

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	Social Sciences and Humanities
Programme:	Political Science
<i>FHEQ</i> Level:	6
Course Title:	Senior Seminar in Political Science 1
Course Code:	PLT 6296
Total Hours:	120
Timetabled Hours:	0
Guided Learning Hours:	25
Independent Learning Hours:	95
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

The Senior Seminar in Political Science 1 course for Political Science majors is the first part of a two-semester sequence taken in the Senior year. Students produce a research proposal, a literature review and a substantial draft that feeds directly into Senior Seminar in Political Science 2 which culminates in a dissertation 8,000 to 10,000 words in length. Students are guided through the various stages of proposal and dissertation writing, and draft work is supervised regularly in a process of continuous feedback.

Prerequisites:

PLT 5201 Research Methods: Social Sciences

Aims and Objectives:

- To help students develop research strategies focusing upon the development of critical thinking and reading skills, the clear articulation of a thesis/argument, and the selection of appropriate theoretical and methodological frameworks
- To help students identify a viable research project, generate a literature review, and write draft chapters that contribute to the final dissertation submission
- To provide a background for eventual careers in fields (including work in government, international organisations, business and the media) which require articulate, clear thinking individuals with a grasp of Political Science
- To provide a framework to assist concerned citizens to think critically about issues that are of increasing importance in the 21st century
- To promote critical engagement with a wide range of literature, and the development of both a succinct writing style, and the ability to present complex arguments orally

Programme Outcomes:

PLT: 6A(iv); 6B (iii); 6B(iv); 6C(i); 6C(ii); 6C(iii); 6C(iv); 6D(i); 6D(ii); 6D(iv)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification.

This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

- Students should demonstrate the ability to design a research question, describe the aims of the research and conduct research using evidence, data and information from a range of primary and secondary sources.
- Students should demonstrate the ability to write a proposal and a draft section/chapter of their paper that sets out an argument and integrates a systematic understanding of specific theoretical and methodological frameworks relevant to their topic.
- Students should demonstrate the ability to critically appraisal several sources in a literature review.
- Students should complete a draft section/chapter which critically engages with the sources discussed, and demonstrate an understanding of the key debates, and the relationship between theoretical perspectives and empirical evidence, as they are relevant to the topic.
- Students should take responsibility for their own learning, demonstrating an ability to work independently, meet strict deadlines and use feedback effectively.
- Students should complete assigned work with a degree of clarity, contextualisation, critical thinking, and reflexive normative understanding appropriate for a 6000-level course.

Indicative Content:

- Designing a research proposal
- Conducting a Literature Review
- Drawing up an Outline
- Formulating a thesis
- Producing a Rough Draft
- Engaging with questions of theory and methodology

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and located at: <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

Course meetings consist of a few interactive group discussions, but weekly meetings primarily revolve around individual tutorial supervision. The course is student-centered, and students are responsible for time and research self-management as well as for their own engagement with their project. Student work is assessed through a variety of ways using both formative and summative approaches. Feedback is intended to help improve student approach to learning and achieve better results.

Indicative Text:

Greetham, B. (2019) *How to Write Your Undergraduate Dissertation*. 3rd ed. London: Palgrave.

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

See syllabus for complete reading list.

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Various updates as part of the UG programme review	AB Jan 2022	
Revision – annual update	May 2023	
Total Hours Updated	April 2024	