

Approches méthodiques de questions politiques

Lecturer

Romain Weikmans (Coordinator)

Course mnemonic

POLI-D104

ECTS credits

5 credits

Language(s) of instruction

French

Course period

Second term

Campus

Solbosch

Course content

This course introduces students to the fundamental methodological tools needed to complete an academic program in the social sciences, and more specifically in political science. During our sessions, we will address

- › the active practice of reading necessary for a good understanding of texts of a high level of complexity or technicality, notably through their contextualization,
- › the best methods for synthesizing and summarizing academic works or political texts,
- › the rules to follow in structuring and writing a coherent and plagiarism-free academic work,
- › the production of a relevant bibliography on a given subject and its referencing according to the discipline's canon
- › the general principles that establish the scientific nature of a research in social science

Objectives (and/or specific learning outcomes)

Social studies have shown that Belgian secondary education is deeply inegalitarian. As a result, regardless of their personal efforts, not all students entering university have the same skills and background knowledge at the start of their first year of Bachelier. The ambition of this course is to partially fill this gap by allowing all students to acquire a basic set of skills essential to the practice of research in political science.

Pre-requisites and co-requisites

Required knowledge and skills

There are no prerequisite skills or knowledge for this course.

Teaching method and learning activities

This teaching seminar is divided into two distinct parts.

The professor will give a series of lectures to all students. These lectures, which are more theoretical, will present the basic methodological tools of political science, as well as their functioning.

For the practical work, students will be divided into small seminar groups. Each of these groups will be supervised by a teaching assistant. Attendance and participation in these seminars will be mandatory. Within the framework of these seminars, the students will have to carry out 4 distinct works, each of which will be the subject of an evaluation.

Contribution to the teaching profile

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- › Explain orally, in his/her own words, a social science text after an initial reading
- › Summarize a scientific text in a short written format using appropriate social science terms
- › Reference a bibliographic source according to the discipline's standards
- › Distinguish between plagiarism and acknowledged borrowing of an idea from an author
- › Identify and obtain access to bibliographic resources relevant to a social science research project
- › situate a social science text in its broader socio-historical context
- › Write in a rigorous and accurate style consistent with academic expectations
- › Provide a reasoned interpretation of a social science text
- › Make appropriate use of basic student skills (synthesizing, summarizing, writing in a structured manner, locating and referencing sources)

References, bibliography and recommended reading

Bibliography about the topic of each seminar is distributed in each group and/or established by students themselves as an exercise of research

Other information

Place(s) of teaching

Solbosch

Contact(s)

Professors :

Joël Kotek – joel.kotek@gmail.com
Martin Deleixhe - martin.deleixhe@ulb.be
Teaching assistants :

Evaluation method(s)

Other

Evaluation method(s) (additional information)

The final grade (out of 20) is composed of two distinct grades:

1°) A grade that will aggregate the results of the 4 assignments, each worth 20% of the final grade (i.e. $20\%+20\%+20\%+20\% = 80\%$ of the final grade = 16 points out of 20).

Each student will have to hand in the following by the deadline communicated by the assistant

- > A 3-page contextualization of a political science text
- > A 3-page synthesis of a scientific article from a political science journal
- > The table of contents of a hypothetical research paper in political science, accompanied by an explanation (in 2 pages maximum) of the structure of this paper
- > A relevant bibliography on a research topic, composed of at least ten scientific sources referenced according to the discipline's canon

Any delay in the submission of this work will be penalized by the withdrawal of one point from the overall mark (i.e. one point out of 20) per day.

2°) A mark awarded for the attendance and participation to the seminars. This will count for 20% of the final mark (i.e. 4 points out of 20).

Determination of the mark (including the weighting of partial marks)

Submission of the assignments : $20\% + 20\% + 20\% + 20\%$ (16 points out of 20).

Course participation: 20% (4 points out of 20).

Each absence from a seminar will be penalized by the withdrawal of one point out of 20, up to a maximum of 4 points (i.e., the entire participation grade).

Main language(s) of evaluation

English

Programmes

Programmes proposing this course at the faculty of Philosophy and Social Sciences

BA-POLI | Bachelor in Political Sciences : General | unit 1

