

Syllabus
SOC 302: Comparative Intellectual Traditions

Instructor: Dr. Leena Taneja
Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, 8:30-12:00
July 1-July 12

Course Description:

This course will consider key intellectual traditions across history, comparing ideas of morality, social justice, political organization, and the relationship between the individual and community, and the self and the divine. Selecting philosophical writings from various traditions, including Asian, Indic, European and Islamic, the course will examine these traditions in their classical contexts and then move on to consider how they evolved in both the early modern and modern periods. The course will give particular attention to how these intellectual trends shaped and responded to changes across time, including, but not limited to, the rise and fall of empires, the formation of nation-states, colonialism, and processes of modernization.

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Compare and contrast different intellectual traditions.
2. Discuss major figures and works from social theory, literature, and philosophy, and relate these figures, works, and ideas to today's world.
3. Develop logical and coherent arguments concerning major figures and works from social theory, literature, and philosophy.
4. Demonstrate basic analytical skills when considering intellectual traditions.
5. Demonstrate solid proficiency in English when reading and analyzing selections from seminal texts.

Schedule

July 2: Introduction to the course. Introduction to Greek philosophy

July 3: **Main Topic: Justice: Socrates and Plato**

Readings: **Socrates**. Crito. The Humanistic Tradition. Ed. Gloria K. Fiero. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. pp. 99-115

Questions: Who were the Greek philosophers? What is the basis of knowledge and justice? What is an individual's responsibility to the state?

July 4: **Plato**, Republic

Readings: Introduction to World Philosophies. Ed. Elliot Deutsch. Upper Saddle River: Prentice-Hall, 1997. pp. 160-175

Questions: Who was Plato? What is the relationship between justice and the ideal state?

July 5: **Topic 2: Leadership: Confucius and Machiavelli**

Readings: **Confucius**, *The Analects. Traditions and Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past*. Ed. Jerry H. Bentley and Herbert F. Ziegler. New York: McGrawHill, 2010. p. 102-119.

July 9: **Niccolo Machiavelli**

Readings: *The Prince*. Trans. Peter Bondanella. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2005. 50-64

Questions: What makes for a good leader? What is the relationship between human nature and good leadership? Are we born inherently good and ethical? Does the means justify the end? What is the relevance of Confucius and Machiavelli today?

July 10: **Topic 3: Post-Colonial Literature: Edward Said and Maya Angelou**

Readings: Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books, 1978. p. 40-46

July 11: **Maya Angelou, African American Poet**

Readings: AfroPoets Famous Writers, <http://www.afropoets.net/mayaangelou> 21.html.

Accessed 2 January, 2018 (students will select a poem to analyze/share with the class)

Research Paper Due!

Questions: Historically, how have we studied and conceptualized the 'other'? How has the Arab world been misrepresented by the West? How has Maya Angelou's poetry served as a tool to give voice to the plight of African-Americans?

July 12: *Final Test*

Assessments:

Class Participation Grade: 10%

Final Test: 50% (Multiple Choice, Short Answer, Short reflective paragraph)

Research Paper: 40% (three prompts based on Units 1 and 2. Students selects one and write a short 2-3 page paper)

Teaching Methods: This course will include both lecture-style and in-class activities and group work designed to encourage greater interaction between all members of the class. Lectures will include powerpoint presentations with maps, diagrams, images and video clips to enhance learning and activities will include games, student developed quizzes, short writing assignments and questions generated by students.