

BA (Hons.) Political Science
Discipline Specific Course

DSC-7 : POLITICAL THEORY : CONCEPTS AND DEBATES

CREDIT DISTRIBUTION, ELIGIBILITY AND PRE-REQUISITES OF THE COURSE

Course title & Code	Credits	Credit distribution of the course			Eligibility criteria	Pre-requisite of the course (if any)
		Lecture	Tutorial	Practical/ Practice		
Political Theory: Concepts and Debates DSC-7	4	3	1	-	NA	NA

Learning Objectives

This course will familiarize students with the basic normative concepts in political theory and encourage them to understand how they manifest in social practices while engaging in relevant debates. The course will make use of these concepts, understood as values, in organizing our collective life in a political community. The course will develop a broader understanding of some of the key concepts of political practices which affects lives of people in a significant way. It gives a conceptual framework to further explore some of the important political processes and institutions. It aims to evaluate and analyse political issues, debates and arguments from their core value analysis through significant policy changes. It further endeavours to bring change in the very understanding of values and concepts to address issues of contemporary times.

Learning outcomes

After completing the course, the learner will be able to:

- Understand the dimensions of shared living through these political values and concepts.
- Appreciate how these values and concepts enrich the discourses of political life, sharpening their analytical skills in the process.
- Instigate further developments of these concepts in new ways
- Develop an insight to some of the core political issues
- Develop critical analytical skill to evaluate core political debates and issues.
- Brings conceptual understanding and clarity to social, political, economic and cultural issues.

SYLLABUS OF DSC-7

UNIT – I

Freedom

- a) Liberty: Negative and Positive
- b) Freedom, Emancipation, *Swaraj*
- Debate*: Free speech, expression and dissent

UNIT – II

Equality

- a) Equality of opportunity and Equality of Outcome
- b) Egalitarianism: Background inequalities and differential treatment
- Debate:* Affirmative action

UNIT – III

Justice

- a) Justice: Procedural and Substantive
- b) Rawls and his critics
- Debate:* Scope of Justice – National vs Global

UNIT – IV

Rights

- a) Rights: Natural, Moral and Legal
- b) Rights and Obligations
- Debate:* Human Rights - Universalism or Cultural Relativism

UNIT – V

Democracy

- a) Democracy: Idea and Practice
- b) Liberal Democracy and its critics
- c) Multiculturalism and Toleration
- Debate:* Representation vs participation

Essential/recommended readings

I. Freedom

Riley, J. (2008) 'Liberty', in McKinnon, C. (ed), *Issues in Political Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 103-125.

Knowles, D. (2001) *Political Philosophy*. London: Routledge, pp. 69- 132.

Swift, A. (2001) *Political Philosophy: A Beginner's Guide for Students and Politicians*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 51-88.

Carter, I. (2003) 'Liberty', in Bellamy, Richard and Mason, Andrew (eds), *Political Concepts*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 4-15.

Smits, K. (2009). 'Should Offensive Speech be Regulated?', In *Applying Political Theory: Issues and Debates*. Palgrave Macmillan, PP. 152-170.

Sethi, A. (2008) 'Freedom of Speech and the Question of Censorship', in R. Bhargava and A. Acharya (eds), *Political Theory: An Introduction*. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 308-319.

II. Equality

Swift, Adam. (2001) *Political Philosophy: A Beginner's Guide for Students and Politicians*. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 91-132.

Casal, P. and William, A. (2008) 'Equality', in McKinnon, C. (ed), *Issues in Political Theory*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 149-165.