

Emneevaluering / course evaluation ISV

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Navn / name *

Navn til emneansvarlig
Jonathan Kuyper

Velg kursnivå *

Bachelorkurs

Bare for Master: velg blokk

Ikke besvart

Emnekode / course code *

STV2100

Emnenavn / Course title

Contemporary Political Theory

Semester *

Fall

Emnerapport / course report *

The course 'STV2100 – Contemporary Political Theory' ran in the Fall semester of 2023 at the University of Oslo. Jonathan W. Kuyper acted as course convenor and lecturer (four lectures). The course also had lectures from Prof. Robert Huseby (three lectures), Dr. Hallvard Sandven (one lecture), Dr. Fredrik Hjørthen (one lecture), and Magnus Hoel (one lecture). The course covered topics from Distributive Justice, International Distributive Justice, International Climate Change, Territory and Rights, Toleration and Minority Rights, International Immigration, Just War, International (Humanitarian) Intervention, Non-majoritarianism and the Politics of Expertise, and Globalization and Democratic Deficits. As such, it tackled the three major strands of contemporary political theory – warfare, justice, and democracy – and was designed to tackle domestic and international affairs in equal measure. The seminars were run by Huseby and Hoel. The course had learning outcomes surrounding a presentation, seminar paper, and term paper - concerning normative political theory and methods.

The course had changed from 2022 in slight ways. For instance, Hoel was added to taking the lecture on 'Toleration and Minority Rights' with a focus on free speech issues, Sandven took the lecture on 'International Immigration, while Kuyper took the lecture on International (Humanitarian) Intervention from Hjørthen. Kuyper and Hoel were the sensors for the course.

From the subject coordinators, we received the following positive feedback. The students enjoyed the breadth of topics offered in the course. They – for the most part – enjoyed their seminar paper activity. The students appreciated that the lecturers generally attended all other lectures and asked questions of one-another – creating a more free-flowing atmosphere. However, it was noted that the lectures could have made more time for discussion.

We also received the following constructive comments. On the lectures, some students felt that there was too much material in a relatively short space of time, and that a single text-book would have helped. On the seminars, the compulsory paper was due after the seminar in which the student presented. This meant some students had to complete a seminar paper very early in the course, while others had much more time. Some students also noted that information about seminars could have been conveyed more clearly.

In response, the following steps will be taken. First, Kuyper is looking into the possibility of a textbook – such as Political Theory: An Introduction by Andrew Heywood. Second, we are hesitant to cover less topics in lectures, as providing breadth is important to reach students with different interests. However, we will dilute the lectures down to focus on fewer key concepts/theories and thus open space for discussion.

Third, while a lot of information about the seminar papers were provided in lectures, the seminars, and Canvas/the course page, there is clearly room to make this even clearer (though Kuyper notes that several students wrote to him asking for answers that were on the Canvas page). We need to meet with the administration to work out how to amend the submission dates for the seminar paper so that students have more equal time to work on the paper. One option would be to move toward a model where all students provide one small aspects of their paper at each seminar – research question, theory, literature review, and argument – then submit on the same date. This would put pressure on graders but could be worth experimenting with. Kuyper and Sandven – who becomes course convenor in 2024 – will discuss this before talking to the administration.

Overall, the course ran well with very strong students signing up for and completing the course.

Emneevalueringen bør inneholde:

1. Vurdering av emnet

- Læringsutbytte i emnet
- Undervisningsformer og organisering
- Andre relevante temaer som læringsmiljø, studentenes arbeidsinnsats og eventuelt vurderingsformer

2. Studentens tilbakemelding

- Oppsummering av studentenes viktigste tilbakemeldinger

3. Helhetlig vurdering og videreutvikling

- En samlet vurdering av kvaliteten på emnet
- Justeringer som er foretatt som følge av evalueringen.
- Muligheter for videreutvikling av emnet

The course evaluation should include:

1. Assessment of the course

- Learning outcomes in the course
- Teaching methods and organization
- Other relevant topics such as the learning environment, students' effort and possibly forms of assessment

2. Student's feedback

- Summary of students' most important feedback

3. Overall assessment and further development

- An overall assessment of the quality of the course
- Adjustments made as a result of the evaluation.
- Opportunities for further development of the course