

# **INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL THEORY**

Compulsory Course

for

M.A. (International Relations-West Asian Studies)

Course No: MWAS-101

Semester I

**Centre for West Asian Studies**

Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi

Course Teacher: **Dr. Sujata Ashwarya**

Associate Professor

Email: [scheema@jmi.ac.in](mailto:scheema@jmi.ac.in)

Phone: 9999496850

Office: Centre for West Asian Studies

Imarat Ibn Khaldun, Second Floor

Jamia Millia Islamia

New Delhi

## **Course Description**

This course is divided into four sections. The Unit I will introduce the students to the meaning of political theory, concepts of state and sovereignty, and theories of the origin of state. Unit II is designed to introduce the concepts in the study of political theory. Unit III deals with the institutions of the states and the forms of governments. In Unit IV will familiarize the students with the various approaches to the study of political theory.

## **Course Content:**

### **Unit I: What is Political theory?**

- Political Theory: Meaning, Nature and Significance
- Understanding the concept of politics and the 'political'
- The Concept of modern State and Sovereignty
- Theories of the origin of the state

### **Unit II: Concepts in Political Theory**

- The concept and theories of Rights
- The concept and theories of Liberty
- The concept and theories of Equality
- The concept and theories of Justice

### **Unit III: State, Constitutions and Forms of Government**

- Classification of States and Constitutions
- Organisation of Government: Legislature, Executive and Judiciary
- Forms of Government: Democracy and Dictatorship
- Theories of Democracy

### **Unit IV: Approaches to the Study of Political Theory**

- Liberalism
- Marxism
- Critical Theories
- Post-modernism
- Feminism

### **Reading List**

- Bhargava, R. (2008) 'What is Political Theory', in Bhargava, R and Acharya, A. (eds.) Political Theory: An Introduction. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 2-16.
- Bhargava, R, 'Why Do We Need Political Theory', in Bhargava, R. and Acharya, A. (eds.) Political Theory: An Introduction. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 17-36.
- Glaser, D. (1995) 'Normative Theory', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds.) Theory and Methods in Political Science. London: Macmillan, pp. 21-40.
- Sanders, D. (1995) 'Behavioral Analysis', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds.) Theory and Methods in Political Science. London: Macmillan, pp. 58-75.
- Chapman, J. (1995) 'The Feminist Perspective', in Marsh, D. and Stoker, G. (eds.) Theory and Methods in Political Science. London: Macmillan, pp. 94-114.
- Vincent, A. (2004) The Nature of Political Theory. New York: Oxford University Press, 2004, pp. 19-80.
- Srinivasan, J. (2008) 'Democracy', in Bhargava, R. and Acharya, A. (eds) Political Theory: An Introduction. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 106-128.
- Owen, D. (2003) 'Democracy', in Bellamy, R. and Mason, A. (eds.). Political Concepts. Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, pp. 105-117.
- Christiano, Th. (2008) 'Democracy', in Mckinnon, C. (ed.) Issues in Political Theory, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 80-96.
- Riley, Jonathan. (2008) 'Liberty' in Mckinnon, Catriona (ed.) Issues in Political Theory, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 103-119.
- Carter, Ian. (2003) 'Liberty', in Bellamy, Richard and Mason, Andrew (eds.). Political Concepts. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 4-15.
- Menon, Krishna. (2008) 'Justice', in Bhargava, Rajeev and Acharya, Ashok. (eds.) Political Theory: An Introduction. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 74-86.

- Wolf, Jonathan. (2008) 'Social Justice', in McKinnon, Catriona. (ed.) Issues in Political Theory. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 172-187.
- Tulkdar, P.S. (2008) 'Rights' in Bhargava, Rajeev and Acharya, Ashok. (eds.) Political Theory: An Introduction. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 88-104.
- McKinnon, Catriona. (2003) 'Rights', in Bellamy, Richard and Mason, Andrew. (eds.) Political Concepts. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 16-27.
- Menlowe, M.A. (1993) 'Political Obligations', in Bellamy Richard (ed.) Theories and Concepts of Politics. New York: Manchester University Press, pp. 174-194.
- Amoah, Jewel. (2007) 'The World on Her Shoulders: The Rights of the Girl-Child in the Context of Culture & Identity', in Essex Human Rights Review, 4(2), pp. 1-23.
- Mookherjee, Monica, 'Multiculturalism', in Mckinnon, Catriona. (ed.) Issues in Political Theory. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 218- 234.

#### **Method of Instruction:**

Lectures and tutorial will be held on a weekly basis. Questions, discussion and debate during classes will be strongly encouraged. Students are expected to keep informed of the current events in the West Asian region.

#### **Method of Assessment:**

A mid-term exam would consist of essay questions based upon the topics covered up to that point. It will be of 25 marks and student must answer two questions out of 4 of 12.5 marks each. The final exam conducted according to a schedule at the end of the semester will be of 75 marks. In the final exam, students must answer 5 out of 10 questions.