

Welcome to First Year of the BA in Sociological and Political Studies

Who are we?

Welcome to the School of Political Science & Sociology. The School is dynamic, innovative and internationally recognised for its research, teaching and service to its students and to wider communities.

In particular, the School has a well-established reputation for research on Children, Youth and Families; Power, Conflict and Ideologies; Gender, Empowerment and Globalisation, and Governance and Sustainable Development. It brings together an international, cross-disciplinary group of academic staff members with diverse backgrounds in politics and sociology, as well as anthropology, business, community and international development, economics, social policy, social work, and women's and gender studies.

What is Sociological and Political Studies?

The School of Political Science and Sociology is unique in Ireland for offering the two academic disciplines of Political Science and Sociology as an integrated combined subject in the BA Joint Honours programme.

Political Science is the systematic study of political life, political activity or behaviour, as well as basic political concepts, such as power, freedom, democracy, human rights and equality. While focusing on all things political, the subject also draws on elements of economics, history, philosophy in its own unique approach and style.

Sociology is the study of society, social issues, and social activities or practices. It includes a factual dimension that seeks to understand our social worlds through the collection of data that tell us about social facts and trends, together with a critical lens informed by a rich theoretical literature, which enables us to reflect on the nature of society, social order, the relationship between individual and society, and social problems.



Both disciplines aim to provide information about the nature of social and political life in our societies while engaging with deeper arguments and analysis about why our societies are the way they are, and if they could be improved.

Why should I take this subject?

This subject is well suited to those with a questioning mind, who want to understand why and how things happen in society and what can be done. It is crucial, especially in this time of a pandemic, to understand how society is shaped and influenced, and what our role is within this process.

Do I need to have studied Politics and Society in school?

No, this course will begin with providing you with a solid foundation in Sociological and Political studies. However, those who have studied Politics and Society and/or Geography will be very well suited to this subject choice.

What Will I Be Studying?

The undergraduate programme introduces basic concepts in political science and sociology, Irish society and politics, political sociology, political and social theory, social science research methods and computer skills, European society and politics, public policy, environmental sociology, development theories and practice and gender studies. The School of Political Science and Sociology offers a uniquely interdisciplinary social sciences education.



How will my modules be delivered?

The First Year Programme in Sociological and Political Studies is normally composed of both large group lecture and seminar based modules.

Due to the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic, in **Semester One**, all essential lectures and learning materials will be available in online formats.

Being 'present' this semester will have a different meaning. You will enrol in a tutorial group and will be in regular contact with your lecturer. One hour per week will be scheduled for regular meetings of your group. We are planning to meet you safely on campus. This will be subject to prevailing Public Health Guidelines. Alternatively, if it is necessary, we can also facilitate you to study fully online.

Whether we meet online or on campus this semester, our team is looking forward to working with you. We are committed to you and your education.

SP158 Introduction to Politics and Sociology (5 ECTS)

This module introduces you to important issues in contemporary Irish Society. You will collaborate with leading lectures in their field who will share their passion and knowledge of their specialist topics with you. The module is comprised of weekly lectures and activities, which are fully online (Asynchronous).

SP1118 Practicing Sociology and Politics (5 ECTS)

You will be assigned to a group of 20 students facilitated by a specialist tutorial leader to support your learning in this tutorial module. This group will meet weekly online and where possible, on campus. In accordance with current Public Health Guidelines, we expect that in Semester 1, students will have the

opportunity to meet on campus once every three weeks at their allotted tutorial time.

CÉIM: Weekly CÉIM online peer learning sessions are student led and are about working collaboratively in small groups to develop independent learning skills, discuss new topics on the course, prepare for upcoming assignments and exams, and have some fun! The atmosphere is welcoming and friendly, and students are encouraged to ask any questions they may have about NUI Galway and their course. Regular CÉIM participants are awarded a Collaborative Learner digital badge.

Estimated Study Time	SP158 Lecture Based Module: 3 hours per week – you can choose when to study this content to suit your schedule (Asynchronous) Tutorial : 1 hour per week (Synchronous/Asynchronous/On Campus when possible) CÉIM: 1 hour per week (Online) Independent Study hours: 8 hours per week Total: 13 hours per week
Assessment	SP158 is examined by MCQs and the tutorial module is examined by continuous assessment, including a presentation and essay. CÉIM is a study support and is not assessed.

What will my Career path be?

There are excellent post-graduate routes on offer and you can find out more [here](#) .

Our graduates have successful careers in the following:

- Civil Service, Public Administration, State agencies
- Journalism and Media
- Public Relations, Advocacy, Lobbying
- Politics and public life
- Development, Community and Voluntary sector,
- Social Work
- Family Support

This list is only a taster. Our graduates boast excellent communication and teamwork skills. They are critical thinkers and adept problem solvers. The skills and knowledge gained prepares you to be a dynamic and insightful leader in society.

This subject is compatible with a wide range of the arts/humanities subjects.

What if I have some more questions?

Attend our introductory lectures on Orientation Week and watch our videos posted on the Orientation website.

You can also contact our First Year Coordinator Jacqueline Murphy – socpolyearone@nuigalway.ie