

CAS IR 546/UNI SS 546

**POWER AND LEGITIMACY**

Spring 2008

Tuesday/Thursday 2 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. at GCB 204

Igor Lukes

745 Commonwealth Ave.

358-1776 or lukes@bu.edu

**SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES**

This course is focused on various political theories and their role in forging the world of today. Relevant primary sources will provide the framework for an inquiry into the relationship between power and legitimacy, ideas and political elites, institutions and struggles for control over the decision-making processes. Political ideologies will be approached as instruments of power.

In addition to the specific political theorists whose works we shall study, the course explores several assumptions, viz., that our history is the history of the continuous replacement of political elites, that each power elite rules in the name of an abstraction – an ideology – and that the central issue of all political systems is: “Who is going to rule, and why?”

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

The course will be conducted in a lecture-and-discussion form and will meet twice a week. There will be a take-home midterm and a take-home final examination, each worth c. 50 percent of the final grade. This arrangement is not mathematically perfect because I need space to reward active course participation or to penalize less than perfect attendance and participation.

The take-home midterm examination will be handed out on 18 March 2008; you will hand it in on 25 March 2006. The assignment for the take-home final examination will be handed out on the last day of class (1 May 2008) and it will be due on 9 May 2008.

Familiarity with assigned texts is essential. Attendance and active course participation are required. Please come prepared to be challenged.

The midterm and final examinations follow the take-home format. You should feel free to discuss the assignments and I would strongly encourage you to use

any book or article you believe is relevant for your essay. However, you must then sit down and write your own text, clearly distinguishing between ideas that are yours, and those you have heard from someone else, read in another publication or seen on the web.

### **OFFICE HOURS**

I am available for consultations during my office hours, every Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. I am also always happy to speak with you before and after each lecture. If you are unable to see me during my office hours I will make a prompt arrangement to see you as soon as possible.

### **POLICY ON INCOMPLETES**

No incomplete grades will be reported unless the student has presented a plausible explanation why the coursework cannot be finished on time. The student will then fill in a form requesting an incomplete grade; this will include a written commitment to satisfy the outstanding obligations by a specific date.

### **ACADEMIC CONDUCT CODE**

Please note that it is your responsibility to know and understand the provisions of the Academic Conduct Code; a copy can be obtained in CAS 105. Cases of suspected academic misconduct, such as plagiarism, will be referred to the Dean's Office.

### **NOTA BENE**

No food, drinks or baseball hats in class. Please turn off your cell-phones.

### Assigned Texts

1. Plato, *The Republic*
2. Dostoevsky, "The Grand Inquisitor"
3. Machiavelli, *The Prince*
4. Hobbes, *Leviathan*
5. Burke, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*
6. Pipes, *Communism*
7. Lukes, "The Tukhachevsky Affair"
8. Stalin, *Marxism and Linguistics*
9. Kovaly, *Under a Cruel Star*
10. Milosz, *The Captive Mind*
11. Havel, *The Power of the Powerless*

## Topics

- I. Who shall govern? By what right?
- II. Plato's ruling class: its myths and interests
- III. Disintegration of the Medieval Pyramid
- IV. The Grand Inquisitor
- V. Jan Hus: Price of Truth and Verification
- VI. Machiavelli
- VII. Comenius vs. Hobbes
- VIII. Burke
- IX. Marx
- X. Lenin
- XI. A Totalitarian Mind in Action:  
Stalin and the Marshal Tukhachevsky Affair
- XII. Stalin on Linguistics
- XIII. Kovaly's "Cruel Star"
- XIX. The "Captive Mind"
- XV. The Pill of Murti-Bing
- XVI. Havel on Post-totalitarian Systems
- XVII. Implosion of Post-totalitarianism