Political Theory Courses (POL THRY)

Courses

A good politics is guided by ideals such as freedom and justice. But what do those words mean? How does power operate—either to promote or to prevent the achievement of freedom and justice for all people? Readings range from the ancient world to the contemporary, including thinkers such as Socrates, J.S. Mill, Martin Luther King Jr., and bell hooks. (Fall and Spring)

POL THRY 3129. American Political Thought — 3 hrs.
Political ideals have shaped the political institutions, practices, and culture of the U.S., even though our ideals of democracy and freedom have conflicted with realities of exclusion and slavery, and the “American Dream” has at times been undermined by inequality of opportunity. This course explores these tensions, analyzing works of foundational thinkers such as Madison and Jefferson, as well as thinkers aiming to deepen our democracy in the centuries since the founding. (Variable)

POL THRY 3160. Classical Political Theory — 3 hrs.
The nature of justice, arguments for and against democracy, the foundations of political knowledge, and the nature of political communities, as understood by the thinkers of classical Greece. (Variable)

POL THRY 3161. Modern Political Theory — 3 hrs.
Western political thought from Machiavelli to Nietzsche, including the philosophical foundations for the American system of government (liberal and civic republican thought). (Variable)