

POU11011 — Introduction to Political Science A

Module Information	
Module Code	POU11011
Module Title	Introduction to Political Science A
Department	Political Science
Year Group	Junior Fresh
Module Personnel	Dr Noah Buckley (buckleno@tcd.ie)
Academic Year	2026–27
Credit Weighting	5 credits
Semester	Semester 1
Contact Hours	20 hours of lectures and 4 hours of tutorials (two lectures per week plus tutorials)

Module Content	
Module Description	This module introduces students to the big issues in politics and to the conceptual, theoretical, and analytical tools of political science, showing how they help us understand and respond to major contemporary political events and challenges at home and abroad. It is designed both for those who intend to study politics throughout their degree and for those taking it as a standalone introduction. There are two main sections in the course. The first considers the basic principles of politics, including power, the major ideologies, identity, interests, and the state. The second examines the theory and practice of democracy in different regions of the world, the major political institutions, and how democracies emerge, function, survive, or fail.
Module Learning Aims	The course has two aims: (1) to equip students with a basic knowledge of the key problems and questions around which politics revolves; and (2) to equip students with the fundamental conceptual, theoretical, and analytical tools used in the consideration of political questions.
Learning Outcomes	On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

Module Content	
	• Identify and understand the key problems and questions around which politics revolves • Employ the fundamental conceptual, theoretical, and analytical tools used in the consideration of political questions • Critically engage with and analyse contemporary national and global political events and issues using the tools and frameworks of political science
Indicative Reading / Resources	Core textbook: • Heywood, Andrew. Politics. 5th ed. London: Red Globe Press / Macmillan. • Additional weekly readings (articles and chapters) are provided via Blackboard.

Assessment	
Assessment Components	Tutorial attendance and discussion-point submissions 10%; short written assignment 30%; end-of-term final essay 60%.
Assessment Details	• Three discussion-point submissions and tutorial attendance (10%). • One short written assignment (30%). • An end-of-term final essay responding to one of several set questions (60%). • Full assignment details, deadlines, and essay questions are provided in class and on Blackboard.

Additional Information	
Prerequisites	None
Co-requisites	None
Any other information	Lectures are delivered twice weekly and supported by small-group tutorials (approximately 20 students per group), led by a team of teaching assistants. Tutorial attendance is compulsory and linked to the discussion-point component of assessment.