ISM UNIVERSITY OF MANAGEMENT AND ECONOMICS

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS

Course code	*POL101*
Compulsory in the programmes	*Economics and Politics*
Level of studies	*Undergraduate*
Number of credits	*6 ECTS (48 in-class hours + 2 consultation hours + 2 exam hours, 110 individual work hours)*
Course coordinator (title and name)	*Dr. Vincentas Vobolevičius* *vinvob@ism.lt*
Prerequisites	*None*
Language of instruction	*English*

THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

This course introduces students to the key concepts, methodologies and fields of research in the contemporary political science, by employing the rational choice approach to analyzing politics. The general topics covered include the notion of human rationality, collective action problems, political entrepreneurship, voting, party competition and politics of coalition, as well as basic game-theory-based methods for the analysis of political phenomena.

This course does not aim to review a certain number of empirical findings regarding political events. Instead, the course is theoretical and methodological in its orientation. Students receive an overview of the scholarly thinking about politics along with the basic game-theoretic tools that will enable an analytically rigorous exploration of political and economic phenomena during the later courses of the Economics and Politics program.

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Learning objectives for BSc in Social Science	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Define science; explain the components of the scientific method; discuss possibilities and advantages of scientific study of politics.	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1, ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	Midterm test, homework grades, term paper	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper
CLO2. Define human rationality; contrast rationality and selfishness; discuss merits and limitations of the rational-choice explanations of political behavior.	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1, ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	Midterm test, homework grades, term paper	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper
CLO3. Define collective action problem (CAP); explain economic solutions to CAP as well as their shortcomings; list possible political solutions to CAP and link them to contemporary schools of political thought.	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1, ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	Midterm test, homework grades, term paper	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper
CLO4. Define political entrepreneurship; explain solutions to CAP's that arise in selecting, monitoring and replacing political	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1,	Midterm test, homework grades, term	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper

incumbents.	ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	paper	
CLO5. List reasons for voting. Discuss consequences of vote-cycling in the context of the Condorcet Paradox, and Arrow's Theory of Impossibility. Explain solutions to the cycling problem in terms of deliberation and agenda setting (including Median Voter Theorem).	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1, ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	Final exam, homework grades, term paper	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper
CLO6. Explain the logic and the determinants of strategies that political parties implement prior to elections, including strategic positioning on policy issues.	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1, ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	Final exam, homework grades, term paper	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper
CLO7. Explain the logic and the determinants of strategies that political parties implement after elections, including formation, maintenance and dissolution of governments.	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1, ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	Final exam, homework grades, term paper	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper
CLO8. Solve game-theoretic and decision theoretical problems, such as calculating expected utility and critical conditions, solving extensive and strategic games, defining sub-game perfection, and doing basic spatial utility modeling.	ELO 1.1, ELO 1.2, ELO 3.1, ELO1.2, ELO2.1, ELO 4.3	Final exam, homework grades, term paper	Lectures, homework, seminars, writing of term paper

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics. Regarding remote learning, ISM reminds students that they are expected to adhere and maintain the same academic honesty and integrity that they would in a classroom setting.

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	In-class hours	Readings
1. Introduction. Introductory comments. What is politics? What is science? Assumptions. Hypotheses. Verification of hypotheses. Deductive v. Inductive models in social sciences.	4	Laver pp. 1 – 17
2. The concept of rationality. What do people want? Characteristics of rational preference orderings. Actions, outcomes and choices. Concept of utility. Utility functions. Uncertainty and orientation towards risk. Problems with utility theory.	4	Laver pp. 18 – 29 Homework 1
3. Social interactions Private v. public goods. Production and consumption of goods. Modeling human interactions. Basic games in extensive form. Concepts of strategy and equilibrium. Nash equilibrium.	4	Laver pp. 29 – 37 Homework 2

4. Collective Action Problem. Rationality and free riding. Economic solutions to free riding. Thomas Hobbes' *Leviathan* and its critique. John Locke's "political society". Incentive-compatible solutions to free riding. Games in the strategic form. Concept of strategy and strategy domination.	4	Laver pp. 38 – 50 Homework 3
5. Long-term interactions. Concept of conditional cooperation. Implicit assumptions and their violations. Rationality of punishing defectors. Bluffing and calling bluffs. Sub-game perfect equilibria. Reputation. The Tragedy of the Commons parable. Conditional cooperation in large groups of people and its shortcomings.	4	Laver pp. 50 – 67 Homework 4
6. Political entrepreneurs as a solution to Collective Action Problem. Who selects politicians? What do politicians do? Public goods v. political services. Principal – agent problem. Shirking and its prevention. The role of political rivals. Mixed strategies, and mixed-strategy equilibria.	4	Laver pp. 68 – 78 Homework 5
7. Political entrepreneurs (cont.) Limiting coercive power of the incumbents. Sustaining political opposition. The structure of competition between politicians. Payoffs for political entrepreneurs. The rationale behind political alliances. Perceptions and Nature Moves games.	4	Homework 6 Review for the midterm
8. Midterm examination	4	
9. Voting Interpretations of the role of elections. Downsian approach to modeling voting and party competition. The paradox of voting. Rational choice attempts to explain voting.	4	Laver pp. 89 – 98 Homework 7
10. Voting (cont.) Deciding how to vote. Credibility of political promises. Choosing between different political "packages". Condorcet paradox and cyclical voting. Dimensions of voting. Median voter theorem, its implications and limitations. Voting on multiple issues and reemergence of voting cycles. Voter pressure groups.	4	Laver pp. 98 – 109 Homework 8
11. Party Competition. One dimension of ideology. Unconstrained two-party competition. Dictatorship of the median voter. Constrained two-party competition. The cost of changing policy positions. Multiparty competition. Entry of new political parties. Multi-dimensional ideologies. Modeling two-dimensional party competition.	4	Laver pp. 110 – 135 Homework 9
12. Politics after Elections Office-seeking and policy seeking motivations. Reputation and motivations of politicians. Minimal winning coalitions. Policy-based coalitions. The concept of a walk-away value. Minority and oversized coalitions. One dimension of coalition policy. More dimensions of coalition policy. Cabinet portfolios and structure induced equilibria.	4	Laver pp. 135 – 153 Review for the final examination
	Total: 48 hours	
CONSULTATIONS	2	
FINAL EXAM	2	

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Type of assignment	%
Group Components 0%	*0*
Individual Components 100%	100
Homework assignments	30
Midterm examination	25
Final examination	25
Term paper	20
Total:	**100**

DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

Assessment consists of three different elements:
• Written homework assignments (30%). Students will be required to solve game-theoretic problems, pertaining to political science topics, covered in class. Homework assignments will be due prior to the beginning of each week's class.
• Midterm examination (25%) covering material learned during the first 7 weeks of the course. The exam will consist of solving game-theory problems and answering multiple-choice questions.
• Final examination (25%) covering material learned during the duration of the entire course. The exam will consist of solving game-theory problems and answering multiple-choice questions.
• Term paper (20%) covering topics and methods learned in class. Students will be free to choose their topics and to develop them according to instructions provided by the lecturer.
Diligent completion of the homework assignments is the only way to really learn the analytical methodology that will be indispensable during subsequent study of political science. Students must complete all tasks of the course at the specified time. Postponing lab tests is impossible, and a retake of the midterm exam will not be allowed.

Assessment requirements, procedures, and other important regulations may be communicated verbally during lectures. Failure to attend a lecture where such information is provided does not exempt the student from the responsibility to comply with these requirements.

RETAKE POLICY

In case of failing final evaluation, students can participate in a **retake exam**. Retake consists of topics from the entire course and comprise 70% of the final grade; midterm exam and final exam results will be annulled; only non-text calculators, provided appropriate tables and formulas will be allowed.

REQUIRED READINGS

Michael Laver. *Private Desires, Political Action. An Invitation to the Politics of Rational Choice*, SAGE Publications

ADDITIONAL READINGS

TBA

ANNEX

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives for the <u>Bachelor of Business Management</u>
Programmes:
International Business and Communication,
Business Management and Marketing, Finance,
Industrial Technology Management

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	BLO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the business disciplines
	BLO1.2. Students will be able to conduct a contextual analysis to identify a problem associated with their discipline, to generate managerial options and propose viable solutions
Students will be socially responsible in their related discipline	BLO2.1. Students will be knowledgeable about ethics and social responsibility
Students will be technology agile	BLO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	BLO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	BLO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	BLO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	BLO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper

Learning objectives for the <u>Bachelor of Social Science</u>
Programmes:
Economics and Data Analytics,
Economics and Politics

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	ELO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the key economics disciplines
	ELO1.2. Students will be able to identify underlying assumptions and logical consistency of causal statements
Students will have skills to employ economic thought for the common good	ELO2.1.Students will have a keen sense of ethical criteria for practical problem-solving
Students will be technology agile	ELO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	ELO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	ELO4.1.Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	ELO4.2.Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	ELO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper