

Brief Description of MSc PS Modules

Module Code	Module Name	Compulsory/ Elective	Module Description
POLS601	Theory of Comparative Political Systems	Compulsory	This module examines the nature, evolution and scope of comparative politics as well as political systems' meaning and nature, political modernization, and political change. The module discusses extensively theories of comparative political systems, including cultural theories, class theories, development theories as well as bureaucracy and institutional approaches. It offers critical discussions on questions of: 1. rule making, rule application and rule adjudication functions; 2. Interest aggregation and party systems in comparative analysis; and 3. interest articulation and interest and pressure groups.
POLS602	International Relations Theory	Compulsory	This module offers an advanced discussion of International Relations Theories. These include positivist theories, such as Realism, Neo-Realism, Liberalism and Neo-Liberalism, as well as critical and reflectivist approaches that are increasingly in use in explaining and analysing international events. These include, critical theory, normative IR theory, constructivism and critical constructivism, and post-structuralism. Additionally, the module offers an in-depth discussion of key concepts in IR, such as power, order, security, and the study of change.
POLS603	Political Thought and Political Theory	Compulsory	This module examines contemporary political theories such as utilitarianism, liberal egalitarianism, libertarianism, communitarianism, feminism, and Marxism.

			<p>The theories are examined with respect to their foundations, main concepts, logical coherence, and implications for practical implementation. In examining these theories, the course may cover topics such as welfare/utility, freedom, equality, democracy, distribution of resources, rights, markets, neutrality, religion and the state, community, multiculturalism, exploitation, and the family.</p>
POLS604	Advanced Research Methods in Political Science	Compulsory	<p>This module offers a solid overview of the philosophy and principles of research in the field of Political Science. It discusses in an advanced manner the components of a research proposal, especially how to frame a research problem and how to write a literature review, a conceptual framework and a theoretical framework in a post-graduate academic dissertation. The module discusses various methodologies and methods (both qualitative and quantitative) in the field, with a particular focus on research methods and design in the sub-fields of comparative politics and international relations. This is an extended module over two semesters.</p>
POLS605	Political Sociology	Elective	<p>This module addresses the state society relations which are product of interactions between state, society and the market. It also discusses the emergence of the state in different contexts and identifies the main drivers of institutional development within states and the main social forces that lie behind their formation. The main issues of the module include: the ideological foundations of capitalism and its economic policies, democracy, nationalism, social movements and revolutions.</p>

POLS606	Politics of Development	Elective	<p>This is an advanced module on development policies and studies. In addition, the module has a practical aspect. The module aims at providing an in-depth study of development theories and their relation to development processes in various regions. It addresses developmental challenges in the global south. The module offers thorough analysis of the different academic definition of development. It discusses social, political, and economic characteristics of developing economies such as poverty, lack of social mobility, the dependence of the economy on agriculture, challenges to the single market, state bureaucracy and its relation to development issues. Moreover, the module covers neoliberal and Keynesian perspective on development. The module discusses issues such as conditionality associated with financing, foreign aid, and structural reform programs.</p>
POLS607	Comparative Politics of the Middle East	Elective	<p>The module provides a specialized discussion of comparative politics theories and approaches in analysing state and institutions in the Arab Region and the Middle East, taking into account contextual and historical characteristics as well as social and political development processes. The module also aims to critically compare Arab political systems, especially focusing on the different forms of institutional development, and the different types of political systems that vary between monarchical, republican, presidential, parliamentary, and mixed systems. The module discusses various topics in a critical way, such as sovereignty, legitimacy, power, identity, rentier states and the political economy of Middle Eastern states.</p>
POLS608	Comparative Western Political Systems	Elective	<p>This module introduces the political systems of Western countries using a comparative approach, and analyses the major political developments that shape the nature and pattern of functioning of contemporary Western systems. The module also provides an in-depth</p>

			<p>study of theories of state formation and the development of Western institutions, as well as a historical analysis of the context that shaped Western political systems. It raises questions about the reasons for abolishing the monarchy and establishing the republic in some countries, unlike in other countries, where monarchy continued with the adoption of parliamentary democracy. In addition to the above, the module discusses the reasons for the United States gaining independence from Great Britain, in contrast to Canada, which remained a member of the Commonwealth of Nations. It also studies, through comparative analysis, the reasons for the difference in the paths of Western political systems. It also deals with concepts related to the above, such as secularism, popular democracy, industrialization and capitalism, state bureaucracy, accountability, and state-society relations.</p>
POLS609	Democracy, Authority and Citizenship	Elective	<p>This module addresses the theoretical, normative and practical approaches to the concept of democracy, by analysing the different models of direct and indirect democracy (which include participatory democracy, representative democracy, and deliberative democracy). The module deals with social, political and ethical issues related to the exercise of democracy and the use of power by the state. Democracy brings the concepts of power and citizenship together by giving the public the right to manage political life and self-determination. The course also covers the requirements of democracy in terms of distributing power in society and preventing its concentration. This is why it links democracy with the issue of citizenship and the restructuring of power. Hence, the module tackles the failure of democracy to achieve its desired goals, which paves the way for the spread of populism and identity-based affiliations and a change in the distribution of power.</p>

POLS610	Totalitarianism and the State	Elective	<p>This module focuses on studying "totalitarianism" and "the state" in the context of modern political ideas and theories. It also examines the origins and historical development of totalitarian states, and then studies the role of the First and Second World War in the rise of totalitarian regimes in Europe, which were inaugurated as political systems in Fascist regimes (Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy) and in Communist countries (former Soviet Union). The module also examines the different types of contemporary totalitarian regimes that continue to manifest themselves in the twenty-first century, such as North Korea, in addition to other cases of totalitarian and authoritarian regimes in developing countries. Therefore, this module provides a critical evaluation of these cases to study how these totalitarian states were consolidated through violence, trauma policies, or tactical consensus and the various methods of the police state. In addition to this, the course discusses critically the prospects for the demise of totalitarian regimes in light of the political, economic and social characteristics of the changing international system and the era of globalization.</p>
POLS611	Identity Politics and Group Violence	Elective	<p>This module provides an advanced critical study of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches to the study of identity politics (ethnic, cultural, sectarian, racial, religious, etc.), and how identity politics has risen as an interdisciplinary subject that combines comparative politics and international relations. The module examines the causes and consequences of policies related to group rights, equality and internal conflicts related to identity, and how they combine internal and external dimensions. It deals with the study of social and political structures that enhance identity politics in societies, the emergence of frictions between different identities within a single society, the formation of fault lines embodied in sectarian conflicts, and the</p>

			relationship of these developments to the nature of political systems. The module also deals with identity politics from the perspective of issues and policies of an intertwining nature between the interior and the outside, by studying the way in which internal conflicts related to identity attract different types of foreign interference with different forms and motives, whether by states, international organizations, or transnational organizations and groups.
POLS612	Making of Public Policy	Elective	This module provides an advanced study of the policies and dynamics of public policy making within and through government institutions. The module focuses on the process of setting priorities, seeking consensus and implementing policies within state institutions, and how the process of forming and making decisions regarding setting the public policy agenda takes place. The module uses an intermediate methodology that focuses on political, cultural, and psychological perspectives in the process of public policy-making and formulation. The module also discusses various models for implementing and evaluating policies, and similarly deals with specialized policy areas, which vary in nature from national security policies to economic, educational, and environmental policies, through a comparative study of a number of case studies.
POLS613	Advanced Topics in Comparative Politics	Elective	This module provides a critical discussion of one (or more) advanced topics in the study of comparative politics. The module focuses on concepts and issues related to the state, political systems, democratization, neoliberalism, modern monetary approaches, and various political economy and development perspectives.
POLS614	International Security Studies	Elective	This module offers a focused discussion of international security studies as a major sub-field in International Relations. Key topics

			<p>discussed are: (1) theories: traditional and critical approaches in security studies; and (2) concepts: uncertainty, war, terrorism, ethnic conflicts, coercion and human security. Additionally, the role of international institutions (such as international security organization, alliances and regional institutions) is critically discussed. the module debates key international security challenges, such as nuclear proliferation, international arms trade, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, peace operations, private security companies and transnational organized crime.</p>
POLS615	Comparative Foreign Policies of Great Powers	Elective	<p>This module offers an in-depth discussion of key theories and approaches in the field of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), with a focus on the rich theoretical production in the field of comparative foreign policy analysis. This is offered through a comparative examination of the foreign policies of great powers, which include - but not limited to - the United States, Russia, China as well as the particular nature of the EU foreign and security policy. The module assesses the perception and reaction of great powers to problems, threats and challenges post 1945 with a focus on the 21st century. Issues related to great powers' self-representation, identity construction, national security concerns and grand strategies are critically discussed in the making and implementation of their foreign policies.</p>
POLS616	Comparative Foreign Policies of Developing States	Elective	<p>This module offers an in-depth discussion of key theories and approaches in the field of Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA), with a focus on the rich theoretical production in the field of comparative foreign policy analysis. This is offered through a comparative examination of the foreign policies of developing states / small and medium powers. The module critically discusses the particularity of small and developing states' foreign policies within the field of FPA due to their several vulnerabilities and limited capabilities to achieve favourable</p>

			outcomes. The module examines several cases of foreign policies of developing countries, in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Arab area, comparatively.
POLS617	International Political Economy	Elective	This module offers a focused discussion of International Political Economy (IPE) as a major sub-field in International Relations. Key topics discussed are: (1) theories: mainstream and critical approaches in IPE; and (2) concepts: such as economic power/hegemony, interdependence, regimes, economic statecraft, international development/dependency, and regionalism. Additionally, the role of international economic institutions (such as the World Bank Group, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization) is critically discussed. The module also debates key IPE topics and challenges, such as the economic rise of China, the crucial role of transnational corporations, the changing international trade structure, and international financial and debt crises.
POLS618	International Relations of the Middle East	Elective	This module provides a thematic overview of the international relations of the Middle East, which brings into focus various IR theories/approaches in discussing the history of the region, key themes, and important actors and conflicts. The module focuses on a variety of topics, which include: geopolitical changes and continuities in the Middle East, important armed conflicts in the region, great powers' policies as well as their cooperation and competition in the region, key security and economic challenges, rising and declining actors in the Middle East and intra-regional relations, and the Middle East in the current globalized economy.
POLS619	Comparative Regional Integration:	Elective	This module offers a comparative discussion of international integration experiences. It starts with a critical presentation of key theories and

	Theories and Practices		<p>approaches in the study of international integration, such as the realist focus on relative gains, the neoliberal theories of functionalism and neo-functionalism, and the constructivist perspective in explaining the process of region-building. Key concepts of international integration are critically discussed, such as the distinction between international cooperation and international integration, inter-governmentalism versus supra-nationalism, and the issues of spill-over, spill-back, and spill-around in international integration practices. This entails also a discussion of trends in inter-regionalism on the world stage and the surge of various atypical models of regional organizations/blocs. The module discusses and evaluates several cases of international integration, such as the EU integration model, ASEAN, MERCOSUR, the GCC, and other examples.</p>
POLS620	International Law and Humanitarian Intervention	Elective	<p>This module offers a discussion of international law with a focus on the question of humanitarian intervention, which is rooted in both international relations theory and the evolution of international law and organization. It critically discusses controversies over key features of humanitarian intervention in terms of the status of parties involved, the question of consent, the means, the motives and the issue of legality. Importantly, the module debates the principle of “state sovereignty” and the principle of the “responsibility to protect” in international relations. The module discusses several cases of humanitarian intervention with the purpose of identifying key trends and change.</p>
POLS621	Advanced Topics in International Relations	Elective	<p>This module provides a critical discussion of one (or more) advanced topics in the study of international relations, which builds on what students previously studied in earlier IR modules. such topics could include: (1) international order and global governance; (2)</p>

			<p>the study of emotions in IR, (3) international ethics and normative IR theory; (4) geopolitical approaches, critical geography and the return of geopolitics in the 21st century, (5) transnationalism on the world stage, (6) armed conflicts and the changing nature of warfare, (6) the study of “change” in the international system and in foreign policy.</p>
POLS622	Analytical Political Theory	Elective	<p>This module examines the logic of political concepts such as freedom, equality, rights, democracy, authority, public interest, toleration, etc. What do such concepts mean? Can they be given precise meaning or are they, in the words of W. B. Gallie, ‘essentially contested concepts’? How are they different from closely related concepts? How do they relate to each other? How does understanding such concepts allow us to better understand political phenomena? The focus on the module is not on normative issues but on the interpretation and analysis of concepts.</p>
POLS623	Critical Political Theory	Elective	<p>Critical political theory is an approach to politics which originated with the Frankfurt School and which provides a distinct basis for social enquiry. Its aims are to examination social domination in modern capitalist societies and explore routes to emancipation and liberation. This module examines critical political theory, beginning with the work of Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse, through to the ideas of Jurgen Habermas and more recent critical theorists. What are the various forms of social relations and what are the cultural oppressions associated with them? Why are modern affluent societies oppressive, even to those who are successful within it? How do ideologies maintain the social and political status quo? What is Habermas’s ‘ideal speech situation’ and what are its implications for politics? These and other questions will be addressed in this module.</p>

POLS624	Theory of Democracy	Elective	<p>This module examines theoretical issues of democracy. What is democracy? Different definitions will be critically examined. What are the fundamental values of democracy, such as liberty and equality? Is democracy more legitimate than other forms of government? Different justifications for democracy will be examined. What are the different theoretical types of democracy, such as representative, participatory, and deliberative democracy? What are the criteria for political participation in democracy? Who should be able to vote? What political institutions and practices does democracy require, such as elections and party systems? Various theorists' works will be examined, both Western and non-Western.</p>
POLS625	Theory of Justice	Elective	<p>This module examines whether ideals of justice can and should be applied globally. Should principles of justice be applied globally or are they relevant only to particular societies? Do people in wealthy countries have a duty to give to those starving overseas? Do people have obligations to their co-nationals and if so, do these obligations override the claims of global justice? Is global justice an unrealistic goal? Various other topics in global justice will also be addressed, such as immigration and open borders, climate change and future generations, and the possibility and plausibility of a world government.</p>
POLS626	Theory of Power	Elective	<p>This module examines the concept of power in political thought and theory. Some of the most important questions may include: What is power and how is it related to other concepts such as authority, force, and violence? Where does power lie in politics and in society in general, with government or with other actors? What kinds of power are there and how is political power different, if at all? How do different schools of thought in political science view power? How should power be distributed?</p>

POLS627	Religion and the State in Political Thought	Elective	This module examines the relation between religion and the state. It examines the attitude towards religion taken by major political thinkers throughout the history of political thought, how different ideologies and political theories view religion, and also examines the role of religion in the modern state. Should the state be separate from religion or is there a role for religion in politics? How should a secular state treat religious diversity in modern societies? Is religious fundamentalism a threat to the authority of the state?
POLS628	Advanced Topics in Political Theory and Political Thought	Elective	This module is an in-depth analysis of specialised topics and important issues in the field of political theory and thought. The module focuses on concepts and issues related to political science and addresses them from the perspective of important political thinkers.