



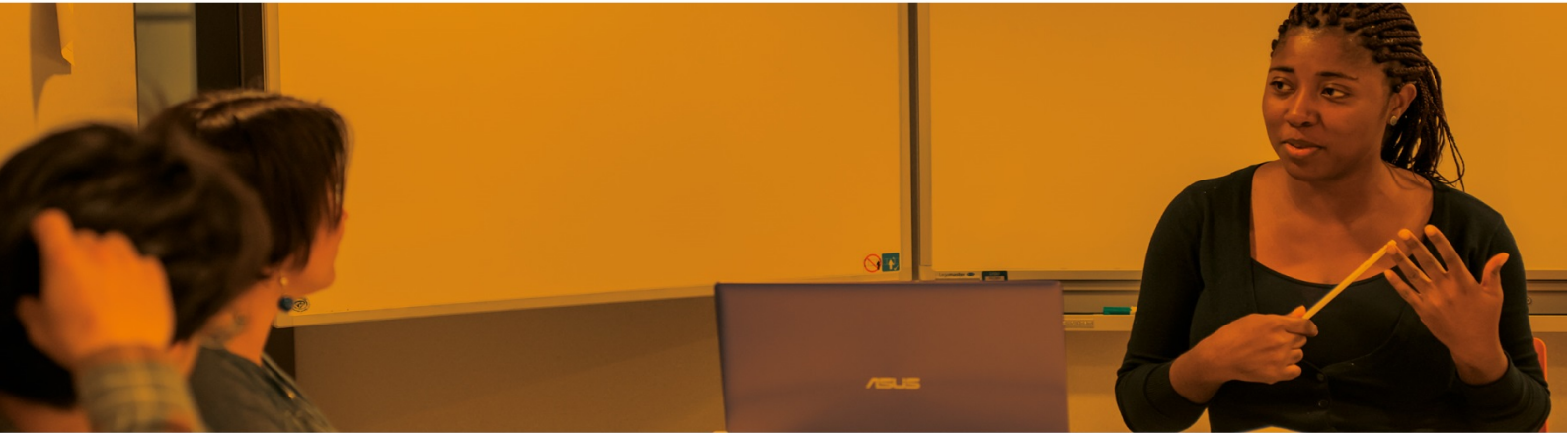
UNITED NATIONS
UNIVERSITY

UNU-MERIT



Maastricht University

Maastricht Graduate School of Governance



Introduction to Political Science

Online Course Manual - FALL 2020



1. Introduction to the Course / Unit

Background

This course explores key concepts in political science. It is organized as an introductory exploration to the wider study of politics and presupposes little or no knowledge of politics and their diverse literatures and methodologies of investigation. The course is designed with a comparative politics flair and provides a good deal of material and room for discussion on key concerns of political analysis. The online lectures, the literature, and the tutor-student interactions will provide a fairly easy path into the discussion.

The aim of the course is to provide participants with a broad overview and understanding of basic elements of political analysis. The course is designed to accentuate the importance of politics and to assist participants in developing the tools to analyze and understand current events.

The course is organized along 5 Units. The first is an introduction to the notions of state, regimes, and ideologies. It is followed by a conceptualization of democracy and the modern states. After that, the concepts of nations, ethnicity and identity are introduced. The fourth Unit explores the machinery of government – the executive and legislative branches of the political system, as well as the mechanisms of political representation.. Finally, the unit looks at the national and international politics in a comparative way.

Course outline

- ***Unit 1: Defining Politics: Key Approaches to the Study of Political Science and Key Concepts in the Field***

This Unit provides students with an introduction to essential concepts of politics such as states, power, regimes and political ideologies.

Aristotle in his famous *Politics* defended the idea that humans are by nature political animals (*Politics* I.2) who above all, want to live together in a functioning society. The way people have organized themselves in building a functioning society has taken many forms across history. In this light, politics can be seen as a set of activities through which the societal power is channeled, preserved and transformed in time.

Since politics serve as instruments for organizing the society, the government, in its broader term, serves as the mechanism to maintain the order and the rule of law. It has the potential to put forward and enforce collective decisions.

In his essay “*Politics as a Vocation*” Max Weber defines the State as a body which claims the monopoly on the legitimate use of power/violence. The State is thus an entity which places its sovereign jurisdiction on a well-defined territorial border.

In the political realm, people can get organized around a set of ideas, which can be powerful enough to influence the power balance within the society. Political ideologies can mobilize people into political actions to preserve or change an existent order.

- **Unit 2: Democracy and Democratization**

What is a democracy and why should we have one? Why and how do countries become democratic or autocratic? What is democratic peace thesis? These questions are key to exploring the mechanisms from which polities derive their legitimacy and accountability. Nowadays, it is clear that the combination between state and democracy is the most viable in the contemporary world politics. Yet, there are many ways of organizing the state, as well as defining the framework of democracy. This Unit will give you a glance of different state typologies and different democracy settings.

Democracy means “rule of the people”. It is an abstract notion and in its modern sense means the government of the people, by the people and for the people. The form of democracy however is complex and taking many facets. This Unit will have a quick overview on different forms the democracy can take in the contemporary world.

- **Unit 3: Nations, Ethnicity and Identity**

Every cluster of people in this world tries to differentiate themselves from their neighboring group. Language, race, religion, history, territory, development – all these factors are sufficient, if not necessary, to make one distinct from another. In the contemporary world, there is hardly a country made up from a homogenous ethnic community. A multicultural environment brings together different ethnic groups, and as many identity formations. At the same time, one of the main duties of the state is to bring people, usually with different ethnic backgrounds, under the same nationhood. These dynamics occupy an important space in today’s politics.

A nation is a community of people who is shaped by a number of cultural, physical, or psychological factors (language, and/or ethnicity, and /or history etc.). In its political sense, a nation is shaped by civic loyalties and political interests to form or maintain a sovereign state. In this sense, the nation is not linked to a physical border. It is a constructed entity based on what Benedict Anderson calls “An Imagined Community”. When the border of a state coincides with that of the nation, then we have a nation-state.

An ethnic group is a community of people who have a distinct common ancestry and share a distinct common culture.

Identity (from Latin – sameness) is a sense of belonging that people share based on a common status (ethnic, national, Diaspora etc.)

- **Unit 4: The Machinery of Government: Executives and Legislatures in Political Systems. Mechanisms of Political Representation.**

Since the representative democracy has been established, grasping the citizen’s vote has been a prime subject of political parties as well as the interest groups around them. Political parties are one of the central institutions of representative democracy and political party systems represent an imperative ground for study in emerging democracies.

In this Unit we focus on the establishment of political party systems, the circles of interests around them and the impact the representative democracy has on the society. The viability of democratic arrangements depends on a series of elements including type of party organization and ideological traits, number of parties, political culture, class structure, mobilization capability etc. This Unit invites discussion on these elements and a critical analysis on the weight of importance assigned.

A political representation (party) is an organization which seeks to influence the state politics by making a transparent agenda and nominating candidates to implement that agenda.

- **Unit 5: Domestic vs. Global Politics**

The realm of politics is both domestically and internationally based. Especially in a globalized world, the domestic politics are always interlinked with the international arena. For centuries, the interests of the sovereign states were driven by self preservation at one side and by domination on the other side. This realm resulted in large scale wars, reshaping of the global map, and by colonial expansions. It is also the natural tendency of states to make coalitions and cooperation links in order to serve the state survival or progress.

Nowadays, there is an international consensus and a body of rules guiding the state behavior towards each other. The emergence of global governance was intended to ensure the international order and to enhance the economic and political cooperation between states.

There is a large body of theories explaining the state behavior in the domestic and international spheres. This Unit will offer you a theoretical and descriptive view into the dynamics of interstate relations.

2. Key Concepts

Unit 1: Politics, Power, State, Regime, Ideology

Unit 2: Government, Democracy, Elites

Unit 3: Nation, Ethnicity, Identity, Multiculturalism, Civic culture

Unit 4: Political representation, Political parties, Interest groups, Lobby groups

Unit 5: Idealism, Realism, Pluralism, Marxism, Globalization, Diplomacy, Foreign policy

3. Learning Goals

Unit 1:

- Understand the concepts, models and theories of politics
- A good comprehension of the state as a social entity
- Be able to distinguish between different forms of states
- Place the role of government structures in the general realm of politics

Unit 2:

- A general conceptualization of what democracy is
- Distinguishing between different models of democracy
- Understand the debate on the democratic peace argument

Unit 3:

- Understand what a nation is
- Distinguish between varieties of nationalism
- Be aware of what ethnicity is and what are ethnic politics
- Make the link between identity politics and multiculturalism

Unit 4:

- Understand the organization of political systems
- Grasp characteristics of political party systems and their determinants
- Understand the importance of political party systems
- Be familiarized with the interests groups surrounding political parties

Unit 5:

- Understanding of the main theories guiding interstate relations
- Linking domestic and international politics
- Understanding the role of international organizations in interstate relations

4. Learning Materials

The course materials are compiled in a course format, including lectures, slides, readings and assignments. The course is embedded in the CoLA (Community of Learning for Africa) platform. Discussions will take place via the dedicated discussion board, and tutorial sessions take place in a digital classroom through the software Zoom.

- i. Lectures / Video Recordings
 - 1) Lecture slides are provided online
 - 2) There are video recordings for each Unit.

- ii. Reading list

There will not be compulsory coursebook for this course, however, it is suggested to purchase the Andrew Heywood (2007) book, "Politics", 4th edition.

This is why you may consider purchasing a copy (e.g. via Amazon (COM)) before starting the course. The necessary details are listed below.

Andrew Heywood, Politics, Palgrave Foundations

ISBN-10: 9780230396357

ISBN-13: 978-0230396357

Available at amazon.com for \$ 22.99

Apart from the Heywood book, there will be a number of fundamental readings for each Unit. The reading material is composed of both theoretical and conceptual articles.

A number of optional readings will be available for each Unit. We highly recommend all participants to consult the optional readings as well, since they provide additional in-depth analysis and examples of the concepts discussed in the Units.

Unit 1:

Obligatory readings:

- Fuller G. (1995). "The Next Ideology." *Foreign Policy* **98**(Spring): 145-158.

Optional readings:

- Aristotle, *The Politics*. Batoche Books, Kitchener, 1999, Book II: pp22-51
- Andrew Heywood (2007), *Politics*. Palgrave. (Chapter 1, Chapter 3, Chapter 12)
- David Hume (1987 [1752]). *Essays Moral, Political, and Literary*. Essay III (That politics may be reduced to a science), Essay IV (The first principles of the government), Essay V (The origins of Government).
- Freedman, M. (2003), *Ideology: A very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press (Chapter 6, "The clash of the titans: the macro-ideologies"), available via Maastricht e-library.
- John Stuart Mill (2001 [1861]). *Representative Government*, Kitchener: Batoche Books Limited (Chapter 1, Chapter 2).
- Drake, C. (1998). "The Role of Ideology in Terrorists 'Target Selection'." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 10(53-85).

Unit 2:

Obligatory readings:

- Terry, K. and P. C. Schmitter (1991). "What Democracy is...and is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 75-86.
- Schmitter, P.C. (2010). Democracy's Past and Future: Twenty-Five Years, Fifteen Findings. *Journal of Democracy* 21(1), 17-28.
- Rosato, S. (2003). The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory. *American Political Science Review*, 97(4), 585-602.
- Diamond, L. (2015). Facing Up to the Democratic Recession. *Journal of Democracy*, (1), 141-155.

Optional readings:

- Diamond, L. (1996). "Is the Third Wave Over?" *Journal of Democracy* 7(7): 20-37.
- Andrew Heywood (2007), *Politics*. Palgrave. (Chapter 4).
- Diamond, L. (2005). "Building Democracy After Conflict: Lessons from Iraq." *Journal of Democracy*(January): 9-23.

- Stepan, A. (1999). "Federalism and Democracy: Beyond the U.S. Model." *Journal of Democracy* 10(4): 19-33.
- Munck, G. and C. S. Leff (1997). "Modes of Transition and Democratization: South America and Eastern Europe in Comparative Perspective." *Comparative Politics* 29(3): 343-362.
- Hobbes, T. (1981 [1651]). *Leviathan*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Unit 3:

Obligatory readings:

- Mansbach, R. and E. Rhodes (2007). "The National State and Identity Politics: State Institutionalisation and 'Markers' of National Identity " *Geopolitics* 12(3): 426-458.
- Baumann, T. (2004). "Defining Ethnicity." *The SAA Archaeological Record*.

Optional readings:

- Rejai, M. and C. H. Enloe (1969). "Nation-States and State-Nations." *International Studies Quarterly* 13(2): 140-158.
- Andrew Heywood (2007), *Politics*. Palgrave. (Chapter 5, Chapter 7).
- Smith, A. D. (1986). *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Guibernau, M. (2006). "National Identity, Devolution and Secession in Canada, Britain and Spain." *Nation and Nationalism* 12(1): 51-76.
- Schnapper, D. (2002). "Citizenship and National Identity in Europe." *Nations and Nationalism* 8(1): 1-14.
- Calhoun, C. (1993). "Nationalism and Ethnicity." *Annual Review of Sociology* 19: 211-239.
- Nagel, J. (1984). "The Ethnic Revolution: The Emergence of Ethnic Nationalism in Modern States." *Sociology and Social Research*, 68(3): 497-520.

Unit 4:

Obligatory readings:

- Penner Angrist M. (2004) "Party Systems and Regime Formation in the Modern Middle East: Explaining Turkish Exceptionalism". *Comparative Politics* Vol. 36 No 2 (pp. 229 - 249).

Optional readings:

- Sartori G. (2005) *Parties and Party Systems. A Framework for Analysis*. ECPR Press, Cambridge University Press. (Some chapters and the full introduction by Peter Mair are available through Google books).
- Andrew Heywood (2007), *Politics*. Palgrave. (Chapter 13, Chapter 14, Chapter 10).
- Gunther R. and Diamond L. (2003), "Species of Political Parties", *Party Politics*. Vol. 9 No 2 (pp. 167-199).
- Randall, Vicky and Svåsand, Lars (2002), "Party Institutionalization in New Democracies", *Party Politics*, Vol. 8, No 1 (pp 5 – 29).

- Dahl, R. (1972). *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven, Yale University Press (a summary of the book can be found here http://www.wikisummaries.org/Polyarchy#Chapter_1:_Democratization_and_Public_Opposition)

Unit 5:

Obligatory readings:

- Paris, R. (2020). The right to dominate: how old ideas about sovereignty pose new challenges for world order. *International Organization*, 74(3), 453–489.

Optional readings:

- Gourevitch, P. (1978). "The Second Image Reversed: the International Sources of Domestic Politics." *International Organization* 32(4): 881-912.
- Andrew Heywood (2007), *Politics*. Palgrave. (Chapter 18, Chapter 19).
- Fearon J. (1998). "Domestic Politics, Foreign Policy, and Theories of International Relations." *Annual Review of Political Science* 1 (Spring): 289-313.
- Jervis R. *Perception and Misperception in International Politics*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1976.
- Alker H. R., Jr., and Thomas J. Biersteker. "The Dialectics of World Order: Notes for a Future Archeologist of International Savoir Faire." *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (1984): 121-42.
- Keohane R. O. "International Institutions: Two Approaches." *International Studies Quarterly* 32 (1988): 379-96.

5. Required Activities/Assignment

The course will feature 3 distinct learning interactions: online (video) lectures, online tutor-student discussion forums, and live Zoom sessions.

- *Online lectures*
The learning goals of every Unit will be summarized in a video lecture which is included in the online course format. The online lectures intend to give a short overview of the intended learning goals and shortly summarize the main concepts to be covered by the readings. These lectures however are not intended to replace the readings. Only with the proper coverage of the key readings for that Unit, students will be able to fully comprehend the learning objectives of the topic.
- *Student-tutor discussion forum*
A tutor will be available throughout the period of the course to directly interact with the student online. The aim of the tutor-student interaction is to respond to specific questions arising from readings or posted lectures. The tutor will respond to any question posted on the discussion forum within 48 hours.
In case of individual offerings, the discussions take place between participant and tutor. In case of group offerings, there is a group discussion possibility.

- *Tutorial sessions*
Every participant is expected to engage 4 times in tutorial setting on Zoom, each Friday, from 14:00 to 16:00 PM CET. Moreover, for the last week of the course, there will be also a tutorial session on Wednesday from 14:00 to 16:00 PM CET. Participation in this discussion is required by the student. The aim of the tutorial sessions is to give a live opportunity for students to meet their tutor and to be able to ask questions and obtain answers in a direct manner. There will be time slots allocated for every Unit and each participant can register in advance.

6. Grading Procedure

The course is offered as accredited 6 weeks course (3 ECTS). In order to pass the course, participants will have to complete an assignment, offered after week 5.

This assignment needs to be uploaded in ELEUM before the deadline in week 6. The assignment will be graded on a scale 1-10, with 5,5 being the minimal pass. At the end of the 6th week, there will be an oral exam of 15 minutes.

The final grade composition is the weighted average of the assignment grade (80%) and oral exam grade (20%).

In case the weighted average is below 5.5, participants are entitled to participate in a resit assignment with oral exam. The deadline of the resit is at the end of week 8.

7. Timeline

The course content is designed as four weeks content, based on an average workload of 15 hours a week. With the tutor there should be agreed when to complete the assignment, when to have the four tutorial meetings, and when to have the oral exam. The standard timeline is included below.

Week 1:	Unit 1
	02/10/2020 14:00 – 16:00 PM CET
Week 2:	Unit 2
	09/10/2020 14:00 – 16:00 PM CET
Week 3:	Unit 3
	16/10/2020 14:00 – 16:00 PM CET
Week 4:	Unit 4 1 ^o Tutorial
	21/10/2020 14:00 – 16:00 PM CET
Week 4	Unit 5 2 ^o Tutorial
	23/10/2020 14:00 – 16:00 PM CET
Week 6:	Assignment deadline 23/10/2020 23:59 PM CET Oral exam – to be slotted individually with the tutor

8. Support Structure

- a. Academic Staff: Dr. Mindel van de Laar
mindel.vandelaar@maastrichtuniversity.nl

- b. Course Tutor:
Christian Nicola Nota
c.nota@maastrichtuniversity.nl

- c. CoLA coordinator (what to do if you have platform or login problems)
Paris Cosma: cola@merit.unu.edu

- d. Student Affairs:
If you have any problems accessing the course or materials please contact
onlinecourses@merit.unu.edu