

PIA8616: POLITICS AND POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Politics and Political Philosophy

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

8616

Academic Unit

Public and International Affairs (PIA)

College/School

College of Liberal Arts and Social Sciences (CH)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

R8 - Research Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

POL8616 Politics and Political Philosophy

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

Analysts of political science and political philosophy use ideas and theories as a means of understanding complex realities. Ideas and theories are helpful because they enable us to structure the way we think, to see relationships, to ask relevant questions and to provide explanations of political and policy phenomena. What ideas and theories we use will often depend on what we are trying to understand or explain and they may not always be adequate for our purpose. We may find that our initial ideas and theories need to be modified or that empirical material suggests that other theoretical explanations are more plausible. Most scholars have an open mind on these matters and approach research questions in a pragmatic manner: the best theory is the one that provides the most convincing ordering and explanation of the data.

The aims of this course are to think of the world in dynamic terms and, drawing upon a range of disciplines and theories, to explore critically the interconnections between different areas of politics and policy. This includes: (1) introducing the principles and theories of political science and public policy, (2) developing a critical understanding of theory and its limitations, (3) analysing the relevance of the major theories and the key drivers of contemporary issues that are reshaping politics and policy, and the ways in which this connects with real world problems. Further, this course introduces some dominant ideas and theories in political philosophy such as Kantian deontology, utilitarianism, and virtue ethics and examines how they are related to political theories that aim to explain as well as evaluate various political actions, decisions, and phenomena. By examining requisite ideas and theories, students are expected to cultivate a critical perspective on the best mode of government, what good government is, what is required for good leadership, and how best to arrive at the common good. A synergy between politics and political philosophy will be built, with emphases put on the questions of what is a good governance, a good political and just order.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Synthesize and evaluate political science and public philosophy theories	25	x	x	
2	Critically evaluate diverse source materials on political science and public philosophy	25	x	x	
3	Critically analyze political theory and political philosophy and apply to contemporary issues	25	x	x	
4	Apply knowledge of the course material to enrich research and theory building, particularly with respect to PhD dissertations and publications	15		x	x
5	Develop critical thinking and communication skills needed for dissertations and publications.	10		x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lecturing	1, 2, 3	
2	Extensive reading	1, 2, 3	

3	Student presentation	Student presentation	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	Participation in class discussion	Participation in class discussion	1, 2, 3, 4	
5	Essay writing	Essay writing	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
6	Canvass/Consultation	Canvass/Consultation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

	ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("-" for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	Presentations and participation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	-	Yes
2	Quizzes	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	40	(two quizzes, each for 20%)	No
3	Individual Essay	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	40	(about 5,000 words)	Yes

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Minimum Continuous Assessment Passing Requirement (%)

0

Minimum Examination Passing Requirement (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Presentations, and participation (20%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills and engagement required for presenting original and creative research ideas

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Basic demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Marginal

(D) Poor demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Failure

(F) Inadequate demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Assessment Task

Quizzes (20% x 2) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Demonstration of knowledge of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy to evaluate political problems or policy issues from a political science or philosophical perspective

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Basic demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Marginal

(D) Poor demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Failure

(F) Inadequate demonstration of knowledge of chosen knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Assessment Task

Individual essay (About 5,000 words) (40%) (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Ability to apply creative and critical thinking skills to research design and engage in theoretically-informed and empirically sound informed analysis

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Good

(B+, B, B-) Good demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Basic demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Marginal

(D) Poor demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Failure

(F) Inadequate demonstration of knowledge of chosen knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Assessment Task

Presentations, and participation (20%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills and engagement required for presenting original and creative research ideas

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Good

(B+, B) Good demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Basic demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Failure

(F) Inadequate demonstration of knowledge in the mainstream literature of political science and political philosophy and skills

Assessment Task

Quizzes (20% x 2) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Demonstration of knowledge of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy to evaluate political problems or policy issues from a political science or philosophical perspective

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Excellent demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Good

(B+, B) Good demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Basic demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Failure

(F) Inadequate demonstration of knowledge of chosen knowledge, understanding and interpretation of political science and political philosophy and ability to use ideas and theories in political science and political philosophy

Assessment Task

Individual essay (About 5,000 words) (40%) (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

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Ability to apply creative and critical thinking skills to research design and engage in theoretically-informed and empirically sound informed analysis

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(B+, B) Good demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Basic demonstration of knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Failure

(F) Inadequate demonstration of knowledge of chosen knowledge, understanding and interpretation of methods used in political science and political philosophy

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

The role of theory, the state and civil society, power, political institutions, legitimacy of power and moral order, institutionalism and path-dependency, political culture and behavior, neo-liberalism, globalization and local politics, governance and public management, public policy, sustainability and climate change, health, poverty and marginality, risk, demography, social conflict.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Nil

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Bell, Daniel. (2015). The China Model. Princeton University Press.
2	Gill, G. (2003). The Nature and Development of the State. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan
3	Peters, B.G. (2005). Institutional Theory in Political Science: 'The New Institutionalism' 2nd edition. London: Continuum
4	Dahl, R. A. 1989. Democracy and its Critics (New Haven: Yale University Press.
5	Fan, Ruiping. (2011). Reconstructionist Confucianism. Springer.
6	Frederickson, H.G. and K.B. Smith, (2003). Public Administration Theory Primer. Boulder, Co.: Westview Press.

7	Kim, Sungmoon. (2016). Public Reason Confucianism. Cambridge University Press
8	Marsh D. and G. Stoker eds. 2002. Theory and Methods in Political Science 2nd edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.
9	Pierson, P. (2004). Politics in Time: History and Institutions and Social Analysis Princeton: Princeton University Press.
10	Pierson, C. (2004). The Modern State 2nd edition London: Routledge.
11	Migdal, S. J. (2001). State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
12	Doogan,K.(2009) New Capitalism? The Transformation of Work Cambridge: Polity Press
13	Kennett, P. (Ed.) (2008) Governance, Globalization and Public Policy, Edward Elgar
14	LaFleur, V., Purvis, N. and Jones, A. (2009) Double Jeopardy: What Climate Change Means for the Poor, Washington DC: Brookings
15	Mishra, R. (1999) Globalization and the Welfare State Edward Elgar Publishing Limited Glos.
16	Mols,P.J. (2008) Environmental Reform in the Information Age; The Contours of Informational Governance. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
17	Nayyar,D. and Court,J. (2002) Governing Globalization: Issues and Institutions Helsinki: UN-Wider Downloadable from: http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/policy-briefs/en_GB/policy-briefs/
18	Ramesh, M (2004), Social Policy in East and Southeast Asia: Education, Health, Housing and Income Maintenance, London; New York: RoutledgeCurzon
19	Rawls, John. (1971). A Theory of Justice. Massachusetts: Harvard University Press
20	Raz, John. (1986). The Morality of Freedom. Oxford University Press
21	Ronit, Karsten, Global Public Policy: Business and the Countervailing Powers of Civil Society (Oxford: Routledge, 2007) Ch.1
22	Singer, Peter. (1993). A Companion to Ethics. London: Blackwell
23	Stalker,P.(2000) Workers Without Frontiers: The Impact of Globalization on International Migration, International Labour Organization
24	Stern, N. (2007) The Economics of Climate Change, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/stern_review_report.htm
25	Stiglitz, J (2002) Globalization and its Discontents London: Allen Lane
26	Walzer, Michael. (1983). Spheres of Justice. Basic Books.
27	Whitman,J. (2005) The Limits of Global Governance London: Routledge
28	Stubbs,R. and Underhill,G (Eds.) (2006 edition) Political Economy and the Changing Global Order Oxford: Oxford University Press
29	Weiss,L. (2003) States in the Global Economy: Bringing Domestic Institutions Back In. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
30	Wilkinson, R. (Ed) (2005) The Global Governance Reader London: Routledge
31	Online Resources: Brookings: http://www.brookings.edu/ ; Institute for Public Policy Research: http://www.ippr.org.uk/ ; OECD: http://www.oecd.org/home ; RAND Public Policy Research: http://www.rand.org/research ; UNFPA: http://www.unfpa.org/public ; UN-Wider: http://www.wider.unu.edu/publications/en_GB/index/ ; World Bank: http://www.worldbank.org/