

GE2217: POWER AND POLITICS

Effective Term

Semester B 2022/23

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Power and Politics

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

2217

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

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

GE Area (Primary)

Area 2 - Study of Societies, Social and Business Organisations

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course focuses on the key concept of power. Power is critical to an understanding of politics and has relevance for understanding many other aspects of life, in particular, the way that societies are organized and how economies grow. In politics, it is through the use of power that governments seek to attain their objectives. Power is also useful in analysing the context in which politics takes place: how competing political parties seek to acquire it, how political leaders use and abuse it, how it affects relations between states and how the executive, in using power, may be constrained by political opposition and institutions such as legislatures and civil society. Power is also closely related to other key concepts, such as authority and sovereignty, and to classifications of political systems which will be considered during the course. This course will enable students to use the concept of power analytically and to examine political, social and economic issues critically.

On completion of the course, students will have developed an appreciation of the utility of the concept and its relevance to many different political, social and economic phenomena.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)		
1	State the main ideas and concepts in the study of power and politics		x	x
2	Recognize different political systems in the world and to distinguish the fundamental values and concepts that underpin each of them	x	x	x
3	Show an awareness of issues related to power relationships in society and the state	x		x
4	Critically analyse political issues	x	x	x
5	Appreciate the importance of power and politics in many aspects of life	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.

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

	TLAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Structured lectures to introduce the main ideas and the key concept of power to students and to examine how these ideas and concepts are related to the understanding of political systems, values and political actions	1, 2, 3, 4	
2	Readings	Required and supplementary readings to help students to have in-depth understanding of the various aspects and applications of the concept of power, the nature of political systems, and international and globalized politics	1, 2, 3	
3	Video clips	Video clips from documentaries, TV series, films, etc. for graphic illustrations of politics or political ideas/systems in action	3, 4, 5	
4	Group discussions and presentations	Group discussions and presentations to require students to clarify the concept of power, to critically and systematically analyse issues, to articulate their own points of view and to defend them, and to learn to listen to arguments and to appreciate different perspectives	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	
5	Individual reflective note	Individual reflective note to require students to reflect on how power plays in politics	1, 3, 4, 5	
6	Individual essay	Individual essay to test students' ability to apply related concepts and theories to analyse a particular aspect of real life politics or institutions systematically and independently	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)	
1	Contributions to in-class groupDiscussions	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	15	
2	Group Project presentation on political issues and discussion	1, 2, 3, 4	35	PPT 25%Discussion performance 10%
3	Individual reflective note (500 words)		10	
4	Individual essay on Hong Kong politics, utilising concepts introduced in the course (at least 2,000 words excluding references)	1, 2, 5	40	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

In-class discussions

Criterion

Questions will be set for discussion and debate in each lesson. Students are required to complete the required readings before coming to the discussion and give comments/observations on the issues discussed. The written comments/observations on the issues will be collected on a group basis. Individual contributions to in-class discussions will also be recorded.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstration of outstanding ability in collating relevant materials to tackle the discussed issues; clear evidence of superior critical analysis and synthesis; excellent grasp of the subject matter; highly proactive in expressing ideas and contributing to constructive discussions.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstration of good ability in collating relevant materials to tackle the discussed issues; evidence of good critical analysis and synthesis; good grasp of the subject matter; proactive in expressing ideas and contributing to constructive discussions.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstration of adequate ability in collating relevant materials to tackle the discussed issues; evidence of some critical analysis and synthesis; adequate grasp of the subject matter; somewhat proactive in expressing ideas and contributing to constructive discussions.

Marginal (D)

Demonstration of limited ability in collating relevant materials to tackle the discussed issues; evidence of some critical analysis and synthesis; some grasp of the subject matter; passive in expressing ideas and contributing to constructive discussions.

Failure (F)

Poor collation of relevant materials to tackle the discussed issues; little evidence of critical analysis and synthesis; little grasp of the subject matter; absence in discussion.

Assessment Task

Group Project Presentation and discussion

Criterion

30-minute presentation on the selected topic followed by a discussion with the whole class. The group members should lead the discussion by providing questions and comments. Each member of the group must share more or less the same amount of workload to prepare for and deliver the presentation. Both collective and individual efforts will be assessed. Each presentation team is required to submit a presentation outline to Canvas at least one day (24 hours) before the presentation. A hardcopy of your presentation is also needed. Students should raise the attention of the audience, keep the eye contact and speak fluently. A simple reading of notes or slides is strongly discouraged. Regarding the contents, members of the groups should compile a bibliography of readings. It is advisable to present an original (general or detailed) approach to the topic, not just to summarise other authors' ideas and show that previous research on the topic. Each group member needs to submit a 2-page summary note of their learning from the group project one week after their presentation.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstration of outstanding ability in collating relevant materials independently and systematically to tackle the presentation topic; creative and stimulating application of materials to establish a very convincing case for the presentation; clear evidence of good team work; highly effective in conducting class discussion and defending the group' s position after presentation; clear evidence of superior critical analysis and synthesis; excellent grasp of the subject matter

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstration of good ability in collating relevant materials independently and systematically to tackle the presentation topic; competent application of materials to establish a good case for the presentation; evidence of good team work; effective in conducting class discussion and defending the group' s position after presentation; evidence of good critical analysis and synthesis; good grasp of the subject matter

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstration of adequate ability in collating relevant materials independently and systematically to tackle the presentation topic; adequate application of materials to establish a reasonable case for the presentation; evidence of team work; somewhat effective in conducting class discussion and defending the group' s position after presentation; evidence of some critical analysis and synthesis; adequate grasp of the subject matter

Marginal (D)

Demonstration of limited ability in collating relevant materials independently and systematically to tackle the presentation topic; limited application of materials to establish a case for the presentation; ineffective in conducting class discussion and defending the group' s position after presentation; evidence of some critical analysis and synthesis; some grasp of the subject matter

Failure (F)

Poor collation of relevant materials to tackle the presentation topic; inability to apply relevant materials to establish a case for the presentation; ineffective in conducting class discussion and defending the group' s position after presentation; little evidence of critical analysis and synthesis; little grasp of the subject matter

Assessment Task

Individual reflective note

Criterion

Write a reflective note (500 words) on how power plays in politics after attending any Legislative Council meetings that are open to public and observe how the politicians represent the interests of their constituents in political issues.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Creative and stimulating application of materials to establish a very convincing case; clear evidence of superior critical analysis and synthesis; excellent grasp of the subject matter

Good (B+, B, B-)

Competent application of materials to establish a good case; evidence of good critical analysis and synthesis; good grasp of the subject matter

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Adequate application of materials to establish a reasonable case; evidence of some critical analysis and synthesis; adequate grasp of the subject matter

Marginal (D)

Limited application of materials to establish a case; evidence of some critical analysis and synthesis; some grasp of the subject matter

Failure (F)

Inability to apply relevant materials to establish a case; little evidence of critical analysis and synthesis; little grasp of the subject matter

Assessment Task

Individual Essay

Criterion

Adopt a critical stance about the topic under examination. Stress the positive and negative aspects of the knowledge about the topic. This must be an original and individual exercise. Arguments expressed by other authors should be quoted and referred to appropriately. Use your own words to express your thoughts, use adequate examples and argue consistently about every opinion or idea you present. The whole text must be free of plagiarism and quotations should not entail more than 25% of the total writing. Furthermore, the whole writing should be guided by a general thread or "thesis". The minimum requirement of reading is 3 theoretical articles or book chapters. In addition, references to 3 or more empirical sources about the specific case are expected.

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstration of outstanding understanding of the concepts, process/institutions, issues, and controversies related to the question; clear evidence of critical and analytical thinking; good organization; excellent application of related concepts/theories to enhance understanding of actual practices/phenomena; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base in the subject

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstration of good understanding of the concepts, process/institutions, issues, and controversies related to the question; evidence of analytical thinking; good organization; good application of related concepts/theories to enhance understanding of actual practices/phenomena; good grasp of subject matter; evidence of good use of literature in the subject

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstration of adequate understanding of the concepts, process/institutions, issues, and controversies related to the question; evidence of some analytical thinking; reasonable organization; some application of related concepts/theories to enhance understanding of actual practices/phenomena; adequate grasp of subject matter; evidence of adequate use of literature in the subject

Marginal (D)

Marginal understanding of the concepts, process/institutions, issues, and controversies related to the question; limited analytical thinking; less than reasonable organization; only occasional application of related concepts/theories to enhance understanding of actual practices/phenomena; limited grasp of subject matter; occasional use of literature in the subject

Failure (F)

Poor or wrong understanding of the concepts, process/institutions, issues, and controversies related to the question; little evidence of basic analytical thinking; poor organization; very inadequate application or misapplication of related concepts/theories to explain actual practices/phenomena; poor grasp of subject matter; little evidence of familiarity with basic literature in the subject

Part III Other Information**Keyword Syllabus**

The idea of politics; political issues; power; power and democracy; power and revolution; political leadership; government in action; gender and politics; globalization and global governance; abuse of power; limiting power; political opposition; social movements.

Reading List**Compulsory Readings**

	Title
1	Alford, R.R. and Friedland, R., 1985, Powers of theory. Capitalism, the state, and democracy, New York: Cambridge University. C0194983 (on reserve)
2	Benford, Robert D. and Snow, David A., 2000, "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment", Annual Review of Sociology 26:611-639. http://www.annualreviews.org/doi/pdf/10.1146/annurev.soc.26.1.611
3	Dye, Thomas R. and Brigid C. Harrison (2005), Power and Society: An Introduction to the Social Sciences 10th edition, 66-95. New York: Thomson.
4	Dupré, Ben. 50 political ideas you really need to know.
5	Halliday, Fred (1999). The Rise and Fall of Revolutions. In Fred Halliday, Revolution and World Politics, 27-55. Basingstoke: Macmillan.
6	Heywood, Andrew (2002). Politics 2nd edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave.
7	Hindess, Barry, 2012, "Power, Government, Politics", in E. Amenta, K. Nash, A. Scott, eds, The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Political Sociology, Oxford: Blackwell, 40-48. JA76.B58 2004 (on reserve)
8	Jasper, James M., "Culture, Knowledge, Politics", in Thomas Janoski et al. (eds.) The handbook of Political Sociology. States, Civil Societies and Globalization, New York: Cambridge University. JA76.H383 2005 (on reserve)
9	Jessop, Bob, 2012, "Developments in Marxist Theory", in E. Amenta, K. Nash, A. Scott, eds, The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Political Sociology, Oxford: Blackwell, 3-14. JA76.B58 2004 (on reserve) [pre-print copy available at:
10	http://bobjessop.org/2014/03/27/marxist-approaches-to-power/]
11	Lemke, Thomas, 2007, "An indigestible meal? Foucault, governmentality and state theory", Distinktion: Scandinavian Journal of Social Theory 5, 43-66. [available on-line at: http://www.thomaslemkeweb.de/publikationen/Indigestible%20Meal%20-%20Proofs.pdf]
12	Marsh, D. and Stoker, G., 2002, Theory and methods in political science, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan JA71 .T54 2002 (on reserve)
13	Scott, Alan, Kate Nash, Anna Marie Smith (eds.), 2009. New critical writings in political sociology, Farnham: Ashgate. [3 vol.] JA76 .N43 2009 (on reserve)

14	Waylen, Georgina, Celis, Karen, Kantola, Johanna, and Weldon, S. Laurel, eds., 2013, The Oxford Handbook of Gender and Politics.
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Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil

Annex (for GE courses only)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

PILO 1: Demonstrate the capacity for self-directed learning

1, 2, 3

PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology

1, 2, 3

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

3, 4

PILO 4: Interpret information and numerical data

2, 3

PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text

1, 2, 3, 4

PILO 6: Demonstrate effective oral communication skills

1, 2, 3, 4

PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team

2, 3, 4

PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions

4, 5

PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation

4, 5

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task

Group Project Presentation (PPT), Individual essay on real-life politics, utilising concepts introduced in the course