Texas A&M University
Departmental Request for a Change in Course
Undergraduate • Graduate • Professional
Submit original form and attachments.

1. This request is submitted by the Department of Political Science.

2. Course prefix, number and complete title of course: POLS 650

3. Change requested
   a. Prerequisite(s): From: ___________________________ To: ___________________________
   b. Withdrawal (reason): ___________________________
   c. Cross-list with: ___________________________

   Cross-listed courses require the signature of both department heads.

   d. Change in course title and description. Enter complete current course title and current course description in item 4; enter proposed course title and proposed course description in item 5.

   e. Change in course number, contact hours (lab & lecture), and semester credit hours. Complete item 6. Attach a course syllabus.

4. Complete current course title and current course description: POLS 650 Normative Political Theory (3-0)

   Credit 3. Examination of the most influential approaches, concepts and political arguments of classical and contemporary political theory.

5. Complete proposed course title and proposed course description (not to exceed 50 words): POLS 650 Normative Political Theory (3-0). Credit 3. Examination of the most influential approaches, concepts and political arguments of classical and contemporary political theory. May be taken for credit up to three times as content varies.

6. a. As currently in course inventory:

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<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Course #</th>
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<td>POLS 650</td>
<td>NORMATIVE POLITICAL THEORY</td>
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   Lect. | Lab | SCH | CIP and Fund Code | Admin. Unit | FICE Code | Level |
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   b. Change to:

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<th>Course #</th>
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   Lect. | Lab | SCH | CIP and Fund Code | Admin. Unit | Acad. Year | FICE Code | Level |
   |------|-----|-----|------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|-------|

   Approval recommended by: James R. Perry 9/25/05

   Head of Department Date

   Head of Department (if cross-listed course) Date

   Submitted to Coordinating Board by: Sandra Williams 11/05

   Date

   Questions regarding this form should be directed to Sandra Williams at 845-8201.
Supporting Statement for Item 3-d of the Departmental Request for a Change in Course POLS 650

POLS 650 should be able to be taken up to three times for credit, as the content varies. Students majoring in political theory need to take this course with different instructors, who cover different material.
POLS 650: Normative Political Theory

Fall 2007  
Thursday 9-12  
Allen Building 2064  

Elisabeth Ellis, Associate Professor  
Allen 2060  
ellis@politics.tamu.edu  
Office Hours T, Th 12-1

Course Description: Examination of the most influential approaches, concepts and political arguments of classical and contemporary political theory. May be taken up to three times for credit as contents varies.

Prerequisites: None.

Learning Outcomes: Students can expect to learn the following by the end of this semester:

1) To define, understand, and use concepts and terms relevant to the study of the Western tradition of political ideas. (SBSEEO1)
2) To critique and apply major theses in the study of political thought. (SBSEEO3)
3) To differentiate and analyze historical evidence and different points of view. (SBSEEO8)

Course Readings: This is an introductory course, but it cannot be comprehensive. You will not be reading Plato, Augustine, Cicero, Machiavelli, Madison, Tocqueville, Bentham, Mill, Smith, Weber, Heidegger, Arendt, Foucault, and many other very important figures in political thought in this seminar. Instead, you will concentrate your energies upon the interpretation of a few interesting writers on political matters, learning to focus on these texts from a variety of methodological points of view. Please purchase the following texts, in these editions:

- Locke, ed. Shapiro, *Two Treatises of Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration* (Yale, 2002).
Course Schedule. The primary reading for the week is to be read entire, unless otherwise noted. If you have not already read the work, start early and come to office hours for help if you need it. Most of these texts require second, third, or tenth readings to reveal themselves with any degree of richness. If you have read the work before, read it again, taking notes. It is essential that you use the editions assigned for this class; otherwise, you will not be able to follow seminar discussion. “Extra” reading is recommended, but only required for those giving reports on the week’s extra read. “Secondary” reading is recommended over the long run, and will improve your understanding in class.

August 30: Instructor attending APSA meeting. Browse the readings and consider possible paper and in-class presentation topics (see below).

Recommended: Michael Walzer, Just and Unjust Wars.

Recommended: Gregory Kavka, Hobbesian Moral and Political Theory
David Gauthier, The Logic of Leviathan
Tom Sorrell, ed., The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes
Eric Nelson, “Translation as Correction: Thomas Hobbes in the 1660s and 1670s”

Recommended: Quentin Skinner, Reason and Rhetoric in Hobbes’s Leviathan
George Kateb, “Hobbes and the Irrationality of Politics”
Richard Tuck, Philosophy and Government: 1572-1651
J. G. A. Pocock, Politics, Language, and Time

Recommended: Dunn, Shapiro, and Grant essays in Locke volume.
Richard Ashcraft, Revolutionary Politics and Locke’s Two Treatises of Government
Jeremy Waldron, God, Locke, and Equality
James Tully, An Approach to Political Philosophy: Locke in Contexts

Recommended: Christopher Hill, God’s Englishmen
Ruth Grant, John Locke’s Liberalism
Martha Nussbaum, “Beyond the Social Contract”
Carol Pateman, The Sexual Contract

Recommended: Maurizio Viroli, “The Concept of ordre”
George Armstrong Kelly, Idealism, Politics, and History
Ernst Cassirer, *Rousseau, Kant, Goethe*

**October 18: Rousseau, *Social Contract.* Extra: *Émile.***
Recommended: Pagden, ed., *The Languages of Political Thought in Early-Modern Europe*
Judith Shklar, *Men and Citizens*
Patrick Riley, *Will and Political Legitimacy*
Sankar Muthu, *Enlightenment against Empire*

**October 25: Kant, “What is Enlightenment?” “Perpetual Peace.” Extra: Kant, *Conflict.***
Recommended: John Christian Laursen, “Subversive Kant”
Jürgen Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
Onora O’Neill, *Constructions of Reason*
Hannah Arendt, *Lectures on Kant’s Political Philosophy*
Michel Foucault, “What is Enlightenment?”

Recommended: Mika LaVaque-Manty, *Arguments and Fists*
Timmons, ed., *Kant’s Metaphysics of Morals*
John Rawls, “Kantian Constructivism”
Katrin Flikschuh, *Kant and Modern Political Philosophy*
Dieter Henrich, *The Unity of Reason*
Samuel Fleischacker, *A Third Concept of Liberty*

**November 8: Hegel, *Philosophy of Right* and “Lordship and Bondage.” Extra: Introduction to The Philosophy of History.**
Recommended: Schlomo Avineri, *Hegel’s Theory of the Modern State*
Alan Patten, *Hegel’s Theory of Freedom*
Jürgen Habermas, *Theory and Practice*
Bernard Yack, *The Longing for Total Revolution*
Dieter Henrich, “Hegel and Hölderlin”
Andrew Buchwalter, “Hegel’s Concept of Virtue”
Judith Shklar, “Hegel’s Phenomenology”

**November 15: Marx, *The Marx-Engels Reader,* 26-125; 143-217; 469-500; 594-617. Extra: Select from pieces not assigned from the Reader.**
Recommended: Schlomo Avineri, *The Social and Political Thought of Karl Marx*
Marshall Berman, *All that is Solid Melts into Air: The Experience of Modernity*
Robert Pippen, *Modernism as a Philosophical Problem*
Terrell Carver, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Marx*
Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*

**November 22: Thanksgiving Break. Eat and Read.**
Extra: Nietzsche, selections.  
Recommended: Alexander Nehamas, *Nietzsche: Life as Literature*  
                           Joshua Dienstag, *Dancing in Chains*  
                           Herbert Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*  
                           Jessica Benjamin, *The Bonds of Love*  
                           Stanley Corngold, *The Fate of the Self*

Recommended: Brian Shaw, "Rawls, Kant’s Doctrine of Right, and Distributive Justice"  
                           Thomas Pogge, "Is Kant’s Rechtslehre a ‘Comprehensive Liberalism’?"  
                           Duncan Ivison, "The Secret History of Public Reason: Hobbes to Rawls"  
                           Jürgen Habermas, "From Kant to Hegel and Back Again"  
                           Isaiah Berlin, *Four Essays on Liberty*

**December 11**: Seminar Papers due. If the final paper is submitted after 5 pm, December 11, the student will be assigned a grade of “I” for the semester. **

Course work/grading: The most important aspect of the course is intensive preparation for each week’s seminar. Students should read and re-read the primary texts, prepare notes on key passages and on interpretive arguments they wish to make, and discuss the material with fellow students in advance of seminar. Together we will investigate the arguments offered by the works at hand. I shall take notes at all sessions to facilitate reference to arguments made by each of us at previous meetings, as well as for adding references to books and articles later. If your performance in seminar is below par for two weeks running, I shall ask you to meet with me on a weekly basis until it improves. Seminar performance grades combine general in-class performance (30% of the final grade) with two reports delivered at the beginning of seminar (10% each). At least one of these must cover an “extra” reading for the week. A second may cover either an extra reading, or provide a review of recent literature on some aspect of the week’s topic. Both these assignments must be discussed with the instructor in advance, as I shall explain at the first week’s seminar. It will be to the student’s advantage to choose topics well in advance, so that their work on in-class reports contributes to their work on the final paper.

The combined results of in-class performance and two in-class reports make up 50% of the course grade. The seminar paper comprises the second half of the student’s grade. Students will write interpretive papers on some aspect of the work of at least one of the authors covered in class. In preparation for this task, once a student has chosen a figure, he or she will conduct a brief review of recent literature on the topic. Papers are to be 5000-8000 words long. Students are expected to aim to produce work worthy of publication in a relevant scholarly journal. My comments on the papers will reflect this goal by specifying what revisions would need to be made for the paper to be publishable.
Grading Policy: 1000 points total.

- 900-1000 = A
- 800-899 = B
- 700-799 = C
- 600-699 = D
- below 500 = F

Seminar Paper: 500 points.
Seminar reports: 100 points each.
Participation (attendance and engagement): 300 points.

Recommended Sources in Political Theory

There are a number of reference works summarizing figures and topics in political theory. These are of varying quality, and include some, like the Blackwell Encyclopedia or the on-line Stanford Encyclopedia, that are quite good. Nevertheless, it is a very bad idea to rely on these sources. They are useful as starting points or for fact-checking. Never, ever, trust any single source of this kind, especially one found on the internet. Remember that peer-reviewed sources like some scholarly journals and some web resources are much more reliable than sources that are not peer-reviewed. Beware also that misinformation is easily repeated, so that multiple references may remain incorrect. Over time, you will develop an ever-changing set of basically trustworthy resources, but none will ever be as good as seeing for yourself.

You should develop a habit of regular browsing of publications in your areas of interest. General political science journals, such as the APSR and the JOP, often publish quality work in political theory. Some generalist political theory journals include Political Theory, Review of Politics, and Journal of Political Philosophy, among many others. Intellectual historians of political thought often publish in the Journal of the History of Ideas, Journal of the History of Philosophy, or the History of Political Thought. Some interesting newer publications include Constellations, Theory and Event, the European Journal of Political Theory, and Contemporary Political Theory. Other journals cater to particular approaches: Philosophy and Public Affairs, in applied normative theory, for example, or Conceptions, for the history of concepts approach. See me if you have any questions about the quality of a journal or journals.

The following collections contain generally reliable sources of secondary literature in political thought: the Cambridge Companions (Cambridge), Feminist Reinterpretations (Penn State), Texts in Political Thought (Cambridge), Rethinking the Western Tradition (Yale).

You can also register for services that deliver tables of contents to you, or that notify you of new publications in your area of interest. These are useful, but can be overwhelming. We’ll discuss them in class. It is not very expensive to register as a student member of APSA, and free to become a member of the Association for Political Theory. These and other narrower professional organizations are extremely useful sources of scholarly and professional information.
A note on translation: Translations vary a great deal in their quality. Furthermore, translators frequently incorporate personal readings of passages into their translations of them. Try to read at least the key passages for your argument in the original therefore. If you cannot read the language, and the passage is particularly tricky, find a fluent colleague or use a dictionary to get at least some first-level hold on what the author actually wrote. It is a good idea to use more than one reliable translation for any argument you wish to make seriously. Too often, significant arguments have been built on meanings that turn out to have been the translator’s and not the author’s.

**Students With Disabilities.** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities in Room B118 of Cain Hall, or call 845-1637.

**Course Materials/Copyright Statements** The handouts used in this course are copyrighted. By “handouts,” I mean all materials generated for this class, which include but are not limited to syllabi, quizzes, exams, lab problems, in-class materials review sheets, and additional problem sets. Because these are copyrighted, you do not have the right to copy the handouts, unless I expressly grant permission.

**Plagiarism Statement** As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one’s own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of the person. Plagiarism is one of the worst academic sins, for the plagiarist destroys the trust among colleagues without which research cannot be safely communicated. If you have any questions regarding plagiarism, please consult the latest issue of the Texas A&M University Student Rules, under the section “Scholastic Dishonesty.”

**Aggie Honor Code** “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal or tolerate those who do.” Upon accepting admission to Texas A&M University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honore System. Students will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the TAMU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor System. For additional information, please visit: [http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/](http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor/)
Hurley, Patricia

From: Guy Whitten [WHITTEN@politics.tamu.edu]
Sent: Monday, September 29, 2008 9:39 AM
To: Hurley, Patricia
Subject: FW: request for approval of a course change in POLS

-----Original Message-----
From: James R. Rogers
Sent: Wednesday, September 24, 2008 10:16 AM
To: Guy Whitten
Subject: FW: request for approval of a course change in POLS

E-mail approval from philosophy in Feb (re: the theory change).

James R. Rogers, Ph.D., J.D.
Associate Professor & Interim Department Head Editor, Journal of Theoretical Politics
Department of Political Science Texas A&M University
4348 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4348
979 845 8833
Fax 979 847 8924

-----Original Message-----
From: James R. Rogers
Sent: Tuesday, February 26, 2008 10:01 AM
To: 'es@psyc.tamu.edu'; 'Oliver, Larry'
Cc: 'Powell, Yvonne'
Subject: FW: request for approval of a course change in POLS

Emily and Larry,

Below is the approval e-mail from PHIL for the proposed course change.

Best,

-- Jim

James R. Rogers, Ph.D., J.D.
Associate Professor
Director of Graduate Studies & Co-editor, Journal of Theoretical Politics Department of
Political Science Texas A&M University
4348 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4348
979 845 2905
Fax 979 847 8924

-----Original Message-----
From: Patricia Hurley
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2008 11:50 AM
To: James R. Rogers
Subject: FW: request for approval of a course change in POLS

-----Original Message-----
From: Daniel Conway [mailto:conway@philosophy.tamu.edu]
Sent: Friday, February 22, 2008 11:51 AM
To: Patricia Hurley
Subject: Re: request for approval of a course change in POLS

Hello Pat:

Thanks for your note. I am happy to approve the proposed course change.

Cheers, Dan

Daniel Conway
Professor and Head of Philosophy
Texas A&M University
314 Bolton Hall
4237 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4237
Voice: (979) 845-5696
FAX: (979) 845-0458
E-Mail: conway@philosophy.tamu.edu

Quoting Patricia Hurley <PAT_HURLEY@politics.tamu.edu>:

Dear Dan,

The field of Political Theory in the Department of Political Science has proposed to make a course that is already on the books repeatable up to three times as its content varies. Course changes require approval letters (e-mails are just fine) for changes in courses with subject matters related to what other departments teach. So we need to receive your approval for the change-in-course request before sending it through university channels.

I've attached a representative syllabus for the course. Please forward your input at your earliest convenience. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thanks so much.

Pat

Patricia A. Hurley
Professor and Head
Department of Political Science
Texas A&M University
4348 TAMU
College Station, TX 77843-4348
Phone: 979-845-8833  Fax: 979-847-8924

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