

## Study Abroad Programme

The module description below is from the 2019/20 academic year and is subject to change, and for the use of study abroad students only.

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Module name	Introduction to Political Theory
Module code	IP1032
School	School of Arts and Social Sciences
Department or equivalent	International Politics
UK credits	15
ECTS	7.5
Level	4
Delivery location (partnership programmes only)	N/A

### **MODULE SUMMARY**

#### Module outline and aims

Political Theory seeks to understand politics both as it is and as it should be, encompassing what Plato called the 'art of communal living'. *Introduction to Political Theory* teaches you how to study politics normatively (in terms of right and wrong) by looking at core political concepts from a variety of approaches.

*Introduction to Political Theory* covers central ideas in the study of political theory at an introductory level while also considering the distinctive method of study in political theory. You will gain a broad understanding of the field and a detailed understanding of key authors, along with an appreciation of how to study political theory and the breadth and diversity of the field. In particular, you will gain an appreciation of political theory as a global field rather than one focused on Western thinkers and traditions.

#### Content outline

The module will cover basic ideas of what is a polity and what makes a good polity. The first part of the module will cover how our understanding of human nature affects how we conceive of politics while you will also examine the nature of the state as a political institution distinct from

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other social institutions, exercising power of individuals and communities. The second half of the module focus on key concepts in political theory, including legitimacy, Justice and Dissent.

Some of the themes that you will cover as part of this module include:

- The Art of Communal Living
- Human Nature
- The State and The People
- Political Privileges and Responsibilities
- Justice: What Does the Good Polity Look Like?
- Political Dissent: Contestation and Change

### **WHAT WILL I BE EXPECTED TO ACHIEVE?**

**On successful completion of this module, you will be expected to be able to:**

#### Knowledge and understanding:

- Identify and explain a range of different approaches to political theory.
- Identify the origins of these different approaches.
- Show awareness of the key concepts and theoretical controversies in political theory.
- Take and support a position on these controversies and make use of different approaches to political theory.

#### Skills:

- Identify and understand the distinctive normative element of political theory.
- Distinguish normative statements from empirical and explanatory ones, and know how to support those statements with evidence and logical argumentation.
- Define, use, and criticise abstract concepts and use them with rigour and consistency

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### Values and attitudes:

- Describe how political theory underlies both empirical/explanatory studies of politics and everyday understandings.
- Develop a critical and reflective approach to politics by employing your conceptual and theoretical learning.

### **HOW WILL I LEARN?**

Teaching will be delivered through lectures and seminars. You will be expected to read materials prior to both lectures and seminars so that you are able to participate fully by asking questions in lectures and engaging in discussions during your seminars. You will also be expected to participate fully in seminar activities, which may include presentations, group discussions, and simulations.

#### *Teaching pattern:*

Teaching component	Teaching type	Contact hours (scheduled)	Self-directed study hours (independent)	Placement hours	Total student learning hours
Lecture	Lecture	10	40		50
Seminar	Seminar	10	90		100
Totals		20	130		150

### **WHAT TYPES OF ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK CAN I EXPECT?**

#### Assessments

You will be assessed through two written pieces of coursework. The first assessment will be a critical review of a primary text from the reading list and will be 1,000 words and worth 30% of

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your total mark. The second assessment will be a conventional essay of 2,000 words and worth 70% of your total mark.

*Assessment pattern:*

Assessment component	Assessment type	Weighting	Minimum qualifying mark	Pass/Fail?
Critical Review (1,000 words)	Written Assignment, including essay	40%	30	N/A
Essay (1,500 words)	Written Assignment, including essay	60%	30	N/A

### Assessment criteria

Assessment Criteria are descriptions of the skills, knowledge or attributes you need to demonstrate in order to complete an assessment successfully and Grade-Related Criteria are descriptions of the skills, knowledge or attributes you need to demonstrate to achieve a certain grade or mark in an assessment. Assessment Criteria and Grade- Related Criteria for module assessments will be made available to you prior to an assessment taking place. More information will be available from the module leader.

### Feedback on assessment

Following an assessment, you will be given your mark and feedback in line with the Assessment Regulations and Policy. More information on the timing and type of feedback that will be provided for each assessment will be available from the module leader.

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### Assessment Regulations

The Pass mark for the module is 40%. Any minimum qualifying marks for specific assessments are listed in the table above. The weighting of the different components can also be found above. The Programme Specification contains information on what happens if you fail an assessment component or the module.

### **INDICATIVE READING LIST**

Cahn, Steven, ed. *Political Philosophy: The Essential Texts*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015 (3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

Dallmayr, Fred, ed. *Comparative Political Theory: An Introduction*. London: Palgrave, 2010.

Keene, Edward. *International Political Thought: An Historical Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity, 2005.

Leopold, David and Marc Stears, eds. *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Wolff, Jonathan. *An Introduction to Political Philosophy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015 (3<sup>rd</sup> edition).

Wolin, Sheldon. *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2004 (2<sup>nd</sup> edition).