

PIA2105: INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

Effective Term

Semester A 2025/26

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Introduction to Political Science

Subject Code

PIA - Public and International Affairs

Course Number

2105

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

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

SA2105 Introduction to Political Science

SA2931/SA2101 Introduction to Political Science (Note: Non-credit unit system)

POL2105 Introduction to Political Science

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to examine the concepts of politics and the political interactions of different players in the arena of politics. This course constitutes a basic foundation for students to discover how governments operate and govern. Students will be taught the skills of creating critical political arguments and analysis.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Understand operations of governments: the powers, functions and relationships of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.		x	x	
2	Evaluate political issues and events: explain critically major political problems.		x	x	
3	Detecting the relationships among political actors in the process of conflict resolution: different roles and contributions in the political process.		x	x	
4	Evaluate the process of authoritative allocation of values: account for how political decisions are made.		x	x	
5	Generate new perspectives of political events: project the likely development of political events.				x
6	Recommend innovative solutions to political issues and debates: suggest prescriptions to resolve political conflicts.				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	Lecture	to understand key concepts in political science, their implications and challenges in the empirical world.	1, 3, 5	

2	In-class discussion	to explain and discuss political events and outcomes that jointly produced by state and non-state actors	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	
3	Mid-term quiz	to critically analyse political issues, in both national and international levels, by applying concepts and knowledge in the course (length: 1 hour)	1, 2, 3, 4	
4	Final exam	to critically analyse political issues, in both national and international levels, by applying concepts and knowledge in the course (length: 2 hours)	1, 2, 3, 4	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks ("- for nil entry)	Allow Use of GenAI?
1	In-class discussion	2, 3, 4, 5, 6	25	-	Yes
2	Mid-term quiz	1, 2, 3, 4	25	-	No

Continuous Assessment (%)

50

Examination (%)

50

Examination Duration (Hours)

2

Additional Information for ATs

Note: If a course has both coursework and examination components, students are required to pass BOTH the coursework assessment AND the examination before they can be awarded an overall passing grade of the course.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. In-class discussion
2. Mid-term quiz
3. Final exam

Criterion

Quality of students' responses

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Comprehensive and critical understanding and analysis of government's operations, political issues and events, relationships among political actors, the process of authoritative allocation of values with excellent research, writing and communication skills.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Fairly good understanding and analysis of government' s operations, political issues and events, relationships among political actors, the process of authoritative allocation of values with good research, writing and communication skills.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Rudimentary understanding and analysis of government' s operations, political issues and events, relationships among political actors, the process of authoritative allocation of values with basic research, writing and communication skills.

Marginal (D)

Poor understanding and analysis of government' s operations, political issues and events, relationships among political actors, the process of authoritative allocation of values with weak research, writing and communication skills.

Failure (F)

Almost no understanding and analysis of government' s operations, political issues and events, relationships among political actors, the process of authoritative allocation of values with inadequate research, writing and communication skills.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Politics. Authority. Legitimacy. Power. Approaches to Political Science. Rational Choice Theory. Historical Institutionalism. State. Nation. Ideology. Regime Types. Democracies. Autocracies. Hybrid Regime. Political Institutions. Executive. Legislature. Judiciary. Electoral Systems. Presidential System. Parliamentary System. Political Parties. Federalism. Constitutions. Civil Society. Interest Groups.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Birch, Anthony Harold. The Concepts and Theories of Modern Democracy. 3rd ed. London: Routledge, 2007.
2	Dahl, Robert A. On Democracy. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998.
3	Dalton, Russell J., and Martin P. Wattenberg. Parties Without Partisans: Political Change in Advanced Industrial Democracies. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.
4	Freedon, Michael. Ideology: a very short introduction. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.
5	Heywood, Andrew. 2013. Politics. 4th ed. London: Palgrave, 2013.
6	Lijphart, Arend. Parliamentary Versus Presidential Government. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992.
7	Norris, Pippa. Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. Revised ed. London: Verso, 2016.
2	Capoccia, Giovanni, and R. Daniel Kelemen. 'The Study of Critical Junctures: Theory, Narrative, and Counterfactuals in Historical Institutionalism' . World Politics 59, no. 3 (2007): 341–69.
3	Dahl, Robert A. Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1971.
4	Hague, Rod., and Martin. Harrop. Comparative Government and Politics: an introduction. 9th ed. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
5	Heywood, Andrew. Political Ideologies: an introduction. 6th ed. London: Palgrave, 2017.

6	Kesselman, Mark, Joel Krieger, and William A. Joseph. Introduction to Comparative Politics: Political Challenges and Changing Agendas. 8th ed. Australia: Cengage, 2019.
7	Pierson, Paul. 'Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics' . American Political Science Review 94, no. 2 (2000): 251–67.
8	Roskin, Michael G., Robert L. Cord, James A. Medeiros, and Walter S. Jones. Political science: an introduction. 12th ed. Boston: Longman, 2012.
9	Thelen, Kathleen. 'Historical Institutionalism in Comparative Politics' . Annual Review of Political Science 2, no. 1 (1999): 369–404.