

# POLITICAL SCIENCE / CHARTER

## GENERAL DESCRIPTION

This introductory course in Political Science offers an overview of the field of study without presenting a history of the discipline. It covers the main topics addressed, the different approaches used, and the methods and tools required for understanding them. This initial introduction to Political Science includes both descriptive aspects ('what is') and normative aspects ('what ought to be'). The course covers the three main fields of the discipline: - comparative politics (including political sociology), - international relations, - political theory.

The teaching is designed to develop the knowledge, analytical ability and critical capacity of students in relation to contemporary political phenomena. By questioning issues central to power and society, such as political violence, the ability of citizens to choose for themselves and others, or the foundations of conformity to social norms and obedience of the institutions of society, this course develops both an understanding of politics and an ability to act upon politics.

The course tackles major contemporary global issues (e.g. terrorism, globalisation, populism, digitisation). It introduces the plurality of conceptions of these phenomena, and the diversity of perspectives, methods of analysis, interpretations and conclusions. Theoretical and methodological pluralism is therefore central to the course.

## KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS

The course is designed to enable students to build multiple knowledge and skills.

### Knowledge

Mastery of a series of analytical concepts and tools central to the discipline, structured in particular around the following elements:

- Collective action;
- Bureaucracy;
- Coalition;
- Conflict;
- Democracy;
- Domination;
- Public Space;
- The State;
- Government;
- War;
- Ideologies;
- Justice;
- Legitimacy;

- Liberalism;
- Globalisation;
- Nation;
- Opinions/attitudes/values;
- Power;
- Regulation;
- Representation;
- Socialisation;
- Sovereignty.

### Skills

- Acquire the foundations for the development of a scientific approach and its presentation in both oral and written forms;
- Recognise and describe the main methods used in the discipline;
- Develop the capacity to summarise multiple and diverse sources;
- Learn to find the relevant sources to respond to a question;
- Situate the thinking of oneself and others within the main approaches offered by Political Science;
- Learn to defend a position in both oral and written form in debate;
- Provide a critical reading of social science texts;
- Understand and comment on documents (text, graphics, tables, illustrations) in the field of political science.

### COURSE CONTENT

Several contemporary political systems will form the basis of the course content, including the following countries: China, the United States of America, France, Kenya, Brazil and the European Union.

Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the following texts which are important references and are fundamental to an initial introduction to the discipline:

Anderson, B., *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso, 1983.

Allison, G. & P. Zelikow, *Essence of decision*, Pearson, 1999 [1971].

Arendt, H., *The origins of totalitarianism*, Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1973.

Barber, B., *Strong democracy*, University of California Press, 2004.

Bourdieu, P., *La représentation politique*, *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales*, 1981, 36(1), pp. 3-24.

Campbell, A., P. Converse & al., *The American voter*, University of Chicago Press, 1980.

Della Porta D., *Social Movements, political violence and the state. A comparative analysis of Italy and Germany*, Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Downs, A., *An economic theory of democracy*, Harper & Row, 1957.

- Duverger, M., Les partis politiques, Paris, Seuil, 1992 [1951].
- Elias, N., La dynamique de l'Occident, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1975
- Foucault, M., Surveiller et punir, Paris, Gallimard, 1975.
- Habermas, J., The structural transformation of the public sphere, MIT Press.
- Huntington, S., Political Order in Changing Societies, Yale University Press, 2006.
- Hirschman, A.O., Exit, voice and loyalty, Harvard University Press, 1969.
- Kalyvas, S., The Logic of Violence in Civil War, Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Lijphart, A., Patterns of democracy, Yale University Press, 2012.
- Lipset, S.M. & S. Rokkan (eds), Party systems and voter alignments, New York, Free Press.
- Machiavel, N., Le Prince, Paris, UEG, 1967 [1532].
- Manin, B., Principes du gouvernement représentatif, Calmann Lévy, 2012 [1995].
- Olson, M., The logic of collective action, Harvard University Press, 1971 [1965].
- Ostrom, E., Governing the commons, Cambridge University Press, 1990.
- Pitkin, H., The concept of representation, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1967.
- Putnam, R., Bowling alone, Touchstone books, 2001.
- Rawls, J., A theory of justice, Oxford Paperback, 2005 [1971].
- Rosanvallon, P., La contre-démocratie ; La politique à l'âge de la défiance, Paris, Seuil, 2006.
- Schumpeter, J. A., Capitalism, socialism and democracy, Routledge, 2003 [1942].
- Tilly, Ch., Tarrow, S., Contentious Politics, Boulder, Paradigm Publishers, 2006.
- Tocqueville, A. de, De la démocratie en Amérique (tomes 1 et 2), Paris, Gallimard, 1992 [1835 et 1840].
- Weber, M., Le savant et le politique, Paris, UGE, 1963 [1919].

## COURSE FORMAT

Political Science is taught in the second semester (S2) over 60 hours and is organised as follows:

- **24 hour lecture course;**
- **12 hours of additional lectures** which will introduce exploration modules partially focused on international relations and partially furthering the themes introduced from the perspective of a specific regional base;
- **24 hours of discussion sections** following the order of the general syllabus of the lecture course.

## EVALUATION

The evaluation of learning in political science is organised in the following manner:

- **By continuous assessment** (an in-class test and two evaluations carried out in class in a format determined by the teacher),
- **A 4-hour final examination** consisting of one general question (selected from a choice of two) and a textual analysis (selected from a choice of two).

The final examination accounts for one third of the overall final grade attributed to this course of study. Continuous assessment carried out by teachers accounts for two-thirds of the overall grade.

The Political Science course is credited with 8 ECTS.