POL 101  Introduction to Political Science

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Office hours: as posted on the door of my office, but feel free to make appointments for other times if necessary.

Course Code: POL 101  
Recommended Study Year: First Year  
No. of Credits/Term: 3  
Mode of Tuition: Lecture-Tutorial  
Class Contact Hours/Week: 3  
Category in Major Programme: Required Course  
Discipline: Political Science  
Prerequisite: None

Aims:

This course is a general survey of the field of political science. Students are not required to have any background in the discipline and, in fact, the course is designed to introduce some basic concepts and approaches in political science. POL 101 is important in the sense that it provides the foundation for future studies in the field.

The course aims to introduce students to the basic concepts in the study of politics. It intends to promote students’ appreciation of the role of politics in daily life and why it is important to get involved in exercising their responsibilities and duties as a global citizen.

Learning Outcomes:

On completing this course, students should be able to critically analyze political processes and evaluate events in local, national and international politics. They are also expected to be able to compare and contrast various political ideologies and forms of government and governance.

Teaching Method:

This course consists of lectures and tutorials. One or several specific topic(s) will be discussed in each lecture. Students should follow the order of the topics as listed in the course outline and prepare the readings. You are advised to have the relevant readings
done before attending the lectures. Keeping up with the readings, especially from the main course textbook, is essential for achieving the learning objectives of this course. Tutorials will be used to reinforce the learning from the lectures and your readings.

You will also find it helpful to regularly read a quality newspaper or watch television news broadcasts, as we hope to connect real-world events to the themes and ideas raised in the textbook and the lectures.

**Measurement of Learning Outcomes:**

Student performance during discussions, presentations and tutorials; performance on the mid-term and final examinations.

**Assessment:**

You are required to make presentations (or other forms of contributions) as well as to participate actively in the group discussions in the tutorials. Details will be provided later. The performance in the tutorials will determine part of a student's final grade in the course (30%): attendance (10%) + presentation and class performance (20%).

There is a mid-term examination as part of the continuous assessment (20%). The mid-term will be held on October 23 (Tuesday) in class. The last part of the grade is a final examination (50%), which will test your understanding of the whole course’s material.

**Course Content:**

1. Introduction: what is politics and what can we do through learning politics? (Roskin, ch. 1; Shively, ch. 1)

2. Political concepts: power, authority, legitimacy, sovereignty, political system, regime, law and constitution (Roskin, ch. 1, ch. 17, pp. 319-23, ch. 4, pp. 56-63; Lawson, ch. 2)

3. Nation-state and government: origins, purposes, functions and forms (Roskin, chs. 3, 13; Shively, chs. 3, 4, 5; Zeigler, chs 1, 2; Lipson, chs 2, 3)

4. Major political ideologies: conservatism, liberalism, socialism and fascism (Roskin, ch. 6; Lawson, ch. 3; Levine, chs. 4, 5)

5. Political socialization and political culture (Roskin, ch. 7; Lawson, ch. 5; Ranney, ch. 3)

6. Machinery and process of government: (Roskin, ch. 5; Ranney, ch. 5; Lipson, ch. 9)

   a. Democratic government - presidential and parliamentary government; separation of powers and check and balance in practice (Roskin, ch. 14,
pp. 256-270, ch. 15; Lawson, ch. 9, 10; Zeigler, ch. 4; Lipson, ch. 10; Ranney, chs. 11, 12; Levine, ch. 11)

b. Authoritarian government - traditional monarchy, personal dictatorship, military regime and others (Zeigler, ch. 7; Lipson, ch. 8)

7. Major political actors and actions: political parties and party systems, interest groups, voting and other forms of political participation, electoral systems (Roskin, chs. 10, 11, 12, 13; Lawson, chs. 7, 8; Zeigler, chs. 5, 6; Ranney, chs. 8, 10; Levine, chs. 8, 9)

8. International Relations and Globalization -- the actors, environment, and activities (I.R.- Roskin, chs. 20, 21; Kegley and Wittkopf, ch. 2; Holsti, chs. 1, 2; Goldstein, chs. 8, 9; Globalization - Clark, 1999, chs. 1, 2; Spero and Hart, 2003, chs. 1, 11; Steger, 2002, chs. 1, 3)

Required/Essential Readings: (* put on reserve in the library)


Recommended/Supplementary Readings:


TO NOTE:

Please try to remember to turn off pagers and mobile phones before entering the classroom/lecture room, as a courtesy to the lecturer and your fellow students.