

**Note:**

**Course content may be changed, term to term, without notice. The information below is provided as a guide for course selection and is not binding in any form, and should not be used to purchase course materials.**

## ***COURSE SYLLABUS***

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### **GOVT 490**

#### **POLITICAL THEORY**

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A critical examination of a variety of philosophical and social science methods that seek to explain and evaluate: political systems, behavior, ideologies, and collective decision-making. Special attention will be given to the political heritage of western/American civilization and the internal and external challenges it faces.

#### **RATIONALE**

GOVT 490 Political Theory attempts to provide the student with a framework for synthesizing the rudiments of political knowledge that he or she has gained in previous undergraduate government courses. By the end of the course, the student should be able to ask the questions that political theorists do and begin to formulate responses to those questions. Specifically, the student should be prepared to answer the “why” of politics.

#### **I. PREREQUISITE**

For information regarding prerequisites for this course, please refer to the [Academic Course Catalog](#).

#### **II. REQUIRED RESOURCE PURCHASE**

Click on the following link to view the required resource(s) for the term in which you are registered: <http://bookstore.mbsdirect.net/liberty.htm>

#### **III. ADDITIONAL MATERIALS FOR LEARNING**

- A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
- B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
- C. Blackboard [recommended browsers](#)
- D. Microsoft Office

#### **IV. MEASURABLE LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Discuss the key texts and ideas of leading political, economic, social, and cultural theorists.
- B. Apply a wide range of philosophical and social scientific models to political institutions and political behavior.

- C. Evaluate various systems of ideas, schools of thought, and sub-disciplines of political science.
- D. Articulate a biblical paradigm for political theory.

**V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Textbook readings and lecture presentations
- B. Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and [Student Expectations](#), the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

- C. Discussion Board Forums (3)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student is required to create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be 400–500 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. The student must include at least 3 references to the course readings and at least 1 Scripture reference. In addition to the thread, the student is required to reply to 2 other classmates' threads. Each reply must be 200–250 words. In each reply, the student must include at least 1 reference to the course readings and at least 1 Scripture reference. Threads and replies must be in current Turabian format. Each reply must be unique; merely posting the same reply in two places is not sufficient and may be treated as a form of academic misconduct.

- D. Final Research Paper Topic and Bibliography

The student will provide a few sentences describing a political theory topic for the Final Research Paper. A bibliography of at least 3 peer-reviewed sources, such as academic journal articles or books published by university presses, must be included. This initial proposal will serve as a basis for communication with the course instructor about the final topic, which must be approved before proceeding.

- E. Short Papers (2)

The student will be required to submit 2 short research papers. The papers must be at least 2 pages and must be written in current Turabian format. Each paper must utilize and cite at least 5 scholarly sources to justify the student's position and/or conclusions, and must, in all other respects, be in accord with the standards of academic writing.

- F. Final Research Paper

The student will write a 7–10-page research-based paper on a political theory topic that must be approved by the instructor. The paper must be written in current Turabian format and include at least 7 scholarly sources to justify the student's position and/or conclusions. It must, in all other respects, be in accord with the standards of academic writing.

G. Key Terms Matching Quiz

The student will match 50 political theory terms with their definitions. The terms will be drawn from the course text and online philosophical encyclopedias.

H. Final Essay Exam

This exam will consist of 5 questions. Answers to each of these questions must be separate 400–500-word essays of approximately 3 paragraphs each (8–10 sentences per paragraph) that include at least 3 citations from the course readings per short essay. The entire exam will contain around 15 paragraphs (120–150 total sentences) and at least 15 citations. All 5 separate essays must be included in one document.

**VI. COURSE GRADING AND POLICIES**

A. Points

Course Requirements Checklist	10
Discussion Board Forums (3 at 100 pts ea)	300
Final Research Paper Topic and Bibliography	25
Short Papers (2 at 100 pts ea)	200
Final Research Paper	175
Key Terms Matching Quiz (Module 1)	100
Final Essay Exam	200
<b>Total</b>	<b>1010</b>

B. Scale

A = 900–1010 B = 800–899 C = 700–799 D = 600–699 F = 0–599

C. Disability Assistance

Students with a documented disability may contact Liberty University Online’s Office of Disability Academic Support (ODAS) at [LUOODAS@liberty.edu](mailto:LUOODAS@liberty.edu) to make arrangements for academic accommodations. Further information can be found at [www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport](http://www.liberty.edu/disabilitysupport).

## ***COURSE SCHEDULE***

### **GOVT 490**

Textbook: Ryan, *On Politics: A History of Political Thought* (2012).

<b>MODULE/ WEEK</b>	<b>READING &amp; STUDY</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENTS</b>	<b>POINTS</b>
<b>1</b>	Ryan: Introduction 1 presentation 1 lecture note	Course Requirements Checklist Class Introductions Final Research Paper Topic and Bibliography Key Terms Matching Quiz	10 0 25 100
<b>2</b>	Ryan: chs. 1–5 1 presentation 1 lecture note	DB Forum 1	100
<b>3</b>	Ryan: Preface–ch. 8 1 presentation 1 lecture note	Short Paper 1	100
<b>4</b>	Ryan: chs. 9–11 1 presentation 1 lecture note	DB Forum 2	100
<b>5</b>	Ryan: chs. 12–17 1 presentation 1 lecture note	Short Paper 2	100
<b>6</b>	Ryan: chs. 18, 21–22, 24–25 1 presentation 1 lecture note	DB Forum 3	100
<b>7</b>	Ryan: chs. 19–20, 23, 26 1 presentation 1 lecture note	Final Research Paper	175
<b>8</b>	Ryan: ch. 27 1 presentation 1 lecture note	Final Essay Exam	200
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>1010</b>

DB = Discussion Board

**NOTE:** Each course module/week (except Module/Week 1) begins on Tuesday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Monday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on **Friday**.