

## **COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT**

**NOTE:** ANY CHANGES TO A CSD MUST GO THROUGH ALL OF THE RELEVANT APPROVAL PROCESSES, INCLUDING LTPC.

<b>Academic School/Department:</b>	Communications, Arts and Social Sciences
<b>Programme:</b>	Political Science
<b>FHEQ Level:</b>	6
<b>Course Title:</b>	Liberty, Justice, Equality: Contemporary Political Theory
<b>Course Code:</b>	PLT 6200
<b>Course Leader:</b>	Dr Michael F. Keating
<b>Student Engagement Hours:</b>	<b>120</b>
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning :	75
<b>Semester:</b>	FALL and/or SPRING and/or SUMMER
<b>Credits:</b>	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

### **Course Description:**

Investigates the central debates and concepts of 20th and 21st century political theory. Through a close examination of key texts representative of the spectrum of contemporary ideological positions, students will become familiar with a variety of key arguments around political concepts such as equality, freedom, democracy and justice. Students will become familiar with central ideas that have shaped political activity in the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries and will become familiar key issues discussed in contemporary political theory.

**Pre-requisites:** PLT 4100 or PHL 4100 or HST 4110

### **Aims and Objectives:**

- provide an overview of some contemporary debates in political theory around key concepts such as freedom, justice, the autonomy of the political, individualism and democracy.
- encourage the analysis and application of theoretical concepts and arguments.
- undertake a sustained critical and creative engagement with a range of primary sources.

### **Programme Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following programme outcomes.

6A(i); 6A(ii); 6B(iv); 6C(i); 6C(iii); 6C(iv); 6D(ii); 6D(iv)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the Departmental/Schools page of the portal.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

At the end of this course, the students will have achieved the following learning outcomes.

- Demonstrates a systematic understanding of the major thinkers and intellectual paradigms in contemporary political theory
- Demonstrates the ability to develop critical responses to, and a systematic and historical understanding of, different approaches to political theory
- Demonstrates a systematic understanding of the contribution of political theory to major thematic debates in politics
- Takes responsibility for their own learning, and completes assigned work with a degree of clarity, contextualisation, critical thinking, and reflexive normative understanding appropriate for a 6000-level course

### **Indicative Content:**

- Key political theorist from 1900 onwards
- Key debates among competing concepts of justice
- Key debates among competing concepts of freedom
- Key debates among competing concepts of democracy
- Key debates among competing concepts of equality
- Debates among liberals, communitarians and their critics
- Conservative and Marxist critiques of liberalism

### **Assessment:**

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Council on June 28, 2012.

### **Teaching Methodology:**

This course will be taught through a combination of lectures and seminar-type activities, including group work, sub-group activities, classroom discussion, and the showing of documentaries. The general approach to classes is informal, and discussion is viewed as an essential part of an interactive and participatory learning program. Audio-visual aids, study materials and electronic learning resources will be used as appropriate.

Lectures provide a framework for the course, and are designed to ensure students have an overview of main issues and concerns on a particular topic, receive clarification on the major points of debate understand the broad dimensions of core problems, and are aware of relevant literature in the specific area of concern. It is essential that lectures are supplemented with assigned readings; together, the readings and the lectures are designed to provide guidance for seminar discussion.

Seminar classes are based on the principle of active and student-directed learning, and are designed to be **Safe, Enjoyable, Managed, Inclusive, Necessary, Academic, Respectful & Stimulating**. The seminars provide an opportunity for discussion of contentious issues, addressing questions and exploring academic debates in more depth, group and sub-group discussion. They are encouraged to share their opinions freely, but must also maintain respect for the opinions of others. It is expected that students will participate regularly in discussions in a creative, competent and critical way, as the formulation of their own thoughts and clarification of

