Aims and Objectives

This module provides an introduction to the study of politics and establishes a foundation for other politics modules that you may take in the future. It is intended as a practical guide to some of the main concepts and vocabulary of political science. As such, the module provides an introductory guide to important themes and issues related to the study of politics, such as the state, regime types, and political change and behaviour. It also introduces students to some of the study skills that they need to complete assignments and assessment in the area of politics.

By the end of the module all students should be able to:
• Identify and explain some of the basic concepts used in political analysis;
• Contrast different political systems and forms of political power;
• Demonstrate an appreciation of arguments about politics and the merits of different political systems;
• Demonstrate proficiency in basic library research skills;
• Demonstrate basic proficiency in planning and writing essays;
• Demonstrate basic proficiency in reviewing texts of political analysis;
• Demonstrate basic competence in presenting

Contents

Justifying power: the legitimation of authority; : The origins of the modern state; State power and its critics;
State failure and its problems; : Democracy - the basic principles; Democracy - the basic types; Where does democracy come from? Forms of democratic government and their outcomes; Political parties and their functions; Electoral systems and parties; Pressure politics in democracies: who has influence and why? Non-democratic regimes – authoritarianism, totalitarianism and the rest; The future of modern politics

Core Readings