

# PO107-30 Introduction to Politics

**26/27**

**Department**

Politics & International Studies

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 1

**Module leader**

Arzu Kibris

**Credit value**

30

**Module duration**

21 weeks

**Assessment**

40% coursework, 60% exam

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

What is 'politics'? Are human beings inherently 'political'? What are the boundaries of 'the political'? How should we study politics? These are among the questions that this core first year module gets you to engage in as it lays the foundations for study in all undergraduate degrees in the Department of Politics and International Studies (PAIS). The module offers a critically reflective space for thinking about how we can study politics and what 'politics' means. It introduces some of the core concepts in the study of Politics and International Studies and considers some of the major drivers of political change as well as political inertia. The aim is to provide you with the conceptual tools needed for more advanced study in the rest of your degree. The module mixes theory and political practice and encourages you to link your own experiences of, and interests in, politics to the ways in which the subject is studied. The assigned readings come mostly from political science, political theory, and the study of political systems but also include perspectives from overlapping disciplines such as sociology, economics, geography and history.

### Module aims

The principal aims of Introduction to Politics are to:

- introduce students to the study of politics through discussion of the main issues and ideological perspectives;

- introduce students to the core concepts used by political scientists and political theorists;
- provide an introductory discussion of political and policy-making processes and of the political ideologies that inform them;
- to consider the nature of, and prospects for, political transformation and the significance of these for the study of politics;
- encourage students to link their own experiences of politics to the ways in which the subject is studied; and
- to provide a venue for both discussion and debate and the development of presentation and communication skills.

## 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.

Lectures will cover topics on 'What is Politics?'; 'Methods and Theoretical Approaches'; 'Actors, Institutions & Ideas'; 'Power and Authority'; 'The State'; 'Democracy & Legitimacy'; 'Authoritarianism'; 'Representation and Participation'; 'Political Parties & Pressure Groups'; 'Ideology'; 'End of Ideology, Post-Truth, Populism, Media, and the Crisis of Politics'; 'Political Change and Revolution'; 'Domestic and International Security'; 'Identity Politics'; 'Environment, Climate Change, Sustainable Development'; 'Political Economy, Development and Social Welfare'; and 'Depoliticisation'.

## Learning outcomes

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

- Be able to identify and discuss critically several of the main theoretical perspectives and debates in political science
- Have the knowledge foundation for more detailed and in-depth study of political theory, political processes, political institutions and political change in second and final year modules
- Be able to write appropriately constructed essays in a critical and analytical fashion
- Have developed enhanced study, independent learning, and communications skills

## Indicative reading list

[Reading lists can be found in Talis](#)

[Specific reading list for the module](#)

## Interdisciplinary

Although students are introduced to key ideologies in politics, this is supplemented with concepts from sociology, economics, geography and history.

## International

This module covers themes and issues relevant to understanding the politics of many different countries in the international system.

## Subject specific skills

1. Being able to identify, and analyse, the main issues and theoretical perspectives;
2. Understanding of the core concepts used by political scientists and political theorists;
3. Identify and evaluate political and policy-making processes, and the political ideologies that inform them;
4. Be able to consider the nature of and prospects for political transformation and the significance of these for the study of politics;

## Transferable skills

1. Developing effective communication, both in written and spoken form, through the use of formative and assessed written work, examinations, seminar presentations and general seminar work;
2. The use of problem-solving techniques that are included in seminar work, including group work, and research for formative and assessed work;
3. The discerning use of the internet as a research tool in preparation for seminars and formative exercises;
4. Development of the techniques of argument, writing and critical thinking;
5. Working with others as part of group work exercises.

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	20 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Seminars	20 sessions of 1 hour (7%)
Private study	236 hours (79%)
Assessment	24 hours (8%)
Total	300 hours

### Private study description

TBC

### 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.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### Assessment group D2

	Weighting	Study time	Eligible for self-certification
<b>Assessment component</b>			
Assessed Essay 2000-word essay	40%	10 hours	No

Reassessment component is the same

<b>Assessment component</b>			
2 hour examination ~Platforms - WAS	60%	14 hours	No

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- Online examination: No Answerbook required

Reassessment component is the same

### Feedback on assessment

Exams and essays are marked according to criteria set out in the Undergraduate Handbook and students received written feedback from their tutors. Students are also encouraged to discuss essay and exam feedback with tutors during Advice & Feedback hours.

[Past exam papers for PO107](#)

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## Availability

## Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 1 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UHIA-VM11 Undergraduate History and Politics
- Year 1 of UPHA-V5L2 Undergraduate Philosophy and Politics
- Year 1 of UPHA-V7ML Undergraduate Philosophy, Politics and Economics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M100 Undergraduate Politics
- Year 1 of UPOA-M16A Undergraduate Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M168 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese
- Year 1 of UPOA-M169 Undergraduate Politics and International Studies with Chinese (3 year)
- Year 1 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology
- Year 1 of UPOA-M163 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and French
- UPOA-M164 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and German
  - Year 1 of M100 Politics
  - Year 1 of M164 Politics, International Studies and German
- Year 1 of UIPA-L2L8 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Global Sustainable Development
- Year 1 of UPOA-M166 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Hispanic Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M165 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Italian
- Year 1 of UPOA-M162 Undergraduate Politics, International Studies and Quantitative Methods
- Year 1 of UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law

This module is Optional for:

- UECA-3 Undergraduate Economics 3 Year Variants
  - Year 1 of L100 Economics
  - Year 1 of L116 Economics and Industrial Organization
- Year 1 of UECA-LM1D Undergraduate Economics, Politics and International Studies
- Year 1 of UPOA-M102 Undergraduate Global Politics (with Integrated Year Abroad at Brussels School of Governance, VUB)

This module is Option list B for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
  - Year 1 of L305 Sociology with Specialism in Cultural Studies
  - Year 1 of L303 Sociology with Specialism in Gender Studies
  - Year 1 of L304 Sociology with Specialism in Research Methods
  - Year 1 of L302 Sociology with Specialism in Social Policy