Foundation Scholarship Examinations 2019-20

Examination Papers set by Trinity College Dublin’s Political Science Department

Guidance for Students

Peter Stone
pstone@tcd.ie
Introduction

The Foundation Scholarship examinations provided by the Political Science department for 2019-20 will be similar to those provided for 2016-17 through 2018-19, and different from those provided for previous years.

The examination “Political Science 1” requires students to write an essay on a topic related to one of the broad areas of political science covered in Senior Fresh (SF) modules—international relations, comparative politics, or history of political thought—but addressing materials that are outside the Michaelmas Term SF module syllabi. An additional reading list will be provided to cover these topics. Students will therefore focus on one of these topics in advance and write one essay on that topic in a two-and-a-quarter-hour examination. The exam will contain only one essay question for each of the three topics for which reading lists have been provided. Students may, at their discretion, prepare more than one topic in advance, but they will answer only one essay question in the examination.

When writing essays for “Political Science 1”, students are expected to know relevant materials and concepts from the related SF modules, but they must demonstrate engagement with and mastery of the materials contained on these additional reading lists. Similarly, students may choose to do additional reading, beyond the materials contained in the provided reading lists, on these political science topics, but, again, students are expected primarily and above all to demonstrate engagement with and mastery of the materials contained on these reading lists. There is no requirement to do any additional outside readings and indeed these reading lists are already extensive and demanding. Indeed, given that these reading lists are extensive, students may wish to select and prioritise their readings from among the readings set out. If a student wishes to refer to additional readings outside these reading lists (or materials contained on module syllabuses), the student is recommended to provide a reference, indicating author, title, and year of publication if possible.

No special tutorials are to be provided by academic staff on the topics to be examined in “Political Science 1”.

Reading lists for these topics this year are contained in this document, as well as sample questions. Students, however, are advised to prepare broadly for a variety of possible questions addressing this material.

Readings for these topics will be available on reserve in the library (in the case of books) or available as hard copies or electronic articles through the library (in the case of articles). Please search for the title of the academic journal through the library website to find any electronic version in the first instance, although some papers/journals may only be available in hard copy.

The examination “Political Science 2” is also a two-and-a-quarter-hour examination. It requires students to write three essays, two of which will relate to materials covered in the three Michaelmas-Term SF Political Science modules, and one of which will be
a more general question about the nature of politics. There will be a total of twelve questions on the exam. Nine of these questions will relate to the three Michaelmas-Term SF Political Science modules—three for each module. The other three questions will be more general questions about the nature of politics. Each student must answer two of the nine module-related questions and one of the three general questions, for a total of three questions.

**To repeat: students must answer three questions out of a total of twelve questions on the Political Science 2 Foundation Scholarship examination, two of which MUST be from the questions drawing on materials from the Senior Fresh modules, and one of which MUST be from the general questions.**

For the questions relating to the materials in the SF Political Science modules, a mastery of the materials taught in those lectures and contained on those syllabi (including of course any optional or additional reading suggestions) up to the end of the Michaelmas Term is sufficient preparation.

Sample questions for the “Political Science 2” examination are contained in this document.

As a reminder, this guidance relates only to the **content and format** of the Foundation Scholarship examinations provided by the Political Science Department. Many students also have questions about which papers they should choose to sit for the Foundation Scholarship examination. For those questions, please consult the regulations of your specific degree programme (BESS, PPES, Law and Politics, European Studies, Political Science and Geography, History and Political Science etc.) Some “Frequently Asked Questions” are also answered on the Political Science Department’s website.

We wish all students good luck with the Foundation Scholarship examinations.
POLITICAL SCIENCE 1

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT
COMPARATIVE POLITICS
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

William Phelan

Topic: The Foreign Policy of the European Union

The International Relations question for the Political Science 1 paper will focus upon the European Union’s foreign policy—its relationship with states and non-state actors outside the European Union. This topic does not include the topic of EU “enlargement” except as discussed in the readings below. Please note this Topic is not about “Brexit”, and students should avoid making “Brexit” the main subject of their analysis.

Readings:


By way of contrast, the following books deal with U.S. and Chinese Foreign Policy, respectively:


**Sample Questions:**

What sort of global power is the European Union?
HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

Peter Stone

Topic: Ostracism in Ancient Athens

In the 5th century BCE, the Athenians employed a democratic practice known as *ostracism*. Once a year, the people would assemble to vote directly on whether to ostracize a citizen that year. If the vote was affirmative, the people would vote again to determine who was to be ostracized. The ostracized citizen was forced to leave Athens for ten years. The Athenians employed ostracism in an effort to protect the democracy from would-be tyrants and other individuals the citizenry deemed dangerous.

The Athenian practice of ostracism seems uniquely alien to democrats today. In recent years, however, political theorists have been revisiting the democratic institutions of ancient Athens, with an eye to finding ways to revive democracy today. The History of Political Thought question for the Political Science 1 paper this year will give you a chance to revisit ostracism. How did the ostracism function in practice? Did it help or harm Athenian democracy? What features of the practice were critical? And could democrats today learn anything from the practice of ostracism?

Readings:

Note: The Forsdyke book will be available on reserve at the library. All other readings below are available online.


**Sample Question:**

What does the Athenians’ practice of ostracism tell us about their understanding of rights?
Lisa Keenan

**Topic: Public Opinion: Formation and Shifts**

This year’s Comparative Politics question for the Political Science 1 paper will focus on the topic of public opinion.

Issues to consider include the following:

- How do individuals form their opinions about the world?
- How can public opinion shift?
- Are such shifts likely to be long-term or short-term? Why?
- Does one explanation of public opinion formation make more sense in certain contexts than others (e.g. Brexit, the 2016 general election, the 2018 abortion referendum in Ireland)?
- To what extent does the media shape public opinion?

**Readings:**


**Sample Question:**

Does self-interest adequately explain public opinion? Discuss with reference to key alternative explanations.
POLITICAL SCIENCE 2

Students must answer three questions in total. Students must answer two of the nine questions relating to the material covered by SF modules in Political Science, and one of the three general questions.

Section A: Answer Any Two Questions from the Following Set (Questions 1-9)

Relating to POU22011 (History of Political Thought A):

1. Is there any reason for a non-Christian to take seriously the political ideas of Augustine and Aquinas?
2. Examine the relationship between the Plato’s metaphysical theory of forms and his political elitism.
3. Etc.

Relating to POU22021 (International Relations A):

4. Is Keohane’s explanation of international cooperation the same as Axelrod’s explanation of cooperation between egoists? Answer drawing on readings and IR theory.
5. Under what circumstances do domestic lobby groups matter in international politics? Answer drawing on readings and IR theory.

Relating to POU22031 (Comparative Politics A):

7. “Unelected judges have no right to overrule democratically elected politicians”. Discuss with reference to at least two countries.
8. Discuss the thesis that social class is no longer the dominant cleavage in European politics.

Section B: Answer One Question from the Following Set (10-12):

General questions:

10. Harold Lasswell defined politics as “Who gets what, when, and how.” Is this an adequate definition of politics?
11. Is politics a characteristic of all human relations?
12. Etc.