**North South University**

**Department of Political Science & Sociology (PSS)**

**Summer 2024**

**POL 101: Introduction to Political Science**

Course Instructor: Dr. M Jashim Uddin (MJU)

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**Course Description & Goals:**

If we want to understand politics, the sound bites and talk shows of the modern media provide an incomplete picture. By the end of this course, you will be able to take a more systematic approach to the study of politics. This course is designed to make you familiar with the issues, institutions, and structures that shape our everyday life, perception, and behavior as a ‘political animal.’

More than two thousand years ago, Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher, declared man as ‘a political animal’ and described political science as ‘the master science’. Plato, Aristotle’s guru, believed that a ruler should be a philosopher. At different periods since ancient times, particularly western political philosophers contributed to bringing about tremendous changes in people’s mind and thinking process through their innovative political ideas and thoughts for the formation and development of state and government and advancement of the civilization. Like conflict, politics is also an inseparable part of human life. Being a political animal, one needs to understand the relationships between and among individuals, states, and governments. What is politics? What is the difference between politics and political science? What is the relationship between politics and government? To what extent does politics influence human relations and how do government and institutions function? Are you interested in politics? If not, are you concerned if others will, and influence the decisions that govern and affect your lives? And what are the benefits of studying political science in real life? These are some questions that may certainly come to one’s mind and this course will critically examine the above and other vital questions.

The key objective of this course is to introduce students to some of the fundamental concepts and institutions of political science, e.g., state, sovereignty, liberty, authority, legitimacy, nationalism, democracy, political party, civil society, and institutions of accountability and oversight mechanisms which underpin them. Through class lectures, assigned readings, group study, class presentations, and constructive debate, the students will explore the theory of political science and politics in reality particularly in Bangladesh. To be a good citizen, consciousness about one’s rights as well as duties to society and state, tolerance and respect for the fundamental human rights of others, democratic values, rule of law, and religious and cultural diversity is vital. Without a doubt, studying political science is worthy of learning and realizing these issues. As a discipline, political science belongs to the liberal arts. And a liberal education is meant to prepare individuals to think freely and wisely about the rights and interest of themselves and others, to be more tolerant of diversity and other’s thought and belief. Political science is deeply related to Ethics; helps people to think not to gain something at the cost of others. The course is designed to strengthen a student’s analytical and writing skills; help a student to be a good leader/decision maker in their professional life of any discipline, and also flourish his/her judgment to manage/resolve the current/emerging political and security crisis in the world in general and in Bangladesh in particular.

***Learning Assessment & Distribution of Grade***

Students must attend all classes and be prepared in advance to positively contribute to the discussion. More than one absence from the class without acceptable reason(s) will have the potential to lower the grade and repeated lateness without acceptable reason(s) may also have negative consequences on the grade.

*\*All exam dates (to be announced in the class) are final. There is NO make-up exam.*

***Distribution of Grade:***

Class Attendance & Participation 10%

Individual Assignment 10%

Group Presentation/Viva 10%

Mid-term exam (time bound) 20%

Quiz 1 10%

Quiz 2 10%

Final Exam 30%

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Total 100%

***Grading Policy***

Letter Grades Numerical Score

A 93-100

A- 90-92

B+ 87-89

B 83-86

B- 80-82

C+ 77-79

C 73-76

C- 70-72

D+ 67-69

D 60-66

F Failure Below 60

***Class Manners***

* Please switch your mobile phone off during class.
* For any valid reason, if you have to leave early or arrive late, please take the utmost care not to DISTURB/ DISTRACT your fellow students.

***Course Layout***

• Introduction to the Course and describing Class Rules

• Why study Politics? What is Political Science? What is its Scope?

• Is political science a science? Politics is the Master Science

• Some Basic and Critical Concepts: Power, Legitimacy and Authority

• What is Power? Analysis of Five Power Theories

• Definion and Source of Legitimacy

• What is state? What is the origin of state? Four State theories

• Elements of State (People, territory, Government & Sovereignty)

(Also Formation of study groups and selections of topics for group/individual presentations)

• **Quiz 1**

• Forms of Government or Regime Types; Democracy, Authoritarian and Totalitarian

• Democracy: Concept, Characteristics/Requirement of democracy, Challenges

• The Constitution and Human Rights

• Mass Media and Politics

• Public Opinion and Politics

• Political Parties: Definition and Functions

• Classification of political parties

**• Quiz 2 & Mid**

• Elections (Definition, Significance, Why do people vote?

• Elections (Who votes whom in the U.S. elections? Elections in Bangladesh)

**•** Political System: Concept, function and cases

• Accountability: Forms and Mechanism

• Separation of Power among three Branches of Government Checks and Balances

• Civil Society in Bangladesh

• **Quiz 3**

• Violent extremism, Countering/Preventing Violent Extremism in Bangladesh

• Ethnic Conflicts; Rohingya Refugee Crisis: Challenges for Bangladesh

• Significance of Non-Violence in managing violent Conflicts in Politics

• Course review

• Group Presentations/Viva

**• Final Exam**

***Required Readings***

Michael Roskin, Robert Cord, James Medeiros and Walter Jones, *Political Science— An Introduction* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2017) 14th Edition.

***Recommendation Readings***

Carlton Clymer Rodee, Totton James Anderson, Carl Quimby Christol and Thomas H. Greenee, *Introduction to Political Science* (London, Tokyo: McGraw-Hill, Inc, 1976).

*Additional study materials will be advised/given during the classes.*

***Wishing you a great Semester!***