



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PROGRAMME

**POLS 112: Introduction to Political Ideas
20 POINTS**

TRIMESTER 2 2016

Key dates

Trimester dates: 11 July to 13 November 2016

Teaching dates: 11 July to 16 October 2016

Mid-trimester break: 22 August to 4 September 2016

Study period: 17–20 October 2016

Examination/Assessment Period: 21 October to 12 November 2016

Note: students who enrol in courses with examinations must be able to attend an examination at the University at any time during the scheduled examination period.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds.

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats).

Class times and locations

Lectures: Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 14:10-15:00

Venue: Maclaurin 103

Tutorials

Weekly from the second week of the term. Sign up via myAllocator.

Please see the Academic Timetable 2016 www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables.

Names and contact details

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Office hours: By appointment (available most reasonable times when not teaching)

Communication of additional information

This course uses Blackboard and presumes that all enrolled students have valid myvuw.ac.nz addresses. Please check that this account is active and you have organised email forwarding. Additional information and any changes to the timetable or lecture and tutorial programme will be advised by email, announced in lectures, and posted on the course Blackboard site.

Prescription

This course offers an overview of major political ideologies, concepts and debates. It is intended to provide students with a solid base in the political ideas that have a prominent place in a variety of POLS and INTP courses. Topics covered range from justice and equality to the morality of war.

Course content

Weeks 1 and 2: The State and Power

Weeks 3 and 4: Democracy and Freedom

Weeks 5 and 6: Justice and Equality

Weeks 7 and 8: War and Morality

Weeks 9 and 10: Nationalism, Patriotism and Cosmopolitanism

Weeks 11 and 12: Multiculturalism and Feminism

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. define major political concepts such as authority, power, freedom, etc.;
2. understand the contours of ideologies that are prevalent in today's political landscape such as liberalism, egalitarianism, multiculturalism and nationalism;
3. discuss important political issues from different ideological perspectives;
4. critically assess different ideological perspectives; and
5. develop cohesive and informed arguments in response to political questions.

Teaching format

This course is taught by means of three weekly lectures of one hour each, one weekly tutorial of one hour, and an online component (primarily on the course website on Blackboard).

Students are expected to come to all lectures having done the required readings. The lectures supplement and clarify the ideas and readings discussed in the course, providing context and explaining difficult points. The lectures may include interactive exercises, and reasonable participation is expected.

Tutorials are an essential component of the learning experience in this course. They are an occasion for students to raise questions and debate issues. To this end, the course fosters a learning environment of mutual respect. The ideas presented in this course range across the entire political spectrum and touch upon virtually every aspect of our political, social, and personal lives. Inevitably, students will be challenged or unsettled by some of the material. Such discomfort is a normal phase of the learning process. Students are expected to reflect critically upon all the ideas addressed in the lectures, tutorials, and readings. Criticism and argument should always be directed at the ideas, not at the person articulating them. Needless to say, students are encouraged to assess, develop, and defend their own ideas rigorously.

The online component of the course consists of fortnightly participation in a course discussion board. This ensures that the student will be generally engaged with the material covered in class and able to relate it to current events.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. submit a bona fide attempt at the essay on or by the specified dates (subject to such provisions as are stated for late submission of work). This is mandatory, in order to demonstrate your attainment of Course Learning Objectives 2-5
2. sit the final examination. This is mandatory, in order to demonstrate your attainment of Course Learning Objectives 1-4
3. attend a minimum of 6 tutorials throughout the trimester so that they will develop their ability to discuss important political issues from different perspectives, in keeping with CLO 3, and keep continually engaged with the course material.

Any student who is concerned that they have been (or might be) unable to meet any of the MCRs because of exceptional personal circumstances, should contact the course coordinator as soon as possible.

Workload

The suggested workload outlined below assumes an average native English-speaking student. Some students will take longer while others will take less time (in terms of absolute number of hours) when completing different activities.

Per week (average)

Lecture attendance: 3 hours

Tutorial attendance: 1 hour

Completing required reading: 4 hours

Completing assignments/studying for the examination: 8.6 hours (note: amount of time spent on assignments/studying will vary from week to week)

Total: 16.6 hours

Per activity (total)

Lecture attendance: 36 hours

Tutorial attendance: 11 hours

Completing required reading: 48 hours

Completing the search strategies report: 2 hours

Completing the discussion board posts: 3 hours

Completing the KCQs: 30 hours (6 hours each)

Completing the essay: 30 hours

Study for the examination: 37 hours

Sitting the examination: 3 hours

Total: 200 hours

Assessment

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	A search strategies report (one page)	2	4-5	Week 3 (July 27-July 31)
2	Fortnightly discussion board posts	8	2-5	Ongoing- see No. 2 below
3	5 Key Concept/Questions (KCQ) papers	25		Ongoing – see No. 3 below – but 4 must be completed by September 23 rd
4	One 1500 word essay	25	2-5	14 October by 3 p.m.
5	Final three hour examination	40	1-4	21 October to 12 November

1. **Search Strategies Report.** Each student must do the *Search Strategies* self-paced tutorial which will be distributed via Blackboard. At their tutorials in week 3 of the course (the week beginning 27 July) students must hand in a Search Strategies Report. This is a one page summary of the electronic search tools and search paths used to obtain three references (one internet based; one from the library's online resources; and one from the library catalogue) relevant to their first essay. The *Search Strategies* self-paced tutorial will provide examples of and information about how to conduct such searches. The reports ought to detail for each of the three results what phrases were searched for, how search results were narrowed or filtered, and what database was selected. Each of the three brief search histories must end in the full citation of the final reference. Reports must be handed in at your tutorial in Week 3.
2. **Fortnightly discussion board posts.** Like any discussion board, the course discussion board is fairly informal. Not every posting needs to raise a question, though you may wish to raise questions about class content; and your contributions can be in comments to other people's postings. You can, for example:
 - Raise questions about issues that are unclear from the class;
 - Comment on, and link to, articles relevant to the discussions in the class;
 - Raise issues that you think ought to be discussed in class;
 - Discuss possible answers to various questions raised by the instructors;
 - Discuss possible answers to various questions raised by other students;
 - Summarize parts of the readings, and raise questions about them.

You are expected to post to the discussion board at least once every fortnight (it is possible to post more times, though it will not necessarily get you a higher score). The deadline for all posts is 5 pm on the last Friday of each two-week period of the course, though you are encouraged to post before the deadline so you can actually participate in discussions; no late posts will be counted. Your contributions will be assessed on a fortnightly basis, according to the following scheme:

- 0 points. No contribution to the discussion board, or very poor quality contribution.
- 0.5points. Minimal contribution (e.g., minimal comment on another person's post in the discussion board, discussion board posts that do not show that you have done the reading or that are not sufficiently on topic)
- 1 point. Regular contributions (e.g., contributing study questions, answers to study questions, and other substantial contributions to the discussion board, raising or answering interesting questions in the discussion board, posts showing that you have done the reading for the week, etc.). Most people should receive 1 point for any contribution (or set of contributions) that is on topic and civil.
- 2 points. Exceptional contributions (e.g., excellent study questions or answers, outstanding participation in the discussion board, posts making an unusually perceptive point about one of the readings for the week, etc.). "Exceptional" does not mean "more." Posting more content in the hopes of getting 2 points will not necessarily result in a higher score; 2 points is for quality, not for quantity of contributions. The quality of a post is judged on the basis of the coherence of its argument, the extensiveness of its research, and other such indicators.

You need to accumulate 8 points over the course of the trimester to obtain your full 8% mark for this assessment component. On average, therefore, you need to be accumulating a bit more than 1 point per fortnight (there are six opportunities for participation during the term), though you may miss a week occasionally. You will be given credit for all contributions you make; so, for example, if you end the term with 6 points, this will translate into 6% of your final grade.

The instructors will occasionally contribute to the discussion board, but the main responsibility is on the students to make it a useful learning resource. The instructors

will also use the issues raised in the discussion board for tutorial discussions or address them in lecture.

5 KCQs. KCQ stands for “Key Concepts and Questions”, and consists of a short paper (minimum 300 words in length) that students have to submit at 5 tutorials throughout the trimester. All 5 KCQs must be submitted for different two-week course modules, at the latest on the week after each module ends. A total of 5 KCQs must be turned in, and 4 must be completed by 23 September to enable the aegrotat process for those who avail themselves of it. You can, however, submit 6, since the course has six different two week modules (see above, under “Course Content”). Your overall mark for this assignment will be based on your best 5 KCQs.

You can turn in a KCQ at any tutorial during the two week period for each module. For example, if you are submitting a KCQ for the “Democracy and Freedom” module (weeks 3 and 4), you can turn that in at any tutorial during weeks 3 and 4. (KCQs for the “Power and the State” module can only be turned in the second week of term, since there are no tutorials in the first week). All KCQs must be turned in to your tutor in hardcopy, and only when you come to tutorial, NO EXCEPTIONS. In the weeks that you do not elect to turn in a KCQ, remember that you will still be asked to discuss discussion questions relevant to the week’s course material.

The KCQ for a given two week module must reflect on at least two required readings. For example, if you are submitting a KCQ for the “Democracy and Freedom” module (weeks 3 and 4) your KCQ must reflect on at least two required readings for weeks 3 and 4 (any two of them – both can be from a single week). The format for each KCQ is:

1. For at least two required readings or other required course material covered in two week module, identify:
 - something that is *interesting* to you personally from each and explain why;
 - an *important* point from each, and explain why you think that point was important to each author;
 - the most *essential* point from each, and explain why you think that point was the most essential idea for each author;
 - at least *one question* that came up for you while you were engaging these particular course materials.
2. Define the key terms or concepts highlighted in the course outline for that module (e.g., for weeks 3 and 4 you might want to define “freedom” and “democracy”). If you use any sources for your definition, please provide references for them.
3. Discuss the key terms or concepts in two to three sentences, explaining whether or not they help you understand some aspect of politics covered in each required text, or whether the readings help you understand these concepts. If they do, explain how. If they do not, suggest a more relevant key term or concept from the text that you think might be more useful for students of political ideas to learn.

The minimum word requirement for each KCQ is 300 words or one typed page long. You may use bullet points, and do not have to write in an essay format in the KCQ. As a rule of thumb, you may want to allocate 75 - 100 words per reading for a total of 150 - 200 words for question 1; 25 words for question 2; and a further 50 - 75 words for question 3. Remember, 300 words is just the minimum requirement. You will not be penalised for going up to 500 words in a single KCQ. Students whose KCQs also include references to recommended readings or AV material, will be considered to be working at an exceptional level.

Please see Blackboard for more specific details on the marking criteria for these assessments. This assessment builds students’ critical thinking and communication skills, and furthers learning objectives of this course, especially 1-4. It also is intended to encourage thorough reading, to help with essay and exam prep, and to encourage tutorial

attendance.

3. **1,500 word essay.** The essay gauges your ability to craft a persuasive argument about a political issue and take into account different ideological perspectives. You will be given a range of questions from both halves of the course from which you can choose. The essay is due on Friday October 14 by 3 p.m. and should be submitted via Blackboard. Students are advised to consult the Programme's *Essay Writing Guide* for advice on composing and referencing their essay. A rubric which outlines the characteristics of essays of varying qualities will be posted to Blackboard.
4. **Final examination.** The final examination will be closed book, comprehensive and will test your mastery of the key ideas and concepts from the course. The examination will consist of a mixture of short answer and essay questions; more details will be available closer to the examination time.

Submission and return of work

Assessments should be submitted via the following methods:

- A hard copy of your search strategies report should be turned in at your tutorial session in week three.
- Discussion board posts should be submitted via Blackboard.
- A hard copy of each KCQ (5 required) should be turned in at your tutorial sessions.
- The essay must be submitted electronically **ONLY** via Blackboard by 3 p.m. on the due date: Friday 14 October.

Hard copies of KCQs will be returned in the tutorial after submission. The essay will be returned electronically with comments via Blackboard.

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

Late submission of **assignments** will **not be accepted** unless the student makes an appointment as soon as practically possible with the course coordinator to explain the lateness (preferably before the assignment is due to be submitted). The circumstances under which an extension will be considered are outlined in section 3.2.1 of the Assessment Handbook.

(See: www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf).

Penalties

Students will be penalised for late submission of assignments – **a deduction of 5% for the first day late, and 2% per day thereafter, up to a maximum of 8 days**. Work that is more than 10 weekdays late can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but may not be marked. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds (for example, illness [presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary] or similar other contingencies). In all such cases, prior information will be necessary. Extensions on deadlines for written work will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

Set texts

Most required readings are contained in the POLS 112 course reader (student notes), and available via the TALIS reading list on Blackboard. Other required readings can be found in the following set text:

- Heywood, Andrew. 2012. *Political Ideologies: An Introduction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

Both are available for purchase at Vicbooks. Please see their website www.vicbooks.co.nz.

Recommended reading

Recommended reading for this course will be listed in a document posted to Blackboard.

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course.

Student feedback

Suggestions for the 2015 iteration of this course included further clarification of discussion board post marking, and facilitating examination study.

In response to this, we have refined the discussion board post marking system and introduced KCQs as a way to enable continuous examination preparation.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz