

Educational Institution
“Belarusian State Economic University”

APPROVED BY

Rector of the Educational Institution
“Belarusian State Economic University”

A.V.Egorov

30.06.2026

Registration No. 4028-26 /

POLITICAL THOUGHT OF THE MODERN ERA

Curriculum of the Educational Institution
in the Academic Discipline for the Specialty
7-06-0312-01 Political Science

The Curriculum is based on the educational standard of advanced higher education OSVO 7-06-0312-01-2023 and the curriculum for the specialty 7-06-0312-01 «Political Science» (Profilization: «Economic Political Science: Political Analysis and Consulting»).

COMPILERS:

N.Y. Veremeev, Associate Professor of the Department of Political Science, Belarusian State Economic University, PhD in Political Sciences.

REVIEWERS:

S.V.Zenchenko, Leading Research Fellow, Centre for Political Science, Institute of Sociology of the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Candidate of Political Sciences, Associate Professor.

V.G. Shendrik, Associate Professor, Department of Philosophy, Educational Institution "Belarusian State Economic University", Candidate of Philosophical Sciences.

RECOMMENDED FOR APPROVAL:

Department of Political Science, Belarusian State Economic University (Protocol No. 10 dated 29.05.2026);

The Methodological Commission for the academic disciplines of the social and humanitarian module, in the specialties of "Psychology", "Sociology", "Political Science (by direction)", "Political Science", "Philosophy", "Economics" with the profile "Economic Psychology" of the educational institution "Belarusian State Economic University"

(Protocol No. 5 dated 11.06.2026);

Scientific and Methodological Council of the Belarusian State Economic University (Protocol No. 9 dated 30.06.2026).

EXPLANATORY NOTE

The curriculum for the academic discipline “Political Thought of the Modern Era” is aimed at forming knowledge about the main directions in the development of political thought in the modern period.

Studying this discipline enables future political scientists to acquire theoretical knowledge in the field of the evolution of political ideas of the 20th and 21st centuries, key political concepts, ideological trends, and contemporary theoretical approaches to the analysis of the state, power, political regimes, and international relations.

In the course of studying the discipline, students are expected to become familiar with the main stages in the development of political thought of the modern era; study the key political theories and concepts of the 20th and 21st centuries; analyse the features of the development of liberal, conservative, socialist, and other ideological traditions; consider the evolution of ideas about the state, democracy, political power, and global governance; examine the contribution of leading representatives of contemporary political science to the development of political theory; become familiar with contemporary methodological approaches to the analysis of political processes; and determine the significance of political thought of the modern era for understanding present-day political reality.

The goal of teaching the discipline is to form a holistic understanding of the development of political thought of the modern era, its main directions, concepts, and significance for the analysis of contemporary political processes.

Achievement of this goal presupposes the solution of the following tasks:

- to reveal the main stages and directions in the development of political thought of the modern era;
- to study the key political theories, schools, and concepts of the 20th and 21st centuries;
- to analyse the evolution of ideas about the state, power, democracy, and political institutions;
- to consider the main ideological trends and their transformation under contemporary conditions;
- to identify the contribution of leading political thinkers to the development of contemporary political science;
- to form skills of analysing and interpreting political-theoretical concepts.

As a result of studying the academic discipline “Political Thought of the Modern Era”, the following competences are formed:

specialised competences:

to analyse the process of adoption and implementation of political and economic decisions; to possess skills and abilities in economic and statistical analysis of political decisions.

to master the techniques of teaching political science in higher education and to apply key theoretical and methodological approaches of contemporary political science in analytical work;

advanced professional competence:

to apply advanced theoretical, methodological and practical knowledge and skills to

solve higher-level professional tasks in the field of state policy and public administration, in research on political institutions and processes, and to possess the tools for the formulation and implementation of public policy.

As a result of studying the academic discipline, the student should:

know:

- the main stages in the development of political thought of the modern era;
- the key political theories and concepts of the 20th and 21st centuries;
- the main ideological trends and their evolution;
- the contribution of leading political thinkers to the development of political science;
- contemporary methodological approaches to the analysis of political processes;

be able to:

- analyse and compare political theories of the modern era;
- evaluate the content and dynamics of political ideas in historical and contemporary contexts;
- apply theoretical knowledge to the analysis of political reality;
- interpret the main provisions of the works of political thinkers of the modern era;

have skills in:

- analysing political-theoretical concepts and ideological doctrines;
- using the methodological tools of political science;
- preparing comparative tables, schemes, and analytical materials on political theories;
- critical reflection on political ideas and concepts.

Within the framework of the educational process in this academic discipline, the student should acquire not only theoretical and practical knowledge, abilities, and skills in the specialty, but also develop value-personal and civic potential, forming the qualities of a citizen capable of active participation in the socio-political and professional life of the country.

The academic discipline “Political Thought of the Modern Era” belongs to the module “Political Science in the Structure of Knowledge about Society” of the institutional component.

Relations with other academic disciplines – the academic discipline “Political Thought of the Modern Era” is connected with a number of other political and philosophical disciplines, such as “Philosophy and Methodology of Science”, “Methods of Political Analysis and Contemporary Digital Technologies”, “Innovative Research in Political Science”, and others.

Form of advanced higher education – full-time.

In accordance with the university curriculum, the following is allocated for the study of the academic discipline: total number of study hours – 96; classroom hours – 32, including lectures – 14 hours and seminars – 18 hours.

Distribution of classroom time by courses and semesters: Semester 1 – lectures – 14 hours, seminar classes – 18 hours.

Independent work of the student – 64 hours.

Workload – 3 credit units.

Form of interim assessment – pass/fail test (credit).

CONTENTS OF THE STUDY MATERIAL

SECTION 1. THE FORMATION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND THE CLASSICAL THEORETICAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE 20TH CENTURY.

Topic 1.1. The Formation of 20th-Century Political Science and Methodological Approaches.

The main stages in the development of political science in the 20th century. Institutionalization of political science as an independent discipline. Formation of the main methodological approaches: historical-theoretical, institutional, and conceptual. Behaviouralism and the empirical revolution in political science. Development of quantitative and behavioural methods of political analysis.

Topic 1.2. Marxism and Neo-Marxism in 20th-Century Political Thought

The classical Marxist theory of the state and power. Development of Marxism in the 20th century (V. Lenin, G. Plekhanov, K. Kautsky). A. Gramsci's theory of hegemony. Main directions of Neo-Marxism and critical theory of society.

SECTION 2. MAIN DIRECTIONS OF 20TH-CENTURY POLITICAL THEORY

Topic 2.1. Liberal Political Philosophy of the 20th Century

J. Rawls's theory of justice: "justice as fairness," the "veil of ignorance," and the social contract. Libertarianism (F. Hayek, R. Nozick) and the idea of the minimal state. Communitarianism and the critique of liberal individualism. The problem of the correlation between freedom, equality, and justice.

Topic 2.2. Conservative Political Thought and the Critique of Liberalism

The intellectual foundations of contemporary conservatism. C. Schmitt's political theory: the concept of the political, friend/enemy, critique of liberalism. Normativism and decisionism. Contemporary forms of political and cultural conservatism.

Topic 2.3. Theories of Democracy and Political Pluralism

Liberal and elitist concepts of democracy (R. Aron). The theory of pluralist democracy (G. Sartori). Participatory democracy and J. Habermas's theory of communicative action. The concept of the public sphere and discourse.

Topic 2.4. The Critique of Totalitarianism and the Concept of the "Open Society"

K. Popper: critique of historicism and the theory of the open society. H. Arendt on the nature of totalitarianism. Analysis of the structures and mechanisms of totalitarian regimes in the works of Z. Brzezinski. Comparative analysis of democratic and totalitarian systems.

SECTION 3. POST-CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL THOUGHT

Topic 3.1. Post-Classical Political Thought: Postmodernism and New Theories of Power

The crisis of modernity and the transformation of political thinking in the second half of the 20th century. Postmodern critique of rationality and universal metanarratives. J. Baudrillard: the concept of simulacra and political reality. F. Jameson and the cultural logic of late capitalism. Feminist political theory: power, gender, and identity. Critique of traditional political categories and the expansion of the concept of the political in contemporary theory. New approaches to the analysis of power, identity, and social relations in the 21st century.

EDUCATIONAL AND METHODOLOGICAL MAP OF THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE “Political Thought of the Modern Era”

Full-time form of higher education

Section / Topic No.	Title of Section / Topic	Lectures	Seminars	Literature	Form of assessment
Section 1	The Formation of Political Science and the Classical Theoretical and Methodological Foundations of the 20th Century				
Topic 1.1	Lecture “The Formation of 20th-Century Political Science and Methodological Approaches”	2		[1], [4], [8]	Express quiz
	Seminar “The Formation of 20th-Century Political Science and Methodological Approaches”		4	[1], [4], [8]	Express quiz, presentations
Topic 1.2	Lecture “Marxism and Neo-Marxism in 20th-Century Political Thought”	2		[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [10], [11]	Express quiz
	Seminar “Marxism and Neo-Marxism in 20th-Century Political Thought”		2	[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [10], [11]	Express quiz, presentations
Section 2	Main Directions of 20th-Century Political Theory				
Topic 2.1	Lecture “Liberal Political Philosophy of the 20th Century”	2		[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]	Express quiz
	Seminar “Liberal Political Philosophy of the 20th Century”		2	[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [8], [10], [11]	Express quiz, presentations, test
Topic 2.2	Lecture “Conservative Political Thought and the Critique of Liberalism”	2		[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [8], [10], [11]	Express quiz
	Seminar “Conservative Political Thought and the Critique of Liberalism”		2	[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [8], [10], [11]	Express quiz, presentations, test
Topic 2.3	Lecture “Theories of Democracy and Political Pluralism”	2		[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], [11]	Express quiz
	Seminar “Theories of Democracy and Political Pluralism”		2	[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6], [7], [8], [9], [10], [11]	Express quiz, presentations
Topic 2.4	Lecture “The Critique of Totalitarianism and the Concept of the Open Society”	2		[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]	Express quiz
	Seminar “The Critique of Totalitarianism and the Concept of the Open Society”		2	[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]	Express quiz, presentations
Section 3	Post-Classical and Contemporary Political Thought				
Topic 3.1	Lecture “Post-Classical Political Thought: Postmodernism and New Theories of Power”	2		[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]	Express quiz
	Seminar “Post-Classical Political Thought: Postmodernism and New Theories of Power”		4	[1], [2], [3], [4], [5], [6]	Express quiz, presentations
	TOTAL HOURS	14	18		Pass/fall test (credit)

*ongoing monitoring activities (in accordance with the Regulation on the rating system for assessing students' knowledge, skills and abilities)

INFORMATION AND METHODOLOGICAL PART

LITERATURE

Main:

1. Atrushkevich, M. M. History of Political and Legal Doctrines: An Intensive Training Course: teaching and methodological manual for students of higher education institutions / M. M. Atrushkevich; Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Belarus. – Minsk: Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Belarus, 2025. – 226, p.
2. History of Political Doctrines: textbook for universities / [A. K. Golikov et al.]; edited by A. K. Golikov, B. A. Isaev. – 2nd ed., revised and supplemented. – Moscow: Yurayt, 2026. – 383 p.
3. Gadzhiev, K. S. Introduction to Political Theory: textbook for universities / K. S. Gadzhiev. – 2nd ed., revised and supplemented. – Moscow: Yurayt Publishing House, 2026. – 410 p.

Additional:

4. Political Philosophy: textbook for universities / G. L. Tulchinsky, A. A. Balayan, I. V. Sokhan, A. Yu. Sungurov; general editor G. L. Tulchinsky. – Moscow: Yurayt Publishing House, 2026. – 269 p.
5. Zotov, V. D. History of Political Doctrines: textbook / V. D. Zotov, L. V. Zotova. – 3rd ed., revised and supplemented. – Moscow: Norma; INFRA-M, 2021. – 672 p. – ISBN 978-5-91768-360-7. – Text: electronic. – URL: <https://znanium.ru/catalog/product/1229729> (access by subscription).
6. Political Science: manual for students of the first stage of higher education / [N. A. Antanovich et al.; edited by N. A. Antanovich]; Belarusian State University. – Minsk: BSU, 2022. – 230, p.
7. Mukhaev, R. T. Political Science. Theory and Mechanisms of the Functioning of Politics: textbook for universities / R. T. Mukhaev. – 6th ed., revised and supplemented. – Moscow: Yurayt Publishing House, 2026. – 365 p.
8. Kostinevich, K. I. Political communication: theoretical approaches to the study of interactions between power and society in the Republic of Belarus / K. I. Kostinevich // Scientific Works of the Belarusian State Economic University. – Minsk, 2019. – Issue 12. – P. 606–615.
9. Socio-Political Processes and Phenomena in the Contemporary Republic of Belarus / E. M. Babosov [et al.]; general editor E. M. Babosov; National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, Institute of Sociology. – Minsk: Belaruskaya navuka, 2024. – 196 p.

Normative Legal Acts:

10. Constitution of the Republic of Belarus of 1994 [Electronic resource]: with amendments and additions adopted at the republican referendums of 24 November 1996, 17 October 2004, and 27 February 2022: as amended by the Law of the Republic of Belarus of 04.03.2022 // ConsultantPlus. Belarus / ООО “YurSpektr”, National Centre for Legal Information of the Republic of Belarus. – Minsk, 2022.

11. On Mass Media [Electronic resource]: Law of the Republic of Belarus, 17 July 2008, No. 427-Z: as amended by the Law of the Republic of Belarus of 14.10.2022 // National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus. – URL: <https://pravo.by/document/?guid=3871&p0=h10800427> (date of access: 31.05.2024).

Internet Resources:

12. National Legal Internet Portal of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – URL: <https://pravo.by>.

13. House of Representatives of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://house.gov.by>.

14. President of the Republic of Belarus. Official Internet Portal of the President of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://www.president.gov.by>.

15. Council of Ministers of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://www.government.by>.

16. Council of the Republic of the National Assembly of the Republic of Belarus [Electronic resource]. – URL: <http://sovrep.gov.by>.

LIST OF QUESTIONS FOR THE PASS/FAIL TEST (CREDIT)

1. Main stages in the development of political science in the 20th century.
2. Institutionalization of political science as an independent discipline.
3. Main methodological approaches to the study of 20th-century political thought.
4. Behaviouralism and the empirical revolution in political science.
5. Weber's concept of ideal types.
6. M. Weber's theory of power and the process of rationalization.
7. Marxist theory of the state and power.
8. Main directions in the development of Marxism in the 20th century (V. Lenin, G. Plekhanov, K. Kautsky).
9. A. Gramsci's theory of hegemony and the development of Neo-Marxism.
10. The concept of a political institution and the main approaches to institutional analysis.
11. Classical and new institutionalism in political science.
12. The systems approach to the analysis of politics.
13. M. Duverger's contribution to the development of institutional analysis.
14. J. Rawls's theory of justice.
15. The main principles of the theory of "justice as fairness."
16. Libertarianism of F. Hayek and R. Nozick.
17. Communitarianism as a critique of liberal individualism.
18. Main ideas of contemporary political conservatism.
19. C. Schmitt's political theory: the concept of the political.
20. Critique of liberal democracy in conservative political thought.
21. Main provisions of decisionism and normativism in political theory.
22. Liberal and elitist concepts of democracy (R. Aron).
23. G. Sartori's theory of pluralist democracy.
24. J. Habermas's theory of communicative action.
25. The concept of the public sphere and discourse in contemporary political theory.
26. K. Popper: critique of historicism and the theory of the open society.
27. Main characteristics of totalitarianism in H. Arendt's conception.
28. Analysis of totalitarian regimes in the works of Z. Brzezinski.
29. Comparative analysis of democratic and totalitarian political systems.
30. Main trends in the development of post-classical political thought in the second half of the 20th and early 21st centuries.
31. Postmodern political theory: main ideas and representatives (J. Baudrillard, F. Jameson).
32. Feminist political theory: main directions and issues.
33. Expansion of the concept of the political in contemporary theories of power and identity.

SAMPLE TEST TASKS

SECTION 1. FORMATION OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND METHODOLOGY

1. The institutionalization of political science in the 20th century is primarily associated with:

- A) the development of religious philosophy
- B) the emergence of political science as an independent discipline
- C) the abandonment of the study of the state
- D) the strengthening of artistic criticism of politics

2. Behaviouralism in political science implies:

- A) the study of political myths
- B) the analysis of symbols of power
- C) the empirical study of political behaviour
- D) the rejection of scientific methods

3. The concept of “ideal types” belongs to:

- A) K. Marx
- B) M. Weber
- C) J. Rawls
- D) K. Popper

4. M. Weber’s “iron cage” means:

- A) military dictatorship
- B) the bureaucratization and rationalization of society
- C) anarchy
- D) economic crisis

5. The main idea of the Marxist theory of the state is that:

- A) the state is neutral
- B) the state expresses the interests of the ruling class
- C) the state does not exist
- D) the state is based only on morality

6. The concept of “hegemony” in political theory is associated with:

- A) M. Weber
- B) A. Gramsci
- C) J. Locke
- D) T. Hobbes

SECTION 2. MAIN DIRECTIONS OF 20TH-CENTURY POLITICAL THEORY.

7. The theory of justice as fairness was developed by:

- A) R. Nozick
- B) J. Rawls
- C) F. Hayek
- D) C. Schmitt

8. The “veil of ignorance” is an element of the theory of:

- A) Habermas
- B) Rawls
- C) Popper
- D) Arendt

9. Libertarianism presupposes:

- A) the expansion of the state
- B) a minimal state and the priority of freedom
- C) the abolition of the market
- D) centralized planning

10. The author of Anarchy, State, and Utopia is:

- A) R. Dahl
- B) R. Nozick
- C) G. Sartori
- D) J. Habermas

11. C. Schmitt’s concept of “the political” is based on:

- A) economics
- B) morality
- C) the friend/enemy distinction
- D) law

12. Normativism and decisionism belong to:

- A) democratic theory
- B) legal and political theory
- C) biology
- D) economics

13. Pluralist democracy is most closely associated with:

- A) G. Sartori
- B) K. Marx
- C) F. Nietzsche
- D) M. Foucault

14. The theory of communicative action was developed by:

- A) J. Habermas
- B) K. Popper
- C) M. Weber
- D) Z. Brzezinski

15. The concept of the open society belongs to:

- A) K. Popper
- B) C. Schmitt
- C) R. Nozick
- D) A. Gramsci

16. The author of the concept of totalitarianism is:

- A) H. Arendt
- B) J. Rawls
- C) F. Hayek
- D) M. Duverger

17. The elitist theory of democracy is associated with:

- A) R. Aron
- B) J. Baudrillard
- C) A. Smith
- D) K. Marx

SECTION 3. POST-CLASSICAL POLITICAL THOUGHT

18. Postmodern political theory criticizes:

- A) rationality and metanarratives
- B) law
- C) democracy
- D) the state

19. The author of the concept of simulacra is:

- A) F. Jameson
- B) J. Baudrillard
- C) J. Habermas
- D) K. Popper

20. The cultural logic of late capitalism is associated with:

- A) F. Jameson
- B) R. Dahl
- C) M. Weber
- D) C. Schmitt

21. Feminist political theory primarily studies:

- A) military conflicts
- B) power, gender, and identity
- C) economics
- D) property law

22. Postmodern theory in politics is characterized by:

- A) the strengthening of rationalism
- B) the rejection of power analysis
- C) the reinterpretation of power and identity
- D) a return to Marxism

ORGANIZATION OF STUDENTS' INDEPENDENT WORK

An important stage in the formation of professional competences within the academic discipline is students' independent work.

For full-time master's students, 64 hours are allocated to independent work.

The content of independent work includes all topics of the academic discipline presented in the section "Contents of the Study Material" and structured into three sections:

- the formation of political science and the classical theoretical and methodological foundations of the 20th century;
- main directions of 20th-century political theory;
- post-classical and contemporary political thought;
- preparation for sitting the interim assessment.

In the process of independent work, students perform the following types of activity:

- in-depth study of key theoretical approaches in 20th-century political science (Weber, Marx, Gramsci, Habermas, and others);
- analysis of the concepts of liberalism, libertarianism, communitarianism, and conservatism;
- study of contemporary theories of democracy and political pluralism;
- mastering critical approaches to political regimes (totalitarianism, open society);
- work with primary sources and academic literature;
- preparation of thematic reports and analytical reviews;
- comparative analysis of political theories and concepts;
- preparation for testing, and the pass/fail test;
- preparation of presentation and analytical materials.

Knowledge Quality Control

Diagnostics of the quality of knowledge acquisition is carried out within the framework of ongoing assessment and interim assessment.

Ongoing assessment is conducted during the semester and includes the following forms:

- testing on the topics of the discipline;
- express quizzes during classroom sessions;
- completion of analytical and problem-based assignments;
- preparation and defence of mini-reports and presentations;
- completion of creative and research assignments on key political theories of the 20th century.

Ongoing assessment in the academic discipline is carried out three times during the semester.

The results of ongoing control are graded on a ten-point scale and are determined on the basis of the marks awarded for ongoing assessment activities during the semester.

Requirements for the student during interim assessment:

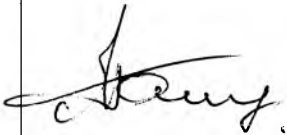
students are admitted to interim assessment in the academic discipline provided they have successfully completed all forms of ongoing control stipulated by the curriculum.

Interim assessment is conducted in the form of a pass/fail test (credit).

Methodology for forming the grade in the academic discipline

In accordance with the Regulations on the Rating System for Assessing the Knowledge, Skills and Abilities of BSEU Students.

**CURRICULUM APPROVAL PROTOCOL
WITH OTHER ACADEMIC DISCIPLINES OF THE SPECIALTY**

Name of the Academic Discipline with which Coordination is Required	Department	Proposals for Changes in the Content of the Curriculum of the Educational Institution	Decision Taken by the Department that Developed the Curriculum (with date and protocol number)
Institutional Economics	Economic Policy	No comments or suggestions 	Recommend the curriculum for the course "Political Thought of the Modern Era" for approval. (Minutes No. 10 dated May 29, 2026)

ADDITIONS AND CHANGES TO THE CURRICULUM
IN THE ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE

«Political Thought of the Modern Era»

Registration № _____ /
for the _____ / _____ academic year

No.	Amendments and Additions	Basis

The curriculum has been reviewed and approved at the meeting of the Department of Political Science (Protocol No. _____ dated __._____.20__)

Head of Department
of Political Science
Candidate of Historical
Sciences, Associate
Professor

O.G. Kazak

APPROVED BY
Dean of the Faculty of
Social Science and
Economics
Candidate of Political
Sciences

A.O. Bueva