

SUGGESTED PRELIMINARY READING FOR PPE

Your first-year course is in two formally-examined parts: political theory and empirical politics, and a third part – methods of political analysis. The first two will be taught by a combination of college-provided tutorials, and departmental lectures and formally examined in the Preliminary examination at the end of the first year. The third part will be taught through lectures and laboratory sessions in the Department of Politics and International Relations, and assessed through a 2,500-word essay to be submitted at the start of your third term.

A. For **political theory**, we suggest you read at least some of the basic texts studied in this part of the course:

- J. J. Rousseau, *The Social Contract*
- J. S. Mill, *On Liberty*
- Alexis de Toqueville, *Democracy in America*
- David McLellan, ed., *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, Second Edition (Oxford University Press, 2000). (readings 14, 37, 39)

B. For **empirical politics** there are two main books:

- William Roberts Clark, Matt Golder, and Sonia Golder, *Principles of Comparative Government*, 2009, Washington.

There is no need to read the whole book. Please read Chapter 1 to understand what the authors mean by ‘institutional design,’ and Chapter 11 ‘Parliamentary, Presidential, and Mixed Democracies’ (pp. 395-461) to apply this idea of ‘design’ to one of the major classificatory tools we use in distinguishing between democratic regimes.

- Arendt Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*, second ed. 2012, New Haven and London.

This book is important in bridging the work you will do in college tutorials on empirical politics, and in departmental classes on methods of political analysis. The book’s ‘models of democracy’ are different from the distinction between the parliamentary and presidential models above. Lijphart’s conclusions have been much disputed, but the interest of the book for you lies more in the methodological tools used (explored in first-year classes) than in whether its conclusions are right. Again you will not have time to plough through the entire book; focus on chapters 1-3, 7, 8, and 15-17.

Finally, at the core of the study of politics is the idea of power. But what does this mean, particularly if we are looking beyond coercive force? What roles do knowledge and language play? This piece by Rose and Miller (1992) is challenging; however, it provides a window into scholarship on the exercise of power and how we can think critically about power within industrial democracies.

- Rose, N., & Miller, P. (1992). Political power beyond the State: Problematics of Government. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 43(2), 173–200.

C. For the **methods component** there are two main textbooks:

- Kellstedt, Paul M. and Guy D. Whitten (2008) *The Fundamentals of Political Science Research*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

This book provides an introduction to the scientific study of politics. It is designed to make you familiar with the basic tools needed to be a critical consumer of scholarly research in political science. The book begins with a discussion of what it means to take a scientific approach to the study of politics and how to develop a research design, Chapters 1-4, please focus on these chapters in your preparation. The more technical part of the books focussing on analytical techniques will be covered in-depth during the lectures and data labs.

- Shively, Phillips W. (2012) *The Craft of Political Research* (9th edition). Pearson Classics in Political Science. Pearson Higher Education.

This book is a supplement to Kellstedt and Whitten and please review Chapters 1-2 that cover the development of research puzzles and designs in political science research.

D. Essay writing

At the core of your tutorial experience is the analytical essay. The key to a strong PPE essay is the presentation and defence of a clear argument. Please read this guide to writing essays (or watch the videos!) prior to your arrival: <https://www.timsquirrel.com/blog/how-to-write-undergraduate-essays>

While there are lots of additional resources on argumentation - see Toulmin's (1968) work, for example - this link from Purdue University provides an excellent summary of argumentative essay writing: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/685/>