

**Notifications** Civil Services ...

## UPSC Political Science Optional Syllabus, Booklist & Preparation Strategy

Political Science & International Relations or PSIR is one of the popular UPSC optional subjects for the UPSC Mains Exam. Political Science and International Relations introduces you to one of the complex subjects and for an aspiring bureaucrat, it is one of the most useful subjects to learn.

However, it is important to have a strong interest in the subject before choosing it as your optional. If you have an inclination towards political science subject, then read the UPSC political science optional syllabus thoroughly.

In this article, we have discussed the UPSC Political Science Optional Syllabus, Political Science preparation strategy as well as the booklist that you should refer to. Read this article till the end to know everything about UPSC political science optional subject.

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### Syllabus of UPSC Political Science Optional for UPSC Mains

UPSC Political Science Optional is divided into two papers, Paper-1 and Paper-2. We've listed the entire UPSC Political Science Optional Syllabus for both Paper 1 and Paper-2 below:

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### UPSC Political Science Optional Syllabus for Paper-1

#### Section A: Political Theory and Indian Politics

- Political theory: meaning and approaches.
- Theories of the state: Liberal, Neo-liberal, Marxist, Pluralist, Post-colonial and feminist.
- Justice: Conceptions of justice with special reference to Rawl's theory of justice and its communitarian critiques.
- Equality: Social, political and economic; the relationship between equality and freedom; Affirmative action.
- Rights: Meaning and theories; different kinds of rights; the concept of Human Rights.
- Democracy: Classical and contemporary theories; different models of democracy-representative, participatory and deliberative.
- Concept of power: hegemony, ideology and legitimacy.
- Political Ideologies: Liberalism, Socialism, Marxism, Fascism, Gandhism and Feminism.
- Indian Political Thought: Dharmashastra, Arthashastra and Buddhist traditions; Sir Syed Ahmed Khan, Sri Aurobindo, M.K. Gandhi, B.R. Ambedkar, M.N. Roy.
- Western Political Thought: Plato, Aristotle, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, John S. Mill, Marx, Gramsci, Hannah Arend

## Section B: Indian Government and Politics

- Indian Nationalism:
- Political Strategies of India's Freedom struggle: constitutionalism to mass Satyagraha, Non-cooperation, Civil Disobedience; militant and revolutionary movements, Peasant and workers' movements.
- Perspectives on Indian National Movement: Liberal, Socialist and Marxist; Radical humanist and Dalit.
- Making of the Indian Constitution: Legacies of the British rule; different social and political perspectives.
- Salient Features of the Indian Constitution: The Preamble, Fundamental Rights and Duties, Directive Principles; Parliamentary System and Amendment Procedures; Judicial Review and Basic Structure doctrine.
- a. Principal Organs of the Union Government: Envisaged role and actual working of the Executive, Legislature and Supreme Court.
- b. Principal Organs of the State Government: Envisaged role and actual working of the Executive, Legislature and High Courts.
- Grassroots Democracy: Panchayati Raj and Municipal Government; the significance of 73rd and 74th Amendments; Grassroot movements.
- Statutory Institutions/Commissions: Election Commission, Comptroller and Auditor General, Finance Commission, Union Public Service Commission, National Commission for Scheduled Castes, National Commission for scheduled Tribes, National Commission for Women; National Human Rights Commission, National Commission for Minorities, National Backward Classes Commission.
- Federalism: Constitutional provisions; changing nature of centre-state relations; integrationist tendencies and regional aspirations; inter-state disputes.
- Planning and Economic Development: Nehruvian and Gandhian perspectives; the role of planning and public sector; Green Revolution, land reforms and agrarian relations; liberalization and economic reforms.
- Caste, Religion and Ethnicity in Indian Politics.
- Party System: National and regional political parties, ideological and social bases of parties; patterns of coalition politics; Pressure groups, trends in electoral behaviour; changing socio-economic profile of Legislators.
- Social Movements: Civil liberties and human rights movements; women's movements; environmentalist movements

## UPSC Political Science Optional Syllabus For Paper-2

### Section A: Comparative Political Analysis and International Politics

1. Comparative Politics: Nature and major approaches; political economy and political sociology perspectives; limitations of the comparative method.
2. State in comparative perspective: Characteristics and changing nature of the State in capitalist and socialist economies, and, advanced industrial and developing societies.
3. Politics of Representation and Participation: Political parties, pressure groups and social movements in advanced industrial and developing societies.
4. Globalisation: Responses from developed and developing societies.

5. Approaches to the Study of International Relations: Idealist, Realist, Marxist, Functionalist and Systems theory.
6. Key concepts in International Relations: National interest, Security and power; Balance of power and deterrence; Transnational actors and collective security; World capitalist economy and globalisation.
7. Changing International Political Order:
  1. (a) Rise of superpowers; strategic and ideological Bipolarity, arms race and Cold War; nuclear threat;
  2. (b) Non-aligned movement: Aims and achievements;
  3. (c) Collapse of the Soviet Union; Unipolarity and American hegemony; relevance of non-alignment in the contemporary world.
8. Evolution of the International Economic System: From Bretton woods to WTO; Socialist economies and the CMEA (Council for Mutual Economic Assistance); Third World demand for new international economic order; Globalisation of the world economy.
9. United Nations: Envisaged role and actual record; specialized UN agencies-aims and functioning; the need for UN reforms.
10. Regionalisation of World Politics: EU, ASEAN, APEC, SAARC, NAFTA.
11. Contemporary Global Concerns: Democracy, human rights, environment, gender justice, terrorism, nuclear proliferation.

## Section B: India and the World

1. Indian Foreign Policy: Determinants of foreign policy; institutions of policy-making; continuity and change.
2. India's Contribution to the Non-Alignment Movement: Different phases; current role.
3. India and South Asia:
  1. Regional Co-operation: SAARC-past performance and future prospects.
  2. South Asia as a Free Trade Area.
  3. India's "Look East" policy.
  4. Impediments to regional co-operation: river water disputes; illegal cross-border migration; ethnic conflicts and insurgencies; border disputes.
4. India and the Global South: Relations with Africa and Latin America; leadership role in the demand for NIEO and WTO negotiations.
5. India and the Global Centres of Power: USA, EU, Japan, China and Russia.
6. India and the UN System: Role in UN Peace-keeping; demand for Permanent Seat in the Security Council.
7. India and the Nuclear Question: Changing perceptions and policy.
8. Recent developments in Indian Foreign policy: India's position on the recent crisis in Afghanistan, Iraq and West Asia, growing relations with US and Israel; the vision of new world order.

## How To Prepare UPSC Political Science Syllabus for UPSC Mains

As you may have seen, the Political Science optional syllabus is divided into two papers. And each paper has two parts. Let's understand how to prepare each of these sections:

- Paper 1- Section A: Focus on completing the static part of the syllabus. Thereafter, revise multiple times to concretize your understanding of this section. You can refer following resources to complete this section:

- Political Ideologies by O.P Gauba, Notes by Shubhra Ranjan Madam
  - Indian Political Thought: V R Mehta + Shubhra Ranjan Madam Notes
  - Western Political Thought: Brian Nelson (excellent book) + Shubhra Ranjan Notes
- Paper 1 Section B: This section sees a significant syllabus overlap with GS I and II, but had to be read with the flavour of optional. Good command over current affairs is also needed to crack this section. You can refer to the following resources:
    - Indian National Movement – Bipin Chandra + Spectrum
    - Indian Polity – B. L. Fadia (Very selective) + Laxmikanth
  - Paper 2 Section A – This part is a combination of dynamic and static topics. For static topics, you can refer to the IGNOU Notes. However, be extremely selective while reading IGNOU notes. You do not need to read cover to cover. Read as per the demand of the syllabus.
  - Paper 2 Section B– This part is heavily dependent on current affairs. Questions are generally asked on the current topics. Hence, make sure you're thorough with the current affairs.

## Booklist for Political Science Optional For UPSC

The booklist for any subject including optional subjects is only an indicative one! You do not have to follow it cover-to-cover. Read the books only as per the syllabus. Read the books under additional readings only if you have extra time in hand.

### Paper 1: Section A: Political Theory

Essential Readings:

- "An Introduction to Political Theory" by O.P Gauba. 7TH EDITION, Mayur Publication
- "Political Theory: An Introduction" by Rajeev Bhargava and Ashok Acharya, 2nd edition, Pearson.
- "A History of Political Thought: Plato to Marx" by Subrata Mukherjee and Sushila Ramaswamy.
- "Western Political Thought: From Socrates to the age of Ideology" by Brian. R. Nelson.
- IGNOU BOOKLET MPSE-004 Social and Political Thought in Modern India
- "Modern Indian Political Thought: Text and Context" by Bidyut Chakrabarty and Rajendra Kumar Pandey.

Additional Readings:

- "Politics" by Andrew Heywood.
- "Political Theory: An Introduction" by Andrew Heywood.
- "Key Concepts in Politics" by Andrew Heywood.
- "Political Ideologies: An Introduction" by Andrew Heywood.
- "Western Political Thought: From Plato to Marx" by Shefali Jha.
- "Indian Political Thought: Themes and Thinkers" by M. P. Singh and Himanshu Roy.

### Paper 1: Section B: Indian Government and Politics

Essential Readings:

- “India’s Struggle for Independence” by Bipin Chandra.
- “Introduction to the Constitution of India” by Dr Durga Das Basu.
- “Indian Government and Politics” by A.S.Narang, Geetanjali Publication
- “The Oxford Companion to Politics in India” by Niraja Gopal Jayal and Pratap Bhanu Mehta.

#### Additional Readings:

- “Politics in India” by Rajni Kothari.
- “Our Parliament: An Introduction to Parliament of India” by Subhash C. Kashyap.
- “Our Constitution: An Introduction to India’s Constitution and Constitutional Law” by Subhash C. Kashyap.

### **Paper 2: Section A: Comparative Politics and International Relations**

#### Essential Readings:

- “The Globalization of World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations” by John Baylis, Steve Smith and Patricia Owens.
- “Global Politics” by Andrew Heywood.
- “Theories of Comparative Politics: The Search for a Paradigm Reconsidered” by Ronald H. Chilcote.
- IGNOU notes on Comparative Politics.

#### Additional Readings:

- “Theories of International Relations” by Palgrave publications.
- “The Oxford Handbook of International Relations” by Christian Reus-Smit and Duncan Snidal.
- “Understanding International Relations” by Chris Brown and Kirsten Ainley.
- “Introduction to International Relations: Theories and Approaches” by Georg Sorenson and Robert Jackson.

### **Paper 2: Section B: India and the World**

#### Essential Readings:

- Indian Foreign Policy: An Overview by Harsh Pant
- International Relations- Mcgraw Hill education
- “IDSA website should be followed for articles.
- MEA website should be regularly followed for updates and articles.
- IR editorials should be followed in The Hindu and The Indian Express.

#### Additional Readings:

- The Oxford Handbook of Indian Foreign Policy” by David M. Malone, C Raja Mohan and Srinath Raghavan.

This is the complete overview of the UPSC Political Science Optional Subject including the syllabus, booklist and preparation strategy. Make sure you remain syllabus-specific while reading the UPSC Political Science Optional Syllabus and compile your notes accordingly.

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GS (Pre + Main ) Foundation Course (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/online-ias-coaching/gf-foundation/>)

UPSC Online Test Series (Pre +Main) (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/testseries/>)

Daily Current Affairs Quiz (MCQ) (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/upsc-daily-current-affair/>)

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Yojana-Kurukshetra Synopsis (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/upsc-yojana-kurukshetra-series/>)

Daily Current Affairs Notes (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/current-affairs/>)

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## Current Affairs analysis

LogiXtics - Unified Logistics Interface Platform's (ULIP) Hackathon launched (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/current-affairs/NewsContent.jsp?newsId=11325&newsType=English>)

 December 18 2021

The Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister releases the report on State of Foundational Literacy and Numeracy in India (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/current-affairs/NewsContent.jsp?newsId=11324&newsType=English>)

📅 December 17 2021

UNESCO inscribes 'Durga Puja in Kolkata' on the Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity (<https://www.careerlauncher.com/upsc/current-affairs/NewsContent.jsp?newsId=11323&newsType=English>)

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