

SOSC 1300: THE WORLD OF POLITICS

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 14:00 – 16:50, Lecture Theater J

Instructor	Teaching Assistants
Prof. James K. WONG (jameskalei@ust.hk) Room 3370 (lifts 13-15) Office hours: By e-mail appointment	Mr. Stephen CHOY (choyho@ust.hk) Miss Heliana LEE (helianalee@ust.hk)

Course Description

This course introduces students to two main fields of political studies – political theory and comparative politics. Political theory seeks to evaluate and justify politics through the study of concepts and ideologies. Comparative politics seeks to understand and explain the similarities and differences in politics through the study of actors, institutions, and their dynamics. Students will benefit with the knowledge, skills, and attitude for analyzing various political phenomena in the world of politics.

Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs)

By the end of this course, students will be better equipped to the following:

1. **Knowledge:** Describe the key concepts and theories in political theory and comparative politics.
2. **Skills:** Apply concepts and theories in discussing issues in political theory and comparative politics.
3. **Attitude:** Exercise independent and critical judgments in the study of politics.

Course Schedule

Dates	Class(es)	Theme	Topics
Jun 21	1	(N/A)	Orientation
Jun 23, Jun 28, Jun 30, Jul 5, Jul 7	2-6	I – Political Theory	The State; Political Power; Democracy; Freedom and Justice; Political Ideologies
Jul 12	7	(N/A)	Mid-term Revision
Jul 14, Jul 19, Jul 26, Jul 28, Aug 2	8-12	II – Comparative Politics	Law and Constitutions; Voting, Elections, and Political Parties; Government Systems; Civil Society Actors; Political Regimes
Aug 4	13	(N/A)	Final Revision

Note: Class schedule and topics may be adjusted to facilitate students' learning. No class on Jul 21 (Thursday).

Assessment and Grading

Deliverable / Weighting	Requirements
<p>Case Analysis (group-based) 20%</p> <p><i>This deliverable aims to help students consolidate the key concepts and/or theories learnt through analyzing real-world cases, which aligns with ILOs #1, #2 and #3.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will analyze a prescribed case based on the concepts and/or theories learnt in Theme I or Theme II. • Students will prepare a video presentation in 15-20 minutes to illustrate the analysis. • The video presentation should be submitted for peer review by 23:59, July 29 (Fri). • All video presentations will be assessed based on content, organization, and style.

<p>Peer Reviews (group-based)</p> <p><i>This deliverable aims to help students develop critical thinking skills by reviewing their peers' video presentations, which aligns with ILOs #2 and #3.</i></p>	<p>10% (5% each)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will critically review the video presentations of TWO peer groups as assigned. • For EACH group, they will complete a review form with written comments and suggestions. • The review forms should be submitted by 23:59, Aug 3 (Wed). • All peer reviews will be assessed based on content only.
<p>Take-home Essays 1 & 2</p> <p><i>This deliverable aims to enable students to describe, explain and apply the key lessons learnt from classes and readings, which aligns with ILOs #1, #2 and #3.</i></p>	<p>70% (35% each)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both essays are open-book assignments. • Essay 1 covers the topics of Theme I. Essay 2 covers the topics of Theme II. • For each essay, students will answer, in 4 days, one of the prescribed questions in 800-1,000 words, excluding endnotes and appendices. • The questions of Essay 1 will be released by 5pm, Jul 12 (Tue). The questions of Essay 2 will be released by 5pm, Aug 4 (Thu). • Students should submit Essay 1 by 23:59, Jul 16 (Sat) and Essay 2 by 23:59, Aug 8 (Mon). • All essays will be assessed based on content, organization, and style.

* **Attendance and Participation Bonus:** A maximum of 5 points will be awarded to students who contribute actively to class discussions. Attendance will be taken on an ad hoc basis.

** **Penalty:** For late submission, no submission or no show, mark penalty will apply. For confirmed cases of plagiarism, severe sanctions will be imposed.

*** **Prevention of Free riding:** Each group should attach detailed division of labor for the case analysis AND peer reviews. The grade of each individual student may be adjusted based on the division and quality of labor.

Important Dates

Date / Time	Task	Date / Time	Task
Jun 28 / 23:59	Confirm grouping	Aug 3 / 23:59	Submit Peer Reviews (review forms)
Jul 16 / 23:59	Submit Take-home Essay 1	Aug 8 / 23:59	Submit Take-home Essay 2
Jul 29 / 23:59	Submit Case Analysis (video presentation)		

Course Reading

Textbook (Reserved at HKUST Library)

[GFL] Robert Garner, Peter Ferdinand & Stephanie Lawson (2020) *Introduction to Politics* (4th edition), Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Useful References (Reserved at HKUST Library)

- Andrew Heywood (2019) *Politics* (5th edition), Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan. [NB: The 4th edition (e-book) is also available [here](#)]
- Catriona McKinnon, Robert Jubb & Patrick Tomlin (eds) (2019) *Issues in Political Theory* (4th edition), Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- John Hoffman & Paul Graham (2015) *Introduction to Political Theory* (3rd edition), London: Routledge [e-book].
- John McCormick (2019) *Cases in Comparative Government and Politics*, London: Red Globe Press.
- Rod Hague, Martin Harrop & John McCormick (2019) *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction* (11th edition), London: Red Globe Press.

Reading List

Class	Topic	Required Reading
1	Orientation	[GFL], chapter 1
2	The State	[GFL], chapter 2
3	Political Power	[GFL], chapter 3
4	Democracy	[GFL], chapter 4
5	Freedom and Justice	[GFL], chapter 5
6	Political Ideologies	[GFL], chapters 6 & 7
7	Mid-term Revision	*No reading
8	Law and Constitutions	[GFL], chapter 10
9	Voting, Elections, and Political Parties	[GFL], chapters 11 & 12
10	Government Systems	[GFL], chapters 11 & 13
11	Civil Society Actors	[GFL], chapter 14
12	Political Regimes	[GFL], chapter 15
13	Final Revision	*No reading

Course Administration*Communications*

All announcements are made through the course website on Canvas (<https://canvas.ust.hk/>). For e-mail communications, students should allow at least 3 working days for a reply. **All e-mail enquiries regarding any of the assessments above should be made at least 48 hours before their respective due dates.**

Class Rules

For students in face-to-face classes, they should avoid using mobile phones except for class activities. **Video/sound recording is NOT allowed.** If there is a genuine need for video/sound recording, students must seek permission from the instructor before the session begins. For students on the Zoom platform, they should NOT annotate, share screens, capture screenshots, record sound, take photos or videos, or play sound or videos without the prior permission of the instructor or TA. **They should NOT share the login details, course materials, lecture recordings, or information of class members with any parties outside the class.**

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating are very serious offences. Students are reminded of the consequences for violating University's regulations governing academic integrity and honesty. For details of the regulations, please visit: <http://ugadmin.ust.hk/integrity/student-1.html>. For advice on avoiding plagiarism and copying, please visit: <http://libguides.ust.hk/writing/style-man>.

Quality Assurance

Students are welcome to offer comments and suggestions on the course. The principal concern of this course is students' learning, and therefore, the instructor may modify the schedule if this will facilitate their learning.

Last revised: June 13, 2022