



SP160
'Problems in Politics & Sociology'
Module Handbook
2023-24

KEY CONTACTS:

First Year Programme Coordinator

Dr Diana Stypinska

Email: diana.stypinska@universityofgalway.ie

First Year Seminar Coordinator

Dr Judith O'Connell

Email: judith.oconnell@universityofgalway.ie

School of Political Science & Sociology Administrative Assistant

Stephanie Quinn

Email: stephanie.quinn@universityofgalway.ie

Please Note:

The information given in this handbook is intended as a guide for the students on the course and as such does not constitute a contract thereof between NUI Galway and a student or any other party or representatives concerning same. Please note that the information provided is provisional and may be subject to change by the University at any time.

Welcome to 'SP160: Problems in Politics & Sociology'!

This Handbook includes all the essential information about the module so please familiarise yourself with it carefully. You are expected to refer to this Handbook on a weekly basis.

However, if you have any questions that are not covered here, please do not hesitate to reach out to your seminar leader, or either of us, directly.

We hope that you will enjoy this module and we look forward to meeting you all soon.

Dr Diana Stypinska and Dr Judith O'Connell

Contents

Module Introduction.....	3
Intended Learning Outcomes	3
Module Contact Information	4
Our expectations of you.....	4
Your Responsibility.....	4
The importance of participation	5
What to do if you experience difficulties.....	5
Student Support Services.....	6
Learning Needs Assessment (LENS)	6
Module Overview - Semester 1	7
Module Overview - Semester 2	8
Assessment	9
How to submit your assessments.....	9
Essay Guidance	9
Semester 1 Politics Essay Topics	10
Semester 2 Sociology Essay Topics	12
Essay Marking Rubrics.....	15
Academic Integrity Policy.....	17
Citing your sources.....	17
Deadlines, extensions & deferrals	18
Consultation Day.....	18
Rechecks & Appeals	18
Module Outline Semester 1	19
Seminar 1	19

Seminar 2 19

Seminar 3 20

Seminar 4 20

Seminar 5 21

Module Outline Semester 2 21

Seminar 6 21

Seminar 7 21

Seminar 8 22

Seminar 9 22

Seminar 10 23

Module Introduction

This seminar module is designed to promote inquiry-based learning, to enhance practical scholarship skills while engaging with real world problems. Students work in small groups under the guidance of a seminar leader. Students are introduced to critical reading, taking effective notes, gathering information and using the library, online sources and Canvas, working in groups, preparing and writing assignments, using academic language, and revising and taking exams. There is an explicit focus on topics of Irish political system, and political ideologies in semester 1 while in semester 2 sociological perspectives on social inequalities and environmental problems and solutions are examined.

Intended Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of the module the student should be able to demonstrate attainment of key competencies and knowledge as outlined in the following Intended Learning Outcomes:

LO1	Critically read political science and sociological texts.
LO2	Write well-structured and coherent assignments that meet academic standards.
LO3	Use diverse learning tools and sources for information gathering (e.g. books, journal articles, online sources, Canvas).
LO4	Actively participate in small-group sessions and in-class discussions.
LO5	Converse in the workings of the Irish political system.
LO6	Understand political ideologies from political science point of view.
LO7	Understand sociological perspectives on religion, social inequality, crime and deviance, and environmental issues.

Module Contact Information

First point of contact: Throughout the academic year your first point of contact for this module is your seminar leader. You will be assigned a seminar leader as soon as you register for a seminar group. Your seminar leader will provide you with academic support, and advise on assessments, extensions, etc. They will also refer you to other members of staff/support services when/if necessary.

Following seminar enrolment, if you are unsure as to who your seminar leader is and/or how to contact them, please email First Year Seminar Coordinator, Dr Judith O’Connell (judith.oconnell@universityofgalway.ie).

For general inquiries about this module, please contact our First Year Seminar Coordinator, Dr Judith O’Connell (judith.oconnell@universityofgalway.ie).

For general inquiries about Year 1 Sociological and Political Studies, please contact First Year Programme Coordinator, Dr Diana Stypinska (diana.stypinska@universityofgalway.ie).

Our expectations of you

Your Responsibility

Be Present	Be Prepared	Participate
<div data-bbox="295 1146 497 1355" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="231 1438 566 1518">Attend all modules that you registered for:</p> <p data-bbox="223 1594 574 1680">Lecture modules: 2 hours per week</p> <p data-bbox="215 1758 582 1892">Seminar modules: 1 hour in designated weeks (see your Module Handbook for details)</p>	<div data-bbox="694 1182 901 1310" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="614 1438 981 1572">Complete the required learning and reading activities each week.</p> <p data-bbox="638 1653 949 1792">You will be expected to discuss these with your Lecturers and Classmates.</p>	<div data-bbox="1093 1142 1348 1366" data-label="Image"> </div> <p data-bbox="1013 1438 1380 1518">Complete all learning activities and assessments.</p> <p data-bbox="1045 1601 1348 1787">At University, you join a ‘community of practice’. Learning is active and collaborative.</p> <p data-bbox="1013 1870 1380 2004">We want to hear your ideas and understanding of the new topics you are engaging with.</p>

		<p>You will participate in weekly discussions and activities to demonstrate this new understanding.</p>
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The importance of participation

The Seminars give you an opportunity to meet with course teaching staff and with other course participants to exchange views and discuss problems. You can ask questions and share progress.

The Seminars also include practical exercises to relate the contents of the modules to your own individual experience or work context. They provide a useful opportunity to address any queries relating to the module material. Remember that it is important to have read the module materials so that you can participate in Seminar discussions and exercises. Inadequate preparation limits your ability to participate and disrupts the learning for other course participants. At your Seminar you will also receive guidance on assignments and projects.

It is the student's responsibility to inform the Seminar Leader of their absence either before or after the scheduled Seminar.

What to do if you experience difficulties

If you are experiencing difficulties that are having a negative impact on your studies, it is important that you let us know so that we can help or offer guidance on where you can seek assistance. Any *information relating your circumstances will be held in strictest confidence.*

The Golden Rule: deal with these issues as they occur by contacting your seminar leader and First Year Seminar Coordinator, Dr Judith O'Connell (judith.oconnell@universityofgalway.ie).

You can also reach out to First Year Programme Coordinator, Dr Diana Stypinska (diana.stypinska@universityofgalway.ie) and/or the College office.

If you encounter difficulties with any aspect of a module or with the First Year programme in Soc & Pol, we are here to help, but you need to let us know. We welcome feedback from students and an important part of our job is to support you in your studies.

Any issues you may have that have not been resolved with the lecturer/programme coordinator in the first instance can also be raised with our Deputy Head of School, Dr Vesna Malesevic (vesna.malesevic@universityofgalway.ie).

As a constituent unit of the College of Arts, Social Sciences and Celtic Studies, the School is subject to oversight by the Dean of Arts and issues relating to School decisions can also be raised with the Dean's office (contact details can be found here: <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies/staff/>).

The School is committed to working with **Year Representatives who are affiliated to the Student Union**. If you are interested in being a Year Rep please contact Dr Diana Stypinska (diana.stypinska@universityofgalway.ie)

Student Support Services

The University Support Services offer a range of different avenues of support.

Please see their webpages for the detailed information: <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/student-services/>

Amongst many services on offer, there are the following:

- [Student Enquiry Centre](#)
- [Things not going right](#)
- [Your Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [Counselling](#)
- [Student Advisors](#)
- [Accommodation](#)
- [Financial Aid](#)
- [Student Health Unit](#)
- [Chaplaincy](#)
- [Creche](#)

Learning Needs Assessment (LENS)

Students with a disability are entitled, under law, to reasonable accommodations to enable them to participate on more equal terms with their peers. Supports and reasonable accommodations are determined through an individual needs assessment, taking into account the nature and impact of the disability, evidence of disability, and course requirements.

Below is a list of the most recommended reasonable accommodations. This list is not exhaustive, and it is important to note that not all students will be eligible for all accommodations.

- Advice, Support and Advocacy
- Exam Accommodations
- In-class Accommodations
- Learning /Skills Support
- Assistive Technology
- Placement Support
- Other Specialised Supports

Incoming first-year students are welcome to register for disability support. We recommend you do so as soon as possible after starting your course or receiving a diagnosis.

Please note: Registration with the Disability Support Service (DSS) is a separate process to registering as a student in the University of Galway.

Students with evidence of a disability, ongoing physical or mental health condition, or a specific learning difficulty can register with the DSS. You only need to register with the DSS once and this remains in place for the duration of your course.

For more information please see: <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/disability/>

Module Overview - Semester 1

Teaching Week	SP160 Problems in Politics & Sociology
Induction Week (Sept. 11)	No seminars
Week 1 (Sept. 18)	No seminars
Week 2 (Sept. 25)	No seminars *** Seminar registration/self-enrolment ***
Week 3 (Oct. 2)	No seminars
Week 4 (Oct. 9)	No seminars
Week 5 (Oct. 16)	No seminars
Week 6 (Oct. 23)	Seminar 1: Introduction and Academic Skills
Week 7 (Oct. 30)	Seminar 2: 'Government and Parliament'
Week 8 (Nov. 6)	Seminar 3: Conducting Academic Research and Essay Writing
Week 9 (Nov. 13)	Seminar 4: 'Anarchism'
Week 10 (Nov. 20)	Seminar 5: Revision Strategies and Mock MCQ exam Essay Submission deadline: Friday, 24th November 2023, 23:59pm
Week 11 (Nov. 27)	No Seminars / Study Week
Week 12 (Dec. 4)	No Seminars / Exam Week
Week 13 (Dec. 11)	No Seminars / Exam Week

Module Overview - Semester 2

Teaching Week	SP160 Problems in Politics & Sociology
Week 1 (Jan. 8)	No seminars
Week 2 (Jan. 15)	No seminars
Week 3 (Jan. 22)	No seminars
Week 4 (Jan. 29)	No seminars
Week 5 (Feb. 5)	No seminars
Week 6 (Feb. 12)	Reading week No seminars
Week 7 (Feb. 19)	Seminar 6: Academic Skills Development Checkpoint – Identifying Areas for Improvement
Week 8 (Feb. 26)	Seminar 7: 'Social Divisions' and Discussion of Essay Topic 1
Week 9 (March 4)	Seminar 8: Academic skills Development: Time Management and Academic Integrity
Week 10 (March 11)	Seminar 9: 'Sustainability, Society & the Environment' and Discussion of Essay Topic 2 Please note that Friday, 17 th March, is a Bank Holiday, therefore, there will be no seminars on that day.
Week 11 (March 18)	Seminar 10: Revision Strategies and Mock MCQ exam
Week 12 (March 25)	No seminars Essay submission deadline – Friday, 29th March 2024, at 23:59pm

Assessment

Type of assessment	Word length	Submission deadline	Submission method	% of the overall mark for the module
Participation	N/A	N/A	N/A	10%
Politics Essay	1500 words (Excluding bibliography)	Friday, 24th November 2023, 23:59pm	Electronically via Turnitin link located in the Assessment Folder on the module Canvas page	45%
Sociology Essay	1500 words (Excluding bibliography)	Friday 29th March 2024, 23:59pm	Electronically via Turnitin link located in the Assessment Folder on the module Canvas page	45%

How to submit your assessments

All your assessments must be submitted Electronically via the relevant Turnitin link located in the Assessment Folder on the module Canvas page.

You must submit each assessment as a single file containing the Cover page, full essay and the bibliography section.

If you are unfamiliar with using Turnitin, please have a look at the materials in this Student Resource Hub: <https://help.turnitin.com/feedback-studio/student-resources.htm>

They include this short video that shows you how to submit an assessment: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v6nDM2q6lqc>

Essay Guidance

As assessment for this module, you are expected to submit two 1500-words essays: one Politics essay in semester 1 and one Sociology essay in semester 2. For each of these essays, you have a choice between two different topics. These essay topics will be discussed in the seminars.

You must include a signed Cover Sheet in each of these submissions.

The wordcount includes the essay and in-text references. The cover sheet and bibliography section are not included in the wordcount.

Detailed Essay Guidance is available on the module Canvas page, in the Assessment folder.

Semester 1 Politics Essay Topics

Politics Essay Topic 1

'Government and Parliament'

Essay Question: Critically assess the argument that the Republic of Ireland has a 'puny' parliament and an over-mighty executive.

This essay invites you to explain the distribution of power between executive and parliament in the Irish political system and consider whether too much power is concentrated in the hands of government and the office of Taoiseach. Your answer should consider whether the balance between executive and parliament has shifted in recent years as a result of reforms aimed at strengthening parliament, such as the changes to parliamentary committees and the introduction of pre-legislative scrutiny.

It would be reasonable to spend a fair portion of the essay explaining the role and relative powers of parliament and executive (i.e. the government) and the way they have changed in recent years. It would be good to connect your discussion of the Irish system to comparative debates on the relationship between parliaments and executives. Feel free to consider the impact of innovations such as pre-legislative scrutiny or the Citizen's Assembly whose deliberations on the eighth amendment (on abortion) were considered by an Oireachtas Committee before the government of the day proposed new legislation (although it's not essential to address these).

Reading:

Much of the key information you need for the essay can be found in the core reading for this topic :

Gallagher, M. (2018) Ch. 7 The Oireachtas: President and parliament. In Coakley and Gallagher *Politics in the Republic of Ireland*, 6th edition. Of particular importance is the material dealing with Dáil Éireann

Two chapters on Taoiseach and Government from different editions of the same book provide all the information you will need on the Irish executive:

O'Malley, Eoin & Martin, Shane (2018) Ch. 10 The government and the Taoiseach. In Coakley and Gallagher *Politics in the Republic of Ireland*, 6th edition.

Elgie, Robert & Fitzgerald, Peter (2005) The President and the Taoiseach. In Coakley and Gallagher (2005) *Politics in the Republic of Ireland*, pp.313-320 [on the Taoiseach]. Note that this is the **4th edition**.

The chapter by Heywood on Assemblies (ie parliaments) can help in enriching the comparative aspect of your essay:

Heywood, A. (2019) Ch. 15 Assemblies. In *Politics* 5th edition. Macmillan. Especially the section on 'Performance of Assemblies'.

while Lynch and Martin's paper on pre-legislative scrutiny can further enhance your analysis and offers some additional evidence on the impact of recent changes to the way in which parliament operates:

Lynch, C. & Shane Martin, S. (2020) Can parliaments be strengthened? A case study of pre-legislative scrutiny, *Irish Political Studies*, 35:1, 138-157.

Politics Essay Topic 2 'Anarchism'

Essay Question: 'Is the anarchist belief in spontaneous order justified?'

Key concepts:

- Autonomy: anarchists offer a distinctive understanding of freedom
- Anarchism: a commitment to the ideal of spontaneous order
- Authority: anarchists are opposed to authority, because they oppose all forms of imposed order

The conventional (e.g. liberal) view of the State is that the State is necessary and we have a duty to obey it (and its laws). The anarchist view is that all imposed order (including that of the State) is illegitimate; and order can (and should) arise spontaneously in society.

As Andrew Heywood puts it, anarchism refers to a 'stateless society in which free individuals manage their affairs by voluntary agreement' (Heywood 2017, p. 139). It is unlike any other ideology for that reason (except for the Marxist idea of communism, where the State withers away in a classless society).

This essay question asks you to analyse whether the anarchist belief in spontaneous order is justified. There are two ways to think of the question, based on two meanings to the term 'justified.' First, you can examine whether anarchism is feasible or realistic or viable. Second, you can ask whether anarchism is normatively or ethically legitimate as a political project. A good essay will bring together both of these dimensions.

I encourage you to bring in examples when you write your essay. In the lecture and in the readings there are numerous examples of the different kinds of anarchism. Using examples should help you communicate clearly to the reader what you are talking about. Examples also can help you advance an argument of your own (here concerning where the belief in spontaneous order is justified). Examples should not be used as so-called 'straw men': they should not be used to make opposing arguments look weak so as to make your argument look strong.

Your essay will need to combine exegesis with critical analysis. That is, you will need to give a clear account of what others have said on this topic (i.e. exegesis) and you will need to analyse these arguments for clarity, precision, and accuracy (i.e. critical analysis).

Your essay should have a clearly defined structure. Your introduction should explain why the issue is important and what you will argue. Your paragraphs should be clearly delineated, each one tackling a different aspect of the question. Any use of published sources should be cited in the text and accompanied by a full bibliographical entry at the end of document. Try and write in clear and precise language: re-read and revise as you go along to remove errors and ambiguity. And let the argument take you where the argument leads: you may find you have to give up what were, before writing this essay, dearly held assumptions!

Main Reading:

Heywood, A. (2017) 'Anarchism,' in *Political Ideologies*, fifth edition (Palgrave), pp. 137–62.

Additional Readings:

Horton, J. (2010) 'Anarchism,' in *Political Obligation*, second edition (Palgrave), pp. 106–34.

Wolff, R.P. (1990 [1973]) 'The conflict between authority and autonomy,' in J. Raz (ed.) *Authority* (New York: New York University Press), pp. 20–31.

Semester 2 Sociology Essay Topics

Sociology Essay Topic 1

'Social Divisions'

Essay Question: Discuss the ways in which class inequalities are maintained.

Key concepts: social class and social reproduction

This essay question is asking you to discuss the ways in which social class inequalities are justified, naturalised and reproduced. You are expected to focus on the idea of social reproduction here. That is to say, rather than simply looking at the economic base of inequalities, you should extend your discussion to include reflections on the role of dominant culture and ideology. Here, you should think about the processes through which social class inequalities come to be seen as inevitable, and even desirable. It is recommended that you focus on a specific example (for instance, education, or the role of media) to answer this question. This will help you to avoid generalisations and present evidence-based claims in support of your argument.

The assigned essay readings explore different facets of the social reproduction of class. You should make sure that you spend sufficient time familiarising yourself with their content before you decide which examples to use for your essay and how to structure your argument.

Essay Readings:

Essential:

- Canny, Angela and Hamilton, Miriam (2017) 'A state examination system and perpetuation of middle-class advantage: an Irish school context' in *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 39:5, pp. 638-653.

- Jones, Owen (2011) 'Chapter 6: A Rigged Society' in *Chavs: The Demonization of the Working Class*. London: Verso. pp. 169-183.

Additional:

- Loveday, Vik (2016) 'Embodying Deficiency Through 'Affective Practice': Shame, Relationality, and the Lived Experience of Social Class and Gender in Higher Education' in *Sociology*, 50:6, 1140-1155.
- Sayer, Andrew (2005) 'Class, moral worth and recognition' in *Sociology*, 39:5, 947-963.
- Tyler, Imogen (2008) 'Chapter 39: "Chav Mum Chav Scum": Class disgust in contemporary Britain' in Greco, M. and Stenner, P. (eds), *Emotions: A Social Science Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 331-338.
- Tyler, Imogen (2013) 'Chapter 6: Britain and its poor' in *Revolting Subjects: Social Abjection and Resistance in Neoliberal Britain*. London: Zed Books. pp. 153-178.

Sociology Essay Topic 2

'Sustainability, Society & the Environment'

Essay Question: Discuss critically the notion of 'sustainable consumption' and its likely implications for the economy, society and the environment. How can environmentally conscious citizens persuade other consumers to either buy less or shop differently?

In contemporary society, the consumption of goods and services bring important social and economic benefits, but growing demands from all quarters also places extreme pressures on the finite natural resources of the planet and on our environment. Sustainable Consumption is about doing more and better with less: but it is not just about consuming less. In fact, many people in poorer regions of the globe do not consume enough and need to increase their use of resources just to satisfy their basic needs and that of their families and communities. But in more affluent societies Sustainable Consumption is about consuming less and consuming differently: supporting local producers and businesses, buying more longer-lasting goods and products, choosing low-carbon heating and transport options, and foregoing the vast amount of *stuff* we tend to needlessly buy and accumulate, often without any logic or reason for doing so. By adopting more Sustainable Consumption practices and mind-set we can increase resource efficiency and fair trade while helping to alleviate poverty and enable everyone, regardless of their income or where they live, to enjoy a good quality of life with access to nutritious food, clean drinking water, adequate sources of energy, and reasonably priced medicine.

When choosing this particular essay students should initially **clearly define and discuss, in their own words, the term 'Sustainable Consumption' and openly state its implications for all three pillars of sustainability: economic, social, and environmental**. Students should then outline what specific problems are caused by (over)consumption in the developed and developing worlds. In seeking solutions to the ecological harm caused by (over)consumption, decision- and policymakers often propose ways of buying less or buying more environmentally friendly goods and items largely based on providing information to consumers. This approach shifts

responsibility onto the shoulders of individuals and largely lets producers 'off the hook'. Most environmentalists would now argue that this is just not working. Therefore, **more ambitious students will develop their essay to discuss this and propose possible ways and means in which our consumption behaviours can be transformed in a way that is fair and equitable for all of society, whilst minimising biodiversity loss and resource depletion linked to climate change.**

Suggested Readings:

- Macionis J.J. and Plummer, K. (2012). *Sociology: A Global Introduction*, 5th Edition. Harlow: Pearson Education Ltd., pp. 525-529 (section on consumption in Chapter 15) **OR** Chapters 9 in *First Year Sociology and Political Science Studies – Sociology Textbook* (2013) especially pp. 300-304 (section on consumption in Chapter 9)
- Dawkins, E. *et al.* (2019). Advancing sustainable consumption at the local government level: A literature review. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 231, pp. 1450-1462
- Pape, J., Rau, H., Fahy, F., and Davies, A. (2011). 'Developing Policies and Instruments for Sustainable Household Consumption: Irish Experiences & Futures'. *Journal of Consumer Policy*, 34(1): pp. 25-42
- Hinton, E.D. and Goodman, M.K. (2010). 'Sustainable Consumption: Developments, Considerations and New Directions' in M.R. Redclift and G. Woodgate (eds) *The International Handbook of Environmental Sociology*, 2nd Edition. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, pp. 245-261
- Spaargaren, G. (2003) Sustainable Consumption: A Theoretical and Environmental Policy Perspective, *Society & Natural Resources*, 16(8): pp. 687-701.

Further Reading:

- Jackson, T. (2009). *Prosperity without growth? The transition to a sustainable economy*. London: Sustainable Development Commission
- Warde, A. & Southerton, D. (eds.) (2012). *The Habits of Consumption*, COLLeGIUM: Studies across Disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences, Volume 12, Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies.

AND related web material at:

[Sustainable Consumption \[European Commission\]](#) | sustainablelifestyles.ac.uk | perlprojects.org
| sci.manchester.ac.uk.

Essay Marking Rubrics

	A (70-100%) H1	B (60-69%) H2.1	C (50-59%) H2.2	D (40-49%) Pass	E (0-39%) Fail
Structure	Clear, coherent structure to essay; excellent introductory and concluding paragraphs; main paragraphs give balanced attention to all important aspects of the answer	Very good structure to essay; very good introductory and concluding paragraphs; main paragraphs give very good attention to all important aspects of the answer	Good structure to essay; good introductory and concluding paragraphs; main paragraphs give good attention to all important aspects of the answer	Acceptable structure to essay; acceptable introductory and concluding paragraphs; main paragraphs give some attention to all important aspects of the answer	No clear introduction or conclusion; main paragraphs are disorderly or give inadequate coverage of key issues.
Content	Engaging closely and systematically with the question set, with consistently strong evidence of comprehensive understanding of the subject matter through use of theories, ably supported by evidence/examples	Very good engagement with the question set, with consistently very good evidence of understanding of the subject matter through some use of theories, well supported by evidence/examples	Good engagement with the question set, with consistently good evidence of understanding of the subject matter through minimal use of theories, supported by some evidence/examples	Acceptable level of engagement with the question set, with some evidence of understanding of the subject matter with no use of theories, and minimal use of evidence/examples	A display of minimal knowledge of material relative to the question posed; serious omissions / errors and/or major inaccuracies included in answer
Argument and Focus	Clearly presented argument that answers the question set; acknowledges weaknesses and strengths of the argument; acknowledges some remaining ambiguities and nuances	Well-presented argument that answers the question set; some acknowledgment of the weaknesses and strengths of the argument; minimally acknowledges some remaining	Some argument made, mostly description but answers the question set; minimal acknowledgment of the weaknesses and strengths of the argument; no acknowledgment of remaining	Predominantly description but answers the question set; no acknowledgment of the weaknesses and strengths of the argument; no acknowledgment of remaining ambiguities and nuances	Unclear, incoherent or simplistic argument; argument does not relate to set question; weak description; no analysis

		ambiguities and nuances	ambiguities and nuances		
Presentati on	Excellent use of Harvard style referencing; accurately acknowledged sources in the text; appropriate use of quotes; properly selected and formatted bibliography; within word limit; proof-read for typographical errors; Essay Entry form attached and properly completed	Very good use of Harvard style referencing; very good attempt at accurate in-text citation; very good use of quotes; well selected and formatted bibliography; within word limit; proof-read for typographical errors; Essay Entry form attached and completed	Good use of Harvard style referencing; good attempt at accurate in-text citation; good use of quotes; relevant and formatted bibliography; within word limit; proof-read for typographical errors; Essay Entry form attached and completed	Acceptable use of Harvard style referencing; most sources not accurately acknowledged in the text; acceptable use of quotes; some relevant sources used with incomplete bibliography; over/under word limit; minimally proof-read for typographical errors; Essay Entry form attached	No acknowledgement of sources in the text; inaccurate use of Harvard style referencing; incorrect / inadequate formatting of bibliography; inappropriate use of quotes; too many or too lengthy quotes; largely over or under word limit; typographical errors; missing/inadequate completion of Essay Entry Form
Expression and grammar	Clear, fluent and accurate use of language with correct spelling, grammar and punctuation; vocabulary and expression are clear and exact throughout; sustained engagement in relevant academic language	Clear and fluent use of language with mostly correct spelling, grammar and punctuation; vocabulary and expression are clear and exact but not consistently throughout the essay; very good engagement in relevant academic language	Accurate use of language with good attempt at correct spelling, grammar and punctuation; good attempt at clear vocabulary and expression but largely inconsistent throughout the essay; good engagement in relevant academic language	Acceptable use of language with some correct spelling, grammar and punctuation; vocabulary and expression are not very clear or exact; acceptable engagement in relevant academic language	Unclear or inappropriate use of language; frequent errors in terms of spelling, grammar and punctuation; poor or awkward expression with many grammatical errors; poor or non-existent engagement in relevant academic language

Academic Integrity Policy

The University of Galway Academic Integrity Policy is available here:

[QA220-Academic-Integrity-Policy-Final.pdf \(universityofgalway.ie\)](https://www.universityofgalway.ie/media/registrar/docs/QA220-Academic-Integrity-Policy-Final.pdf)

As the Policy states, 'Academic misconduct is any attempt to gain or help others gain an unfair academic advantage'. This can be 'intentional or inadvertent', and can be committed in a variety of ways (University of Galway 2022).

The following examples of academic misconduct are quoted from the University Policy (please note that this is not an exhaustive list):

- 'Submitting work as your own for assessment, which has, in fact, been done in whole or in part by someone else'.
- 'Cheating in exams (e.g., crib notes, copying, using disallowed tools, impersonation)'.
- 'Cheating in projects (e.g., collusion; using 'essay mills' to carry out the allocated part of the project)'.
- 'Self-plagiarism where you submit work which has previously been submitted for a different assignment without permission/acknowledgement'.
- 'Posting advertisements for services which encourage contract cheating either physically or virtually'.
- 'Submitting all or part of an assessment item which has been produced using artificial intelligence (e.g. Google Translate or other machine translation services/software, AI essay writing service etc.) and claiming it as your own work.'

Source: University of Galway (2022) 'QA220 Academic Integrity Policy', available at:

<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/media/registrar/docs/QA220-Academic-Integrity-Policy-Final.pdf>

Citing your sources

You should familiarise yourself with the University Referencing guide:

<https://libguides.library.nuigalway.ie/Plagiarism/Referencing>

Citing your sources: The School does not stipulate a particular style of referencing, and you will not be penalized for using the 'wrong' method. The main thing is to be consistent, i.e. please don't mix referencing styles in your coursework. For ease of use we recommend the Harvard system, which is commonly used in the social sciences.

A useful guide to using the Harvard method can be found here:

https://libguides.ul.ie/ld.php?content_id=23581826

We require students to confirm that any written work submitted is their own work: see the Assignment Cover Sheet in the Assessment folder on Canvas. When submitting work via Turnitin on Canvas, you can 'sign' the Cover Sheet by typing your name in the space provided.

We allow students to make multiple submissions to Turnitin before the set deadline. You are advised to make use of this option and carefully review your Turnitin similarity match report to ensure that your essay is properly referenced and that all the used sources are acknowledged.

You can find guidance on how to interpret your Turnitin similarity report here:

<https://help.turnitin.com/feedback-studio/turnitin-website/student/the-similarity-report/interpreting-the-similarity-report.htm>

Deadlines, extensions & deferrals

If for good reason you cannot make a deadline for an assignment, you can seek an extension from your seminar leader.

Submitting coursework late without an extension or a deferral, will be subject to penalty of 2% per overdue day (Monday – Friday & excluding weekends).

Exceptions include valid medical or personal reasons in which case you should contact your seminar leader and notify the First Year Seminar Coordinator Dr Judith O’Connell (judith.oconnell@universityofgalway.ie). A new deadline will be arranged.

Golden Rule: get your assignments in on time! It is best to deliver an imperfect essay by the due date as opposed to losing marks for late submission.

If you need to defer a module (in which case you will be examined for that module during the autumn exam – technically called the ‘2nd sitting’), you should contact the College Office, as we are not authorised to grant an application for deferrals.

The University deferral procedures are outlined in this document:

<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/media/registry/exams/policiesprocedures/QA234---Deferral-of-Examinations---A-guide-for-students.pdf>

For further information on deferrals please contact Catherine McCurry in the College Office at collegearts@universityofgalway.ie

Consultation Day

Consultation day is organised by the University after 1st sitting results release. It gives an opportunity to the students to seek informal recheck of their submitted work and the mark achieved. It is a requirement of the University to go through informal recheck first before proceeding with an Appeal.

Rechecks & Appeals

The Examinations Office has a procedure for dealing with queries relating to marks awarded for modules:

<https://www.universityofgalway.ie/media/registry/exams/policiesprocedures/QA235---Procedure-for-the-Discussion-Checking-and-Appeal-of-Examination-Rresults---Feb-2021.pdf>

Module Outline Semester 1

Seminar 1

Introduction and Academic Skills

Seminar Reading: Cottrell, Stella (2013) 'Chapter 1: Success as a Student' in *The Study Skills Handbook, 4th Edition*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 9-34.

In this introductory seminar, you will meet your seminar leader as well as your fellow students and discuss transition to University-level education, focusing specifically on the academic skills that you will be working towards developing this year.

The seminar will also cover the basics of academic referencing. After the session, it is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the Referencing guide:

<https://libguides.library.nuigalway.ie/Plagiarism/Referencing>

Seminar 2

'Government and Parliament'

Seminar Reading: Elgie, Robert (2005) 'Taoiseach and President'. In Coakley and Gallagher (2005) *Politics in the Republic of Ireland*, pp.313-320. (please note this is the **4th edition**)

Seminar activity:

Identify several examples of the powers of the Taoiseach, and several examples of constraints on the Taoiseach's power.

Central aims of the seminar:

1. To understand the key information and concepts in the short reading on the office of Taoiseach. This is a clear and concise reading that sets out the powers a Taoiseach enjoys and introduces students to some of the key lines of debate on those powers. It should help students to understand the distinction between the executive and legislative branches of government and the issues surrounding the distribution of power between them (the topic of one of the essays).
2. To stimulate discussion and reflection on the power enjoyed by a Taoiseach and the limitations on that power. Students might be encouraged to connect the ideas in the reading to current examples. That the current government is based on a novel arrangement to 'rotate' the office between the two main government parties highlights the limits to a taoiseach's power, especially in a coalition government where the junior partner has the power to withdraw at any time. A great deal of power is concentrated in the hands of the head of the Irish executive and one central issue is whether this concentration has facilitated the abuse of power. Discussion might touch as well on the strengthening of the power of the Irish parliament vis a vis the executive in recent years.

Seminar 3

Conducting Academic Research and Essay Writing

Seminar Reading: Cottrell, Stella (2013) extracts from 'Chapter 11: Writing at University Level' in *The Study Skills Handbook, 4th Edition*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 281-285 and 287-290.

In this seminar, you will discuss how to conduct academic research, evaluate the credibility of the sources and approach academic writing.

After the session, it is recommended that you familiarise yourself with the following resources:

- The Academic Writing Centre guidance on 'Use of Secondary Sources' and 'Evaluating Sources': <https://library.nuigalway.ie/media/library/files/awcdocuments/Secondary-Sources.pdf>
- NUIG Guide on 'Getting Started with Your Assignments': <https://openpress.nuigalway.ie/firstyearin/chapter/assignments-and-expectations/>

Seminar 4

'Anarchism'

Seminar Reading: from Andrew Heywood, *Political Ideologies* sixth edition (Palgrave, 2017), chapter on Anarchism, with particular attention to pp. 139–44. [This text is available on Canvas]

Seminar Activity:

For Andrew Heywood, anarchism refers to a 'stateless society in which free individuals manage their affairs by voluntary agreement' (2017, p. 139). Here are some questions that will help us in our efforts to analyse this ideology:

- Is it best to think of anarchism as providing a critique of contemporary societies, in particular liberal democracies? What criticism does anarchism make of representative democracies and capitalist market economies?
- Can there be an anarchist society? What is the difference between anarchism and chaos?
- Is belief in spontaneous order justified, given the possibility that others will treat us cruelly unless they are prevented from doing so by a non-voluntary and coercively enforced set of rules?
- Perhaps anarchism is in evidence in voluntary associations? Even so, can voluntary associations account for anything more than one (minute) aspect of the human experience?
- Are non-voluntary obligations not only needed but also justified? One example seems to be the duties of children to their (unchosen) parents. Are there such non-voluntary obligations at the level of the political community as well?

Seminar 5

Revision Strategies and Mock MCQ exam

In this week's seminar we will discuss different revision strategies and practical advice on preparing for and sitting the exam. You will also have an opportunity to sit, and discuss, a mock Politics MCQ exam.

Module Outline Semester 2

Seminar 6

Academic Skills Development Checkpoint – Identifying Areas for Improvement

Seminar Reading: Cottrell, Stella (2013) extract from 'Chapter 2: Developing your skills' in *The Study Skills Handbook, 4th Edition*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 43-50.

In preparation for this seminar, please revisit the feedback you received on your Politics essay, focusing on the marking rubric.

In the seminar, we will focus on reflecting upon your overall academic progress so far, identifying key areas for improvement and discussing the best ways of addressing them.

Seminar 7

'Social Divisions' and Discussion of Essay Topic 1

Seminar Reading: Tyler, Imogen (2008) 'Chapter 39: "Chav Mum Chav Scum": Class disgust in contemporary Britain' in Greco, M. and Stenner, P. (eds), *Emotions: A Social Science Reader*. London: Routledge. pp. 331-338.

Discussion theme: Social class divisions and popular culture

Seminar Activities:

1. Laughter and class disgust

Watch the clip from 'Little Britain'. How does it represent the working class? How is disgust invited or mobilised?

Think about:

- Speech (who is understandable, reasonable?)
- Clothing
- Habits
- Gender (stereotypes of girls/young women presented as "lower class").

Tyler argues that ‘class disgust is performed in ways that are community-forming’ and that it is ‘a means of asserting middle-class identity claims’ (2008:335).

What middle-class identity claims do you think are asserted through this comedy clip?

Discuss your reflections with the rest of the class.

2. Class differences and class representations

Working in small groups, think of examples of portrayals of class differences within popular media. Think of specific terms used to convey class identities, including derogatory terms of abuse. List them and reflect on their meanings and the feelings that they are meant to invoke.

Share your points with the rest of the class and reflect together on the ways in which social class is emotionally mediated.

What does your discussion tell us about the contemporary processes of the reproduction of class inequalities?

Seminar 8

Academic Skills Development: Time Management and Academic Integrity

Seminar Reading: Seminar Reading: Cottrell, Stella (2013) extract from ‘Chapter 5: Time Management as a Student’ in *The Study Skills Handbook, 4th Edition*. Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 121-135.

In this seminar, we will focus on time management strategies and academic integrity. The set reading includes some exercises that will help you reflect on your time management to date and think about how you can improve it. We will also talk about the importance of academic integrity and how this often relates to time management.

Seminar 9

‘Sustainability, Society & the Environment’ and Discussion of Essay Topic 2

Seminar reading: Van der Linden, S., Maibach, E. and Leiserowitz, A. (2015). Improving public engagement with climate change: Five “best practice” insights from psychological science. *Perspectives on Psychological Science*, 10(6), pp.758-763.

Seminar task: Communicating the critical importance and urgency of tackling the climate emergency to teenagers and young adults.

Background and Context:

Climate Change is the defining issue of our time, and we are at a defining moment in time. Since the mid-1800s, humans have contributed to the release of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases into the air, largely due to the burning of fossil fuels to create energy. Over time, large quantities of these gases have built up in the atmosphere causing global temperatures to rise, resulting in long-term changes to our climate. From changing weather patterns that threaten food production, to rising sea levels that increase the risk of devastating flooding, the impacts of climate change are

global in scope and unprecedented in scale. There is scientific consensus that the planet is warming and that this warming is mainly caused by human activities. Yet, in the face of such overwhelming evidence the world remains mired in a paralysis of procrastination and inaction. While a measure of blame must be laid at the feet of politicians and governments, some levels of culpability for such indecisiveness must also be placed on a failure of communication. In particular, as social scientists we are failing to persuade ordinary people of the evidential truth about the climate crisis and to get the message across of the real and present dangers that now face humanity from inaction.

Aim of this In-Class Task:

In this task students, working in groups of 5/6, must develop a practical message and strategy for communicating the urgency of tackling the climate crisis targeted at teenagers and young adults. What are the key facts of climate change, the main forces driving climate change, and why is there a need to tackle this issue at an international level at this moment in time?

The Task:

Therefore, each group must complete the follow: Firstly, each group must decide on a spokesperson and then using appropriately targeted language and using just one/two sentences in each case explain:

1. What climate change is
2. What is driving climate change
3. Why there is an urgency to tackle this issue now and
4. Why does it require international cooperation?

Once settled on a core message the group should then discuss the best medium, technology or social media platform to use, and in what way the message should be presented in order to capture the attention of as many teenagers and young adults as possible. An example of this may be to produce a humorous yet factual Tic-Tok short video aimed at this younger population, or a 'hands-on' practical campaign that gets young people to record their weekly waste levels then creating a competition to reduce such waste over time.

Once the groups finish and return to the main class, each group should present their core message and strategy to the reminder of the class.

Seminar 10

Revision Strategies and Mock MCQ exam

In this week's seminar we will discuss different revision strategies and practical advice on preparing for and sitting the exam. You will also have an opportunity to sit, and discuss, a mock Sociology MCQ exam.