Political Science

Academic Year: 2014/2015  
Semester: 2nd

Instructors: Professor João Carlos Espada / Orlando Samões

Course Description:

A synopsis of the main themes and authors that define contemporary political discussion.

Course Content:

I. What is Political Science?
Political Science and its main branches: Political Theory, Comparative Politics, Public Policy and International Relations.
Isaiah Berlin: the crucial question in political science: ‘Why Should Anyone Obey Anyone Else?’

II. Liberal Democracy under Attack
Friedrich List (1789 – 1846): the national system of political economy,
Vladimir U. Lenin (1870 – 1924): the hypocrisy of liberty
Benito Mussulini (1883 – 1945): the doctrine of fascism
Carl Schmitt (1888 – 1985): The debility of liberty

III. The Counter-Attack of Liberal Democracy
Karl R. Popper (1902 – 1994): the open society and its enemies
Michael J. Oakeshott (1901 – 1990): civil association and the rule of law
Isaiah Berlin (1909 – 1997): two concepts of liberty
Raymond Aron (1905 – 1983): The Opium Of The Intellectuals.
Leo Strauss (1899 – 1973): relativism and the three waves of modernity

IV. The Third Wave of World Democratization and the Fall of the Berlin Wall.
Samuel P. Huntington (1927 – 2008): the waves of the world’s democratization
Ralf Dahrendorf (1929 – 2009): two concepts of democracy
Timothy Garton Ash: the revolution of ’89 witnessed in Warsaw, Budapest, Berlin and Prague.

V. Theories of Justice
John Rawls (1921 – 2002): justice as fairness
Robert Nozick (1938 – 2002): the entitlement theory of justice

VI. Political Traditions: Complex Boundaries
Socialism, Liberalism, Conservatism. Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church.
Three Modern Political Traditions: English, American and French.
Course Objectives:

The course aims to introduce students to some of the most important works of contemporary political thought. In doing so, the course will give students the conceptual tools to embrace the fundamental ideas presented by the authors and understand their main theoretical contributions and solutions to contemporary political problems.

Grading:

Paper to be discussed orally (50%) and a written Test (50%).

Bibliography:

I. Introduction: What is Political Science?

II. Liberal Democracy under Attack
LENIN, Vladimir U., The State and Revolution (Ch.1), 1918. Source: Collected Works, Volume 25.
SCHMITT, Carl, «When Parliament Cannot be Sovereign» (1931).
MUSSOLINI, Benito, “The Doctrine of Fascism”. In Enciclopedia Italiana, 1932.

III. The Counter-Attack of Liberal Democracy
OAKESHOTT, Michael, “Rationalism in Politics”. In Rationalism in Politics and Other Essays (Indianapolis: Liberty Press, 1991), pp. 5-42.


IV. The Third Wave of World Democratization and the Fall of the Berlin Wall.


V. Theories Of Justice


VI. Political Traditions: Complex Boundaries


Bibliography – not included in the readings set


**Biography:** João Carlos Espada is the director and founder (1996) of the Institute for Political Studies at the Catholic University of Portugal, where he is University professor of Political Studies. He was previously a tenured Research Fellow at the Institute of Social Sciences of the (state) University of Lisbon. From January 2011 to December 2013, he held the European Parliament / Bronislaw Geremek European Civilization Chair at the College of Europe, campus of Natolin (Warsaw). He earned his D.Phil from the University of Oxford, under the supervision of Lord (Ralf) Dahrendorf, and he taught at Brown, Stanford and Georgetown Universities in the US. He is editor of the quarterly journal Nova Cidadania and president of the Portuguese section of the International Churchill Society/Churchill Centre. He has cofounded and is a member of the Board of the European Partnership for Democracy, as well as of the Editorial Board of the Journal of Democracy, the steering committee of the Council for a Community of Democracies, and of the executive committee of the Michael Oakeshott Association. He has authored nine books and edited another ten in political theory, all in Portuguese and several in English. He has contributed regular opinion columns to the press over the last 25 years. He was political adviser to the President of the Portuguese Republic, Prof. Aníbal Cavaco Silva, during his first presidential term (2006-2011), having held a similar position during the first presidential term of Mr. Mário Soares (1986-91). He is a member of the Academy of Sciences of Lisbon, of the Naval Academy and of the International Academy of Portuguese Culture. In June 2010, he was awarded The Medal of Gratitude by the European Solidarity Centre, based at Gdansk, in “appreciation of [his] involvement in organizing assistance for Solidarity and support for Poles facing an authoritarian government”. In 1996, he was awarded the title of “Grande Oficial da Ordem do Mérito” by the President of the Republic of Portugal, Mr. Mário Soares.

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