develop discussions based on the same in the classroom. A prior request to entertain discussion on any particular thinker or thought shall be honoured, by the instructor on a bi-weekly basis.

8. List of Readings

1. Essential

- i. Bidyut Chakrabarty and Rajendra Kumar Pandey(2009) *Modern Indian Political Thought*, Sage publications, pp. 7-146, 158-177, 205-221
 - ii. Mackenzie Brown(1959), *The White Umbrella*, University of California Press, pp.26-79
 - iii. Varma, V. P. (1974) *Studies in Hindu Political Thought and Its Metaphysical Foundations*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, pp. 211- 230.
 - iv. Chaturvedi, Badrinath (2006) 'Dharma-The Foundation of Raja-Dharma, Law and Governance', in *The Mahabharata: An Inquiry in the Human Condition*. Delhi: Orient Longman, pp. 418- 464.
 - v. Spellman, John W. (1964) 'Principle of Statecraft', in *Political Theory of Ancient India: A Study of Kingship from the Earliest time to circa AD 300*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, pp. 132- 170
 - vi. Collins, Stephen (2001) 'General Introduction', in *Agganna Sutta: The Discussion on What is Primary* (An Annotated Translation from Pali). Delhi: Sahitya Akademi, pp. 1- 26.
 - vii. Gokhale, B. G. (1966) 'The Early Buddhist View of the State', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, XXVI, No. (1), pp. 15- 22.
 - viii. Mehta, V.R. (1992) 'The Imperial Vision: Barni and Fazal', in *Foundations of Indian Political Thought*. Delhi: Manohar, pp. 134- 156.
 - ix. Habib, Irfan (1998) 'Ziya Barni's Vision of the State', *The Medieval History Journal*, Vol. 2, No 1, pp. 19- 36.
 - x. Kabir (2002) No. 30, 97 *The Bijak of Kabir*. (trans.) Hess, L. and Singh, S. N, Delhi: OUP, pp. 50- 51, 69- 70.
 - xi. Velcheru Narayana Rao and Sanjay Subrahmanyam (2009), *Notes on Political Thought in Medieval and Early Modern South India*, *Modern Asian Studies*, Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 175-210
 - xii. Andrew Heywood (2017 ed.), *Political Theory*, Palgrave Macmillian pp 1-81
 - xiii.** Andrew Heywood(2017 ed.), *Political Ideologies*, Chapters 1- 5.
2. Certain other readings shall be identified and circulated for general reading and workshop purposes. Please be prepared to put in more commitment to read more.

9. Evaluation Pattern

Evaluation will follow a continuous evaluation pattern, on a multiple component basis. The evaluation shall be based on the idea that a student should be able to display either a persistent commitment or a steady growth.

- Classroom Participation through
Weekly Reflection Notes (1 Page) : 20 percent
 - Case study - Module 5 : 20 percent
 - Mid Term Examination : 30 percent
 - End-Term Examination : 30 percent
- Total : 100 Marks