

# PO2E2-15 Topics in Political Theory

**24/25**

**Department**

Politics & International Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Katy Wells

**Credit value**

15

**Module duration**

10 weeks

**Assessment**

20% coursework, 80% exam

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

Politics considers how the political world operates, and how it ought to operate. In this module, we consider the “oughts” of politics. Building on Foundations of Political Theory, the module examines key thinkers and topics in contemporary normative political theory.

The module is divided into two parts:

(A) Key thinkers in contemporary normative political theory. This includes the study of Rawls, and of other key political theorists, such as Nozick and Okin.

(B) Key topics in contemporary normative political theory. This includes issues such as immigration, education, representation, microaggressions, and climate change.

### Module aims

To foster a detailed critical understanding of a diverse range of arguments central to contemporary analytical political theory.

To foster the ability to analyse and assess opposing arguments in political theory.

To foster appreciation of the relevance of arguments in political theory to contemporary political and social issues and the ability to apply arguments in political philosophy to a range of such issues.

## Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

### INDICATIVE SYLLABUS

Week One: Introduction

Week Two: John Rawls's Justice as Fairness

Week Three: Robert Nozick's Entitlement Theory

Week Four: Gender and Justice

Week Five: Education and Upbringing

Week Six: Reading Week

Week Seven: Immigration

Week Eight: Injustice, Violence and the Law

Week Nine: Microaggressions

Week Ten: Climate Change

## Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Comprehend and critically analyse complex arguments from a diverse literature in contemporary political theory.
- Provide an account of your considered judgements about the issues discussed, taking account of a variety opposing arguments and perspectives.
- Construct your own sustained argument about major political values, and defend it against sceptics, using arguments from other disciplines where appropriate.

## Indicative reading list

Please see Talis Aspire list.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

## Subject specific skills

The module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following subject-specific skills:

The ability to comprehend and critically analyse complex arguments from a diverse literature in contemporary political theory.

The ability to provide an account of their considered judgements about the issues discussed, taking account of a variety opposing arguments and perspectives.

The ability to construct their own sustained argument about major political values, and defend it against sceptics, using arguments from other disciplines where appropriate.

## Transferable skills

The module provides students with opportunities to acquire or develop the following key transferable skills:

The ability to apply the methods and techniques that they have learned to review, consolidate, extend and apply their knowledge and understanding, and to initiate and carry out projects.

The transferable/key/generic skills necessary for employment related to Politics and International Studies, e.g. lateral thinking and problem solving; detailed critical analysis and interpretation of a variety of primary and secondary sources; the ability to digest, retain and apply complex information and ideas; skills in research, independent study, and group discussion; and the ability to consider unfamiliar ideas and ways of thinking.

The skills necessary for the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility: e.g. the ability to assess their own capacity for and progress in learning; the ability to organize work and manage their time successfully; the ability to meet deadlines; and the ability to reflect critically on the extent and limitations of how and what they have learned, discovered and understood.

Skills in the communication of information, ideas, problems and solutions.

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Seminars	9 sessions of 1 hour (6%)
Private study	132 hours (88%)
Total	150 hours

### Private study description

Students will prepare for seminars by reading the core reading and reflecting on the debate questions for the week's topic. They will complete the module assessment.

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You must pass all assessment components to pass the module.

## Assessment group D

	Weighting	Study time
1000 word essay	20%	
1000 word essay constructing an argument for a particular viewpoint.		
Exam	80%	
Students should answer two questions		
~Platforms - WAS		

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- Online examination: No Answerbook required

## Feedback on assessment

Written feedback will be provided for this assessment.

[Past exam papers for PO2E2](#)

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## Availability

### Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
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