

POP77132: Political Science PhD Field Seminar

Department of Political Science

Convenor: Liam Kneafsey¹

Instructors: Multiple Instructors (see weekly topics below)

Hilary Term Seminar Schedule: TBC

Office Hours: By Appointment (by Zoom or In-person - just email to arrange)

Email: kneafsel@tcd.ie; lkneafse@tcd.ie

Individual Instructors' contact info is available on the TCD Political Science Dept website

Overview

This class will give PhD students exposure to, and an opportunity to engage with, multiple strands of political science research from staff across the Political Science Department at TCD. Political Science is a diverse discipline combining different strands of scholarship with varied conceptual, substantive, and methodological approaches dealing with distinct research questions and issues of social and scientific importance. This variety to the field is illustrated through the work of the staff members in the Department here at Trinity. This course will allow PhD students to learn about and critically engage with the types of research interests, questions, and approaches that staff members take within political science broadly. This will help PhD students become more familiar with the variety of work in the discipline and offer core grounding in different sub-fields while also introducing staff members and their work in a manner that encourages potential collaboration and further research.

Learning Objectives

After completing this class, PhD students should be able to:

- Engage with different conceptual, substantive, methodological and theoretical approaches to the analysis of politics
- Develop connections across research agendas in the various sub-fields of political science including to their own research
- Consider variation in frameworks, methods and questions of substantive importance in the academic study of politics
- Understand and articulate the varied research interests of the staff team in the TCD Politics Department of which they are members

Course Content

This 10 ECTS module course is structured around a set of eleven seminars (see above) – these seminars focus on **substantive interactive discussion** of the assigned materials which vary week-to-week as selected by the individual instructor for that week. This module has a distinct format compared to other classes you will have taken. As it seeks to introduce the various staff members in the Department, the sub-fields they work within in their research, and the diversity of approaches they take to questions of methods and substance, there are different instructors across the eleven weeks of the module and varied readings assigned by the week's instructor. Given the particular seminar format of this class, it is imperative that students complete the assigned readings for each week. The seminars are 'participatory', in the sense that the opinion of students is sought directly and consistently from the opening to end and the class is based solely around the discussion of the selected materials by the instructor. Attendance at the seminars is

¹ This course is inspired by previous versions of the Field Seminar for Political Science PhDs at Trinity. Thanks in particular for suggestions to Prof Peter Stone and Sinéad Harrington.

compulsory as it is core to the assessment for this module. Please contact me (and the individual instructor for that week) in advance by email if you cannot make a seminar. I am happy to meet with students to discuss course materials, research papers, and other matters. Please let me know by email and we will set up an appointment.

Course Assessment Requirements

Seminar Participation: (30%). Everyone is expected to attend every seminar ready to participate and having completed the relevant readings – this is an opportunity to effectively engage with the diversity and breadth of political science. Students are expected to carry the discussion forward. The course instructors, will chair and, where necessary, focus the debate and pose questions based on their knowledge of the sub-field. Your grade will depend not just on attendance, but actual participation. The field seminar offers a series of insights into complex sub-fields and a constructive discussion will give you a solid opportunity to become conversant in the debates and considerations across these sub-fields.

Reflection Paper: (70%). Select one of the sub-field topics from one of the weeks from the module which was not led by your PhD supervisor. Based specifically on the readings assigned in this course and associated discussion, what are the defining features/characteristics of this sub-field and what are the best approaches for studying those features/characteristics? You should consider theoretical frameworks, methodological issues, key findings, and/or substantive impacts. Reflecting on this, how do these aspects of the sub-field relate to and/or influence your thinking on your own research, and on the academic study of political science more broadly? If appropriate, you may also wish to refer to ideas and research avenues that reflecting on the work in this sub-field and the discussion has generated for you. The assignment will be marked by the course coordinator rather than the weekly instructor (unless they are the same person) and so the assignment should reflect the perspective of a fellow political scientist examining another sub-field rather than an area expert.

The assignment should be approximately 3000 words in length (+/- 10%) excluding notes/bibliography. **Provisional Due Date: Friday April 19th at 11.59pm.** All late work, unless excused beforehand, will have 5 marks deducted for each day beyond the deadline. Virtually all issues can easily be addressed in advance so it is best to let me know as soon as possible so we can make arrangements that avoid the need for penalties. Assignments are submitted through the Assessments folder on Blackboard which allows for direct submission through Turnitin.

Academic Dishonesty and Citations Plagiarism: When you write your assignments, please take care to cite appropriately the source material of your work. - All students are required to complete an online tutorial on online plagiarism called 'ready, steady, write' (<http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/ready-steady-write>) - All students must sign a declaration that they have completed this course when submitting their essay. - For a comprehensive guide about the different type of plagiarism, please read the University's plagiarism policy here (<http://tcd-ie.libguides.com/plagiarism/levels-andconsequences>) Of course, in your work, you are expected to draw on existing theoretical and empirical research. All scholarly and journalistic material should be appropriately cited. You may use any citation style you wish, but be consistent in your work. See <http://uncg.libguides.com/content.php?pid=100907&sid=757621>. Chicago (footnote) or APSR (in- text) are the most commonly used styles in political science. As a PhD candidate, issues of academic dishonesty and/or plagiarism are particularly serious and should be strongly guarded against.

Required Texts: A full set of readings for each week will be provided closer to the start date of the seminar.

Class Schedule - TBC

Week 1: TBC

Week 2: TBC

Week 3: TBC

Week 4: TBC

Week 5: TBC

Week 6: TBC

Week 7: Reading Week (No Class)

Week 8: TBC

Week 9: TBC

Week 10: TBC

Week 11: TBC

Week 12: TBC