



National Research University Higher School of Economics  
School of World Economy and International Affairs

Undergraduate Programme  
in International Relations  
(Parallel Degree from HSE and UoL)

# Introduction to Political Science

Course Syllabus  
(Fall 2018)

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## **I. Course description**

**Level:** second-year course

**Duration:** 15 weeks, 56 classes

**Prerequisite:** None

### **Course Objective:**

The working language of the course is English. The main aims are to:

- introduce students to the main differences between democratic and non-democratic regimes, and between different models of democratic government
- introduce students to how political preferences are formed, how voters behave, how parties compete, how interest groups form, and how electoral systems shape behaviour
- explain how political institutions work, such as presidential and parliamentary systems, single-party and coalition governments, federalism, and courts and central banks
- explain how political behaviour and institutions shape policy outcomes, such as economic performance, public spending, and immigration and environmental policies
- prepare students for further courses in political science.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

- Ability to explain certain political outcomes
- Ability to compare different countries by their political structure and institutions
- Ability to apply theoretical political concepts for explaining certain political trends

### **Course Materials:**

- Study Guide “Introduction to Political Science”,
- Clark, W.R., M. Golder and S. Nadenichek Golder, *Principles of Comparative Politics*, Washington DC: CQ Press, 2017.

## II. Assessment Policies

### Classroom policies:

#### [Code of Conduct](#)

! The professors reserve the right to impose sanctions in the cases described in the document

#### [Expectations](#)

Other policies on behalf of the instructor (if needed)

**a. The UoL exam (40%):** The final exam at the end of this course will make up 40% of your final grade for the course at HSE.

**b. Two written exams (30%):** There will be a written examination at the end of each module. The exams will each make up 30% of your final grade. The exams will be evaluated according to the completeness and correctness of the answers provided.

**c. Class attendance and participation (30%):** Students' participation in class discussions is assessed according to the frequency of their participation, and their ability to understand and analyze basic concepts.

### Final Grade Formula:

$$G_{final} = 0,40 * G_{UoL\ exam} + 0,15 * G_{exam1} + 0,15 * G_{exam\ 2} + 0,15 * G_{participationmodule1} + 0,15 * G_{participationmodule2}$$

### III. Course Design and Resources

Week	Topic
Week #1	<b>What is political science? Main approaches in the field</b>
Week #2	<b>Methods in political science</b>
Week #3	<b>Explaining democracy</b>
Week #4	<b>Defining and measuring democracy</b>
Week #5	<b>Political preferences &amp; voting behavior</b>
Week #6	<b>Electoral systems</b>
Week #7	<b>Political parties</b>
Week #8	<b>Social movements and interest groups</b>
Week #9	<b>Regime types, agenda setters and veto players</b>
Week #10	<b>Coalition and single-party government</b>
Week #11	<b>Federalism and decentralization</b>
Week #12	<b>Delegation of power</b>
Week #13	<b>Economic performance and equality</b>
Week #14	<b>Satisfaction with democracy</b>
Week #15	<b>Protecting the environment</b>

Reading and seminar materials are listed in the Study Guide “Introduction to Political Science”. Other readings that are assigned will be accessible to the students via the online link provided by the instructor.

### IV. Exam questions

List of exam questions is announced at the exam by the University of London Exam Committee.

For preparation students may use exam questions of the previous years with Examiners' commentaries available through VLE of the University of London.