

5.00 credits	30.0 h	Q1
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Teacher(s)	Paye Olivier ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Bruxelles Saint-Louis
Learning outcomes	<p>At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :</p> <p>This is an introductory class. Its aim is to introduce the students to the understanding of contemporary political phenomena through the study of a few basic analytical frameworks. The lecture will look into some foundational concepts and typologies in political science, as well as some authoritative explanatory theories.</p> <p>By the end of the lectures, the students are expected to be familiar enough with those theories to apply them to concrete situations. During the exam (see 'assessment methods'), the students will be asked to use those key theoretical points to analyse some contemporary political phenomena that will not have been discussed during the lectures.</p>
Evaluation methods	<p>It is a one and half hour long written open-book exam. It is made of 4 questions, each assessed on 10 points. The resulting total is then divided by two to obtain a consolidated result on 20 points to which one can add possibly a two points bonus (see previous section).</p> <p>The exam is made of a question for each of the 4 sub-sections of the lectures. The questions will invite the students to analyse, with the appropriate methodological tools from political science, some concrete political situations, not covered during the lectures. The students must apply the relevant theoretical knowledge (selected into a 40 items list) to the cases presented. Each question will be based on a newspaper's article containing enough fact-based information to carry the analysis.</p> <p>If the exam could not be held in a classroom, due to circumstances similar to these related to the Covid-19 crisis, a one hour long online open-book exam would be alternatively organized including MCQ. This examination would then consist of two parts, each worth ten points. The first part would consist of only two open-ended questions of the type described above; the second part would consist of a multiple-choice true-false questionnaire proposing various statements relating to the elements of general knowledge included in the list of 40 "theoretical referents" mentioned above. Examples of true-false questionnaires will be made available on the course website.</p>

Teaching methods	<p>The class of 'Political Science' is worth 5 ECTS. 3 ECTS correspond to workload associated with attending and studying the content of the ex cathedra lectures (1). The remaining 2 ECTS are associated with a 'self-teaching activity', that is to say some work the students have to do by themselves (2).</p> <p>(1) EX CATHEDRA LECTURES</p> <p>Though the lectures are given ex cathedra, moreover to a large audience, the class aims to be as interactive as possible.</p> <p>During the lectures, and within some reasonable time limits, students are encouraged to ask clarificatory questions or to express their opinion regarding the latest theoretical developments presented by the professor. The professor will direct some questions at the students to invite them to share their knowledge and analyses on some topics covered during the lectures. However, the students are under no obligation to respond.</p> <p>The literary version of the class' content is to be found in N. Schiffino, O. Paye et al., Fondements de science politique, 2e éd., Bruxelles, De Boeck Supérieur, 2022. The relevant excerpts from the handbook are listed in a document available on the class' webpage, on the Moodle interactive platform, under the heading "Matière du cours". Finally, a portfolio of slides will be made available in an electronic format on the Moodle platform as well as in a physical format at the 'Reprographie'. It will support and illustrate the oral developments.</p> <p>(2) LEARNING ACTIVITY</p> <p>The learning activity presents itself mainly as a series of 8 assignments put online every week on the Moodle interactive platform. Each assignment is made of a question addressing the content of the latest lecture. The answer to each question should not exceed five lines. The questions are handpicked amongst previous exam questions and anticipate the type of question the student will have to answer during her exam. Each student must submit his completed assignment every week, beginning on the second lecture.</p> <p>The completed assignment will be submitted in an electronic format every week before the deadline mentioned on the Moodle platform (generally four to five days after the lecture). They will be considered as valid if they have been duly completed and submitted within the defined timeframe. In total, the students will have to submit at least 7 assignments over the semester if they want to obtain a two points bonus which will be added to their 'normal' result for their exam (see below "Assessment Methods"). If the student must retake the exam during the second session, and if she benefits from a bonus, this bonus will also apply to her second session's exam.</p> <p>The assignments' content will not be assessed. The only aspect taken into consideration for the eventual assessment of the learning activity is the regularity with which the assignments have been submitted on time. Each assignment will be corrected and discussed during the following lecture. Some examples of good and bad answers will subsequently be put on the online platform. It is up to the student to assess their own answers and to gauge the distance between them and the correct ones.</p>
Content	<p>This is an introductory class. Its aim is to introduce the students to the understanding of contemporary political phenomena through the study of a few basic analytical frameworks. The lecture will look into some foundational concepts and typologies in political science, as well as some authoritative explanatory theories.</p> <p>By the end of the lectures, the students are expected to be familiar enough with those theories to apply them to concrete situations. During the exam (see 'assessment methods'), the students will be asked to use those key theoretical points to analyse some case studies that will not have been discussed during the lectures. The lectures are divided into four main sections, each corresponding to a classic concept in contemporary political science: Politics, Power, State, and Democracy. In the analysis of each concept, and the reality it captures, we intend to shed a light on what is peculiar to political phenomena (as specific social phenomena) and on what stands out in contemporary Western political phenomena, compared to other geopolitical contexts or other periods of history.</p> <p>The lectures also aim to highlight the relevance of fundamental concepts of political science, such as international organization, political party, nation, etc. It will tackle a few authoritative analytical theories of contemporary political science.</p> <p>Last but not least, the lectures wish to trigger some critical thinking on current political issues and to invite students to consider the role played by the framing and the story-telling of social issues, the lingering tension between popular sovereignty and the rule of law in modern political regimes, the peculiarities of Belgium's political system and its institutional future...</p> <p>Throughout the lectures, an effort will be made to illustrate the key theoretical points with some examples drawn from the most recent news cycle.</p>
Inline resources	<p>The class has a Moodle webpage on which the students will find, amongst other things, the following documents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the up-to-date version of the Power Point slides' portfolio, - a list of the exact excerpts of the handbook (Fondements de la science politique) constitutive of the class' content, - a list of the elements of theoretical content constitutive of the exam's material (actualized at the end of the semester), - copies of previous years' exams and their correct answers. <p>- An online forum is also available for the students to ask any question, provide some answers to their co-students, and communicate with the professor.</p> <p>It is also on the Moodle webpage that the students will upload their assignments and that the professor will share the correct answers to the assignments' questions.</p>

Bibliography	<p>La version littéraire de la matière de cours est entièrement contenue dans l'ouvrage précité : N. Schiffino, O. Paye et al., Fondements de science politique, 2e éd., Bruxelles, De Boeck Supérieur, 2022. Aucune autre lecture que les passages idoines de cet ouvrage – qui sont repris précisément dans un document consultable sur le site de cours – n'est requise pour réussir l'examen.</p> <p>Les étudiant•e•s qui souhaiteraient aller plus loin que la matière du cours trouveront des orientations bibliographiques spécifiques dans l'ouvrage susmentionné. Le site de cours met également à leur disposition un document contenant des références à d'autres manuels d'introduction à la science politique, à des dictionnaires de termes de science politique, à des publications introductives aux institutions et à la vie politiques belges ainsi que des adresses de sites web d'associations de science politique.</p>
Faculty or entity in charge	ESPB

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)

Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Bachelor in Political Sciences (shift schedule)	SPDB1BA	5		