



Subject/Paper: Political Theory-Concepts and Debates

SCHOOL: HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCE		ACADEMIC SESSION 2024-25		FOR STUDENTS' BATCH: B.A. 2023-27	
Teacher		Dr. Sonika Sharma			
1	Course code	DE IX			
2	Course Title	Political Theory-Concepts and Debates			
3	Credits	4			
4	Learning Hours	Contact Hours		50	
		Project, Tutorial and Assessment		10	
		Total hours		60	
5	Course Objective	This course is divided into two sections. Section A helps the student familiarize with the basic normative concepts of political theory. Each concept is related to a crucial political issue that requires analysis with the aid of our conceptual understanding. This exercise is designed to encourage critical and reflective analysis and interpretation of social practices through the relevant conceptual toolkit. Section B introduces the students to the important debates in the subject. These debates prompt us to consider that there is no settled way of understanding concepts and that in the light of new insights and challenges, besides newer ways of perceiving and interpreting the world around us, we inaugurate new modes of political debates.			
6	Course Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand the various concepts in political theory and appreciate how they can be helpful to analyze crucial political issues 2. Understand the significance of debates in political theory in exploring multiple perspectives to concepts, ideas and issues. 3. Appreciate how these concepts and debates enrich political life and issues surrounding it. 4. The course will develop a critical understanding of the different structures and functions of political science. 5. This course deals in detail the philosophy & the principles as mentioned in the different ideas of different ideologue. 			
7	Outline syllabus:				
7.00	Paper Code	Unit	Introduction	Reference number	Teaching methods
7.01	Paper Code. PS 501	Group (A) I	I. Importance of Freedom a) Negative Freedom: Liberty b) Positive Freedom: Freedom as Emancipation and	Political Theory an introduction by Andrew Heywood	Lecture and Presentation

			Development <i>Important Issue:</i> Freedom of belief, expression and dissent	Pg: 227-264	
7.02	Paper Code. PS 501	II	II. Significance of Equality a) Formal Equality: Equality of opportunity b) Political equality c) Egalitarianism: Background inequalities and differential treatment <i>Important Issue:</i> Affirmative action	Political Theory an introduction by Andrew Heywood Pg: 268-296	Lecture and Presentation
7.03	Paper Code. PS 501	III	III. Indispensability of Justice a) Procedural Justice b) Distributive Justice c) Global Justice <i>Important Issue:</i> Capital punishment	Political Theory an introduction by Andrew Heywood Pg: 174-205	Lecture and Presentation
7.04	Paper Code. PS 501	IV	IV. The Universality of Rights a) Natural Rights b) Moral and Legal Rights c) Three Generations of Rights d) Rights and Obligations <i>Important Issue:</i> Right of the girl child	Political Theory an introduction by Andrew Heywood Pg: 206-236	Lecture and Presentation
7.05	Paper Code. PS 501	Group (B)	I. Why should we obey the state? Issues of political obligation and civil disobedience. II. Are human rights universal? Issue of cultural relativism. III. How do we accommodate diversity in plural society? Issues of multiculturalism and toleration.	Political Concepts by Martin, Rex. (2003)	Lecture and Presentation
8	Course Evaluation				
8.10	CA: 20%				

8.11 (a)	Attendance	10%
8.12 (b)	Assignment	60%
8.13 (c)	Presentation	1 Presentation, 30%
8.14	Any other	--
8.15	MTE(IA)	20%
8.16	End-term examination: 60%	
9	References and Video References	
9.1	References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Acharya, Ashok. (2008) 'Affirmative Action', in Bhargava, Rajeev and Acharya, Ashok. (eds.) 2. Amoah, Jewel. (2007) 'The World on Her Shoulders: The Rights of the Girl-Child in the Context of Culture & Identity', in <i>Essex Human Rights Review</i>, 4(2), pp. 1-23. 3. Bedau, Hugo Adam. (2003) 'Capital Punishment', in LaFollette, Hugh (ed.). <i>The Oxford Handbook of Practical Ethics</i>. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 705-733. 4. Campbell, Tom. (2008) 'Human Rights' in Mckinnon, Catriona. (ed.) <i>Issues in Political Theory</i>. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 194-210. 5. Carter, Ian. (2003) 'Liberty', in Bellamy, Richard and Mason, Andrew (eds.). <i>Political Concepts</i>. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 4-15. 6. Casal, Paula & William, Andrew. (2008) 'Equality', in McKinnon, Catriona. (ed.) <i>Issues in Political Theory</i>. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 149- 165. 7. Knowles, Dudley. (2001) <i>Political Philosophy</i>. London: Routledge, pp. 69- 132. 8. McKinnon, Catriona. (ed.) (2008) <i>Issues in Political Theory</i>. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 289-305. 9. Menlowe, M.A. (1993) 'Political Obligations', in Bellamy Richard.(ed.) <i>Theories and Concepts of Politics</i>. New York: Manchester University Press, pp. 174-194. 10. Menon, Krishna. (2008) 'Justice', in Bhargava, Rajeev and Acharya, Ashok. (eds.) <i>Political Theory: An Introduction</i>. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 74-86. 11. Mookherjee, Monica, 'Multiculturalism', in Mckinnon, Catriona. (ed.) <i>Issues in Political Theory</i>. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 218- 234. 12. <i>Political Concepts</i>. Manchester: Manchester University Press, pp. 16-27. 13. <i>Political Theory: An Introduction</i>. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 298-307. 14. Riley, Jonathan. (2008) 'Liberty' in Mckinnon, Catriona (ed.) <i>Issues in Political Theory</i>, New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 103-119. 15. Seglow, Jonathan, 'Multiculturalism', in Bellamy, Richard and Mason, Andrew. (eds.) 16. Sethi, Aarti. (2008) 'Freedom of Speech and the Question of Censorship', in Bhargava, Rajeev and Acharya, Ashok. (eds.) 17. Swift, Adam. (2001) <i>Political Philosophy: A Beginners Guide for Student's and Politicians</i>. Cambridge: Polity Press, pp. 91-132. 18. Tulkdar, P.S. (2008) 'Rights' in Bhargava, Rajeev and Acharya,

		<p>Ashok. (eds.) <i>Political Theory: An Introduction</i>. New Delhi: Pearson Longman, pp. 88-104.</p> <p>19. Wolf, Jonathan. (2008) 'Social Justice', in McKinnon, Catriona. (ed.) <i>Issues in Political Theory</i>. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 172-187.</p> <p>20. Working Group on the Girl Child (2007), <i>A Girl's Right to Live: Female Foeticide and Girl Infanticide</i>, available on http://www.crin.org/docs/Girl's infanticide CSW 2007.txt</p>
9.2	Video References	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSizX3MvL28&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lhsf9uJsquQ&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=2 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XkD3IS1nWFI&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=4 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qZebVW8YpAs&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=5 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uwOa_csCBG4&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=6 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=un_O5Hme5Qg&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=7 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vT7bdTdTzQI&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=8 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OWmsltNk0lo&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=9 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhJUnPXSk7U&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=10 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=s7YuzWwjC0&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=11 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLarw6hjVPo&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=12 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NRozvmZE5ns&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=13 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vPtoged5RRI&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=14 https://youtube.com/watch?v=_fHTOE9lztE&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=15 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9xbxHq-FAAI&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=16 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7XwxjIEB6u0&list=PLk6pKT7IDoJh85W-LO52tP8gyHuAa0swY&index=17

Mapping of Outcomes iv. Topics

Outcome no. → Syllabus topic↓	1	2	3	4	
Paper Code. Unit I.1	√				
Paper Code. Unit I.2	√				
Paper Code. Unit I.3					√
Paper Code. Unit I.4	√				
Paper Code. Unit I.5	√				

Paper Code. Unit II.1		√			
Paper Code. Unit III .2		√			
Paper Code. Unit II.3		√			
Paper Code. Unit II.4		√			
Paper Code. Unit III.1			√		
Paper Code. Unit III.2					√
Paper Code. Unit III.3			√		
Paper Code. Unit IV.1				√	
Paper Code. Unit IV.2				√	
Paper Code. Unit IV.3					√
Paper Code. Unit IV.4				√	
Paper Code. Unit V.1					√
Paper Code. Unit V.2					√
Paper Code. Unit V.3					√

QUESTION BANK

UNIT I

1. What is the need for freedom?
2. Why the constraints are necessary for freedom?
3. What is a positive aspect of liberty?
4. What is political liberty?
5. How can freedom of expression be justified?
6. What is the importance of freedom for individuals and societies?
7. What do you mean by national freedom?
8. Is the total absence of constraints or restrictions possible for freedom?
9. What is the need for constraints?
10. Define liberalism.
11. Explain the significance of the positive aspect of liberty.
12. What is negative freedom (liberty) and why is it considered important in political theory?
13. Define negative freedom as the absence of external constraints on individual actions and choices.
14. Discuss how negative freedom contributes to personal autonomy and individual rights.
15. How does negative freedom relate to concepts such as civil liberties and human rights?
16. Analyze the connection between negative freedom and the protection of freedoms such as speech, assembly, and privacy.
17. Provide examples of how societies safeguard negative freedom through legal and institutional frameworks.
18. What are the limitations or criticisms of negative freedom in promoting social justice and equality?
19. Discuss concerns that emphasis on negative freedom may neglect structural inequalities and barriers faced by marginalized groups.
20. Define positive freedom as freedom as emancipation and development.
21. Explain positive freedom as the ability to fulfill one's potential and achieve self-realization.
22. Discuss how positive freedom differs from negative freedom in terms of its focus on empowerment and capabilities.
23. How do theories of positive freedom address issues of social and economic justice?
24. Explore how positive freedom theories advocate for equal opportunities, access to education, healthcare, and economic resources.
25. Provide examples of policies or movements that aim to promote positive freedom and social development.
26. What challenges exist in realizing positive freedom in practice?
27. Analyze barriers such as poverty, discrimination, and political repression that hinder individuals from achieving positive freedom.

28. Discuss the role of governments, international organizations, and civil society in promoting positive freedom globally.
29. Why is freedom of belief considered fundamental in democratic societies?
30. Discuss how freedom of belief protects religious, philosophical, and ideological diversity.
31. Analyze its role in fostering tolerance, pluralism, and societal cohesion.
32. What is the significance of freedom of expression in promoting democratic governance?
33. Explain how freedom of expression supports informed public discourse, accountability, and transparency.
34. Discuss the balance between freedom of expression and limitations (e.g., hate speech laws, national security concerns).
35. Why is freedom of dissent crucial for political participation and social change?
36. Analyze the role of dissent in challenging authority, advocating for reforms, and promoting human rights.
37. Provide examples of historical or contemporary movements where freedom of dissent has been instrumental in achieving social progress.

UNIT II

1. Define formal equality (equality of opportunity) and its importance in society.
2. Explain how formal equality ensures that individuals have equal access to opportunities regardless of their background or characteristics.
3. Discuss examples of policies or practices that promote equality of opportunity in education, employment, and social mobility.
4. How does formal equality contribute to meritocracy and social cohesion?
5. Analyze how merit-based systems and equal access to education and employment opportunities foster individual achievement and societal progress.
6. Discuss challenges or criticisms related to achieving true equality of opportunity in practice.
7. What are the implications of failing to achieve equality of opportunity in terms of social mobility and economic disparities?
8. Explore how barriers such as discrimination, poverty, and unequal access to resources hinder equal opportunities for individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds.
9. What is political equality and why is it important for democratic governance?
10. Define political equality as equal rights and opportunities to participate in political processes, such as voting and running for office.
11. Discuss how political equality ensures representation, legitimacy, and accountability in democratic systems.
12. How does political inequality manifest in different societies?
13. Analyze disparities in political participation, representation, and influence among different social groups (e.g., gender, race, socio-economic status).
14. Provide examples of efforts to promote political equality through electoral reforms, affirmative action, or grassroots movements.
15. What are the challenges or barriers to achieving political equality?
16. Discuss issues such as voter suppression, gerrymandering, campaign finance disparities, and underrepresentation of marginalized groups in political institutions.
17. Define egalitarianism and its focus on addressing background inequalities and differential treatment.
18. Explain how egalitarian principles aim to reduce disparities in wealth, income, and social status through redistributive policies.
19. Discuss the ethical and moral justifications for egalitarianism in promoting social justice and fairness.
20. How do background inequalities contribute to differential treatment in society?

21. Analyze how systemic inequalities based on race, gender, class, and other factors lead to differential treatment in access to opportunities, resources, and services.
 22. Provide examples of policies or initiatives aimed at addressing these disparities and promoting egalitarian principles.
 23. What are the critiques of egalitarianism, and how can these challenges be addressed?
 24. Discuss criticisms related to the effectiveness of redistributive policies, incentives for productivity, and individual responsibility.
 25. Explore alternative approaches or reforms that balance egalitarian goals with economic efficiency and social cohesion.
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UNIT III

1. Define procedural justice and its importance in legal and social systems.
2. Explain how procedural justice ensures fairness in decision-making processes, such as trials, hearings, and administrative procedures.
3. Discuss principles of procedural justice, such as transparency, impartiality, and due process.
4. How does procedural justice protect individual rights and promote trust in institutions?
5. Analyze the role of procedural safeguards in preventing miscarriages of justice and upholding the rule of law.
6. Provide examples of cases or reforms that highlight the importance of procedural fairness in legal proceedings.
7. What are the challenges or criticisms of achieving procedural justice?
8. Discuss issues such as biases in legal systems, access to legal representation, and disparities in procedural protections for marginalized groups.
9. Define distributive justice and its relevance in addressing social and economic inequalities.
10. Explain how distributive justice concerns the fair allocation of resources, opportunities, and benefits in society.
11. Discuss theories of distributive justice, including egalitarianism, utilitarianism, and Rawlsian principles of justice.
12. How does distributive justice inform public policies and social welfare programs?
13. Analyze how governments and institutions prioritize fairness in taxation, social services, healthcare, and education.
14. Provide examples of redistributive policies aimed at reducing poverty and inequality.
15. What are the ethical considerations and challenges in implementing distributive justice?
16. Discuss debates over the role of government intervention, merit versus need-based allocation, and the impact on economic incentives and productivity.
17. Define global justice and its relevance in addressing transnational issues and disparities.
18. Explain how global justice concerns the fair treatment of individuals and nations in the global arena, including human rights, trade, and environmental issues.
19. Discuss theories and approaches to global justice, such as cosmopolitanism, humanitarian intervention, and global governance.
20. How do international organizations and agreements promote global justice?
21. Analyze the role of institutions like the United Nations, International Criminal Court, and international treaties in advancing global justice norms.
22. Provide examples of initiatives or cases where global justice considerations have influenced international policies and actions.
23. What are the challenges and criticisms of achieving global justice?
24. Discuss issues such as sovereignty concerns, power imbalances between states, and the effectiveness of international law in addressing global injustices.
25. What are the ethical and legal debates surrounding capital punishment?

26. Discuss arguments for and against the use of the death penalty, including deterrence, justice for victims, and human rights concerns.
 27. Analyze international perspectives and trends regarding the abolition or retention of capital punishment.
 28. How does capital punishment reflect broader issues of procedural and distributive justice?
 29. Examine cases of wrongful convictions, disparities in sentencing, and the impact of socioeconomic factors on legal outcomes.
 30. Discuss efforts to reform capital punishment laws and practices to ensure fairness and accountability.
 31. What is the role of global justice principles in the debate over capital punishment?
 32. Explore how international human rights standards and norms influence national policies on the death penalty.
 33. Provide examples of countries or regions where capital punishment policies have been contested or reformed in response to global justice concerns.
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UNIT IV

1. What are natural rights, and how do they differ from legal rights?
2. Define natural rights as inherent rights that are considered fundamental to human beings by virtue of their humanity.
3. Discuss the historical development of natural rights theories, such as those articulated by John Locke or Thomas Hobbes.
4. How do natural rights theories influence modern conceptions of human rights?
5. Analyze the connection between natural rights and internationally recognized human rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and property.
6. Discuss debates over the universality and cultural relativism of natural rights principles.
7. What are the criticisms of natural rights theories in contemporary discourse?
8. Discuss challenges such as the lack of consensus on specific natural rights, conflicts between rights, and the application of natural rights in diverse cultural context.
9. Define moral rights and legal rights, and their relationship within legal systems.
10. Explain moral rights as ethical principles that individuals are entitled to regardless of legal recognition.
11. Discuss legal rights as rights recognized and enforced by law, often codified in constitutions or international treaties.
12. How do moral and legal rights intersect in protecting individual freedoms and responsibilities?
13. Analyze examples where moral rights have influenced legal developments or vice versa, such as the abolition of slavery or recognition of indigenous rights.
14. Discuss the role of advocacy and social movements in expanding legal rights based on moral principles.
15. What are the challenges in balancing moral considerations with legal rights in policy-making?
16. Discuss ethical dilemmas related to rights conflicts, privacy concerns, and the responsibilities of individuals and governments in protecting rights.
17. Describe the concept of three generations of rights (civil and political rights, economic, social, and cultural rights, and collective rights).
18. Explain the evolution of human rights categories from civil and political rights (first generation) to economic, social, and cultural rights (second generation), and collective rights (third generation).
19. Discuss how these categories address different aspects of individual and collective well-being.

20. How do three generations of rights reflect changing societal values and priorities?
21. Analyze the implementation and prioritization of rights in different regions and countries based on historical, political, and economic contexts.
22. Provide examples of challenges in realizing each generation of rights and efforts to integrate them into national legal frameworks and policies.
23. What is the significance of recognizing collective rights in promoting global solidarity and sustainable development?
24. Discuss how collective rights, such as the rights of indigenous peoples or environmental rights, contribute to inclusive and sustainable development goals.
25. Explore debates over the enforcement and accountability mechanisms for collective rights at national and international levels.
26. Explain the relationship between rights and obligations in the context of human rights.
27. Define obligations as duties or responsibilities that correspond to the enjoyment of rights, such as respecting the rights of others and fulfilling social responsibilities.
28. Discuss how international human rights frameworks balance individual rights with the responsibilities of states and other duty-bearers.
29. How do rights and obligations intersect in addressing specific issues, such as gender equality or children's rights?
30. Analyze examples where obligations to protect and fulfill rights have led to policy changes or legal reforms.
31. Discuss challenges in enforcing rights and obligations, particularly in contexts where rights are violated or disregarded.
32. What are the specific rights and challenges faced by girl children globally?
33. Discuss issues such as access to education, healthcare, protection from violence, child marriage, and discrimination based on gender.
34. Analyze the impact of cultural norms, poverty, and lack of legal protection on the rights of girl children.
35. How do international human rights frameworks address the rights of the girl child?
36. Explore conventions such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).
37. Discuss efforts by governments, NGOs, and international organizations to promote and protect the rights of girl children.
38. What are the challenges in realizing the rights of the girl child, and what strategies can be adopted to address these challenges?
39. Analyze barriers such as gender stereotypes, inadequate resources, and gaps in implementation and enforcement of laws.
40. Propose recommendations for policy reforms, advocacy initiatives, and community-based interventions to advance the rights and well-being of girl children globally.

Unit V

1. What is political obligation, and what are the main theories explaining why individuals should obey the state?
2. Discuss theories such as social contract theory, natural law theory, and consent-based theories.
3. Analyze the concept of legitimacy and its role in justifying political authority.
4. What are the moral and practical considerations surrounding civil disobedience?
5. Define civil disobedience and discuss examples from history or contemporary contexts.
6. Explore criteria for justifying civil disobedience (e.g., non-violence, public interest, respect for law).
7. What are the limits of political obligation?

8. Discuss scenarios where individuals or groups may have moral grounds to disobey the state.
9. Analyze critiques of political obligation theories, including challenges from anarchism or libertarianism.
10. Define human rights and discuss their historical development and international recognition.
11. Explain the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and other key human rights instruments.
12. Discuss the role of international law and institutions in promoting human rights.
13. What is cultural relativism, and how does it challenge the universality of human rights?
14. Define cultural relativism and its argument that rights are culturally specific.
15. Analyze cultural practices or beliefs that conflict with international human rights standards.
16. How can we reconcile cultural diversity with the universality of human rights?
17. Discuss approaches such as dialogue, education, and contextual adaptation of human rights norms.
18. Analyze critiques of cultural relativism and arguments for universal human rights principles.
19. Define multiculturalism and its goals in pluralistic societies.
20. Explain policies and practices that recognize and promote cultural diversity within a society.
21. Discuss multiculturalism as a response to immigration, globalization, and minority rights.
22. What are the challenges and criticisms of multiculturalism?
23. Analyze debates over integration versus segregation, cultural cohesion, and national identity.
24. Discuss concerns about cultural practices that may conflict with human rights or gender equality.
25. How can societies balance multiculturalism with the need for social cohesion and shared values?
26. Discuss strategies for fostering tolerance, understanding, and mutual respect among diverse cultural groups.
27. Analyze the role of education, civic engagement, and legal frameworks in promoting social harmony.

Assignment(s)

1. The Concept of Political Obligation and Civil Disobedience
2. Universal Human Rights vs. Cultural Relativism