COURSE DETAIL

OPERA, POWER AND POLITICS
Country France
Host Institution Institut d'Etudes Politiques (Sciences Po)
Program(s) Sciences Po Paris
UCEAP Course Level Upper Division
UCEAP Subject Area(s) Political Science Music
UCEAP Course Number 102
UCEAP Course Suffix P
UCEAP Official Title OPERA, POWER AND POLITICS
UCEAP Transcript Title OPERA/POWER & POL
UCEAP Quarter Units 4.50
UCEAP Semester Units

3.00

Course Description

Embracing voice, music, theatre, poem and visual arts, opera can be considered as a “total” art form. It is endlessly reinvented by a changing society, which it also contributes to shape. Sometimes forbearing political events (some uprisings started in opera houses), often used as propaganda by the rulers of the time (from Louis XIV to Hitler and many others), opera entertains a unique relationship with the political power. During the Age of Enlightenment, opera became at times a vector of subtle social criticism and political utopia. Today, contemporary issues such as the #metoo movement can find their ways into opera staging, not without controversy. This course proposes a cross-thematic journey into opera, power, and politics (history, sociology, and philosophy are also called upon when relevant) from Monteverdi to Mozart, Verdi, Wagner, John Adams and many others, confronting musical works with the dynamics of power. The course examines various video extracts from operas as a basis for discussion and to foster the development of a personal critical perspective on the complex relationship between opera and power.

Language(s) of Instruction
English

Host Institution Course Number
DHUM 25A06

Host Institution Course Title
OPERA, POWER AND POLITICS

Host Institution Course Details
https://syllabus.sciencespo.fr/en/?202520/291233

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Seminar

Host Institution Department
Humanities

Course Last Reviewed
2025-2026

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