



OLLSCOIL NA
GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY
OF GALWAY

Scoil na hEolaíochta Polaitiúla
agus na Socheolaíochta
School of Political Science
and Sociology

Visiting and Erasmus Students Handbook, Semester 1, AY2627



Welcome to the School of Political Science & Sociology!

[The School of Political Science & Sociology](#) (popularly known as **SOC & POL**) offers a wide range of modules. Some are specifically about Ireland, and others are international in theme, but all deal with issues that are regarded as important in today's world. Whatever your interests (or your discipline) we hope that at least one of them is for you and that you will join us in this semester's programme. If you decide to study with us, the following points should be noted:

1. All the modules offered by the School are [in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd /Final Year programme](#) range. Visiting students may take *any mixture* of modules from 1st, 2nd, and 3rd/Final year.
2. Please check our [website](#) for module descriptions per year of programme after you have consulted this handbook and learned what modules are available to you.
3. Once you are [registered with the University and register for specific modules](#), you will have access to Canvas (online learning platform) where all relevant module information will be made available by lecturers. I strongly suggest to familiarise yourself and check regularly Canvas and your University of Galway e-mail for the latest updates. These two types of communication with students will be the main and only way to reach students and keep them informed this semester.
4. **All classes start as and from week commencing Monday 7th September 2026.**
5. **All SOC&POL modules are worth 5 ECTS each.**
6. *You can register for as many or as few modules as you wish - there is no compulsory number for Visiting Students within one subject. You ought to be guided in this regard by the requirements of your home institution.*
7. **You register with the University through the student registration portal in accordance with the University of Galway Registration instructions (<http://www.nuigalway.ie/registration/>).**

If you experience issues with University registration, please check here:

https://www.nuigalway.ie/registration/how-to-register/newstudentundergrad/new_undergrad_faq/registration_issues/

8. **If you experience difficulties with registration for any SOC&POL module, please** go to the School website, find [Visiting Students page](#), and download the Registration form. Once you complete it, please e-mail it to the School Office to Stephanie.Quinn@universityofgalway.ie. Ms. Quinn will place you on the Waiting list and do her best to get you registered for the module of your choice.
9. Before making your choices, please remember that all modules have a limited number of places for ALL students. Remember you can do ***any combination of modules offered in all three years of the programme.***

10. You are strongly advised to attend the Visiting Students Orientation events and specifically talks given by different Schools, including the School of Political Science and Sociology on Wednesday, September 2nd at 11.50 am in Bailey Allen Hall.
11. Remember that all problems have a solution and that we are here to help you.

Semester Dates

Start of teaching all years	Monday 7th September
End of teaching all years	Friday 27th November
Study week	Monday 30 th November to Friday 4 th December
Semester 1 exams start	Monday 7th December
Semester 1 exams end	Friday 18th December
Christmas Holidays start	Saturday 19 th December

Exams & Assessment

In terms of how your modules in the School of Political Science & Sociology will be assessed, details will be released through module outlines and posted on Canvas. If you have any queries, please contact the relevant lecturer/course contact person (i.e. module coordinator).

[SOC&POL Visiting Students Handbook - AY26-27 Semester 1](#)

International Students Coordinator: Dr Vesna Malešević

E-mail: Vesna.Malesevic@universityofgalway.ie

Office: Aras Moyola, floor 2, room 324

Office hours: by appointment

1st YEAR PROGRAMME

SP1125 Introduction to Politics

Module Coordinator: Gerry Fitzpatrick

Timetable: due to large number of students, lectures are repeated; you choose either group A or group B time slots and attend 2 lectures per week.

Group A: Tuesday 11-12 noon (venue: Kirwan Lecture Theatre), and Wednesday 1-2pm (O'Flaherty Lecture Theatre)

OR

Group B: Tuesday 12-1pm (venue: O'Flaherty Lecture Theatre), and Thursday 11am-12 noon (venue: Kirwan Lecture Theatre)

Description:

This module introduces political science, in part by focusing on Irish examples but it also explores the big ideas and concepts that dominate political debate today. The module covers a few diverse topics: (1) political parties and Irish parties; (2) the unique political institutions of Ireland, notably the Oireachtas; (3) and political ideologies such as liberalism, conservatism, socialism, and anarchism are also examined.

There is additionally one 1-year module based on small group teaching that is available to you:

BSS1100 Digital Citizenship

Lecturer: Dr Mike Hynes

Timetable: Monday 1-3pm, AC203

Description:

The advancement of technology, the impacts of social media, and the technological trends influencing our everyday lives have all resulted in the creation of an online society, a global society. In a world so filled with technology, it is sometimes difficult for individuals to fully understand and manage their behaviours and the choices they make online. This module will help students navigate a digital world that has become more ubiquitous with the pervasive use of mobile communication devices like smartphones that allow us to remain connected at all times. Just as we are citizens of our own country, we are citizens of the online society and, as such, we need to learn how to use our technologies appropriately. We need to ensure that we learn how to exercise our use of technology for the betterment of ourselves as well as society at large. Now, more than ever, it is crucial for students to understand their role as Digital Citizens in this ever-changing world. While the Digital Citizenship module is about being actively engaged in the digital community, it should demonstrate the same kinds of behaviours expected in a face-to-face community and show a clear understanding of technology systems and operations while practising safe, legal and ethical behaviours online. And where technology is harmful to our overall well-being, and large technology corporations act in a manner that's harmful to society, we need to understand the consequences of this and challenge such developments and behaviours.

2nd YEAR PROGRAMME

Please consult regularly the *individual module outline provided by the lecturer on Canvas* for up-to-date information. 2nd year Handbook available on the School website provides full guidelines at <https://www.universityofgalway.ie/colleges-and-schools/arts-social-sciences-and-celtic-studies/political-science-and-sociology/undergraduate-courses/political-science-sociology/#tab3>

SP2122 European Politics

Dr Brendan Flynn and Colleagues (brendan.flynn@universityofgalway.ie)
Monday 12-1pm (O'Flaherty theatre); AND Monday 2-3pm (O'Flaherty theatre)

SP2125 Welfare, Rights and Policy Issues

Dr Brian McGrath and Colleagues (brian.mcgrath@universityofgalway.ie)
Tuesday 12-1pm (AMB 1021); AND Wednesday 12-1pm (AMB 1021)

SP2116 Sociology of Health

Dr Vesna Malesevic and Colleagues (vesna.malesevic@universityofgalway.ie)
Tuesday 2-3pm (AMB 1021); AND Friday 12-1pm (O'Flaherty theatre)

SP2117 International and Global Politics

Dr Evans Fanoulis and Colleagues (evans.fanoulis@universityofgalway.ie)
Tuesday 2-3pm (AUC G002, Aras Ui Chathail); AND Friday 12-1pm (AMB 1022, Fottrell theatre)

Descriptions:

SP2122 European Politics

Lecturers: Dr. Brendan Flynn and Colleagues

This module explores European politics through a broadly comparative perspective. It first addresses the strategic developments of the last decade and beyond, starting with the end of the cold war in the early 1990s, and the new security frameworks emerging today. We then discuss European nationalism, examining this issue in the context of Spain and the collapse of Yugoslavia. This is followed by lectures on the wider significance of German re-unification. In the second part of the course, we will use a regional framework of analysis. Here we will examine the Nordic democracies, the Mediterranean states, the newly established and struggling democracies of central Europe and the smaller European democracies such as the Netherlands, Switzerland, Belgium, and Austria. Finally in the last section of the course we will examine some comparative trends: European electoral behaviour, Europe's various distinctive styles of governance, and the rise of political extremist movements across Europe in the last few years.

SP2125 Welfare, Rights and Policy Issues

Lecturers: Dr. Brian McGrath & Colleagues

For students of Sociology and Politics, a particularly relevant field of study concerns people's welfare and wellbeing; and the purpose and role of social policy in addressing complex issues. Drawing on the School's strengths in its research and teaching programmes concerning welfare, policy analysis and professional/activist work, the purpose of this module is to introduce and examine a *selective* range of contemporary issues relating to: gender and equality, families and their support, children and their protection and rights. It is concerned with the effect of policies, particularly on more vulnerable groups

in society. It provides a range of perspectives from important social policy fields of: social work; family support; social/political activism/advocacy; and community-based approaches. The policy responses to the welfare issues we explore reflect distinctive approaches but similar principles, grounded in equality, human rights, and social justice. This module is structured around three core themes: Introduction to Policy and Concepts, Gender, Equality, Rights and Policy, and Family Support & Policy and Children's Rights, Child Protection & Policy.

SP2116 Sociology of Health

Lecturers: Dr. Vesna Malesevic & Colleagues

Health is deeply personal, but it is also profoundly political. This module challenges you to look beneath the surface of the medical model to discover how health, illness, and medical knowledge are socially constructed. We will investigate how institutions categorise our bodies and minds, exploring how medicalisation can act as a form of social control across race, gender, and class.

Spanning individual experiences to global systems, we analyse the social determinants of health and the root causes of systemic disparities. From examining the social realities of caregiving to analysing how institutional structures perpetuate disadvantage, this course equips you with the vital analytical tools to critique—and challenge—the systemic conditions of health inequalities.

Through engaging debates on chronic illness, disability, and structural disparities, you will learn to look at modern medicine through a critical sociological lens. If you want to understand the hidden structural forces driving today's biggest health debates, this module is for you.

SP2117 International and Global Politics

Lecturers: Dr Evans Fanoulis and Colleagues

The module aims at introducing you to the world of concepts, actors, events and theoretical approaches of international and global politics, with a primary focus on questions of peace, war, security and conflict. By the end of the semester, you will understand key concepts such as the nation-state and the international system as well as the main theoretical schools in international relations such as realism, liberalism and constructivism. You will be able to understand the role of international and regional organisations in the context of multilateral diplomacy. It also considers the role of non-state actors such as NGOs like Amnesty International or Greenpeace, and multinational corporations.

3rd/Final Year Programme

The *individual module outline provided by the module coordinator on Canvas* will provide up-to-date information. [3rd/Final Year Handbook](#) provides full guidelines and module descriptions.

SP404 Development & Change Tuesday 3-4pm O'Flaherty Theatre AND Wednesday 4-5pm O hEocha Theatre AMB1021	Su-Ming Khoo Contact: suming-khoo@universityofgalway.ie
SP3197 Thinking Politically: The Power of Ideas Monday 11-12 noon AMB1022 Fottrell Theatre AND Thursday 3-4pm O hEocha Theatre AMB1021	Allyn Fives, Kevin Ryan Contact: allyn.fives@universityofgalway.ie kevin.ryan@universityofgalway.ie
SP4134 Politics of Peace and Conflict Thursday 4-5pm CSB-1006 AND Friday 3-4pm O hEocha Theatre AMB1021	Niall Ó Dochartaigh, Sarah Jenkins Contact: niall.odochartaigh@universityofgalway.ie sarah.jenkins@universityofgalway.ie
SP3195 Equality, Diversity & Collective Action Thursday 4-5pm O'Flaherty Theatre AND Fri 3-4pm CSB-10006	Stacey Scriver Contact: stacey.scriver@universityofgalway.ie
SP3207 Public Policy and Government Tuesday 3-5pm ENG-2001 Lecture Room 1	Hanna-Kaisa Hoppania Contact: Hanna-Kaisa.hoppania@universityofgalway.ie
SP3208 Contemporary American Politics Wednesday 6-8pm O'Flaherty Theatre	Kevin Leyden Contact: kevin.leyden@universityofgalway.ie
SP3199 Care, Power, Information Tuesday 6–7 pm CSB-1006 Thursday 6-7 pm AMB1022 Fottrell Theatre	Su-Ming Khoo and Judith O'Connell Contact: suming-khoo@universityofgalway.ie judith.oconnell@universityofgalway.ie

SP3119 Green Political Thought Wednesday 11-1 pm AMB G-036	Gerry Fitzpatrick Contact: Gerard.Fitzpatrick@universityofgalway.ie
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Descriptions:

SP404 Development and Change

Lecturers: Su-Ming Khoo; Nata Duvvury

This course is a critical introduction to development studies. It focuses on the meanings of ‘development’ and the debates surrounding the definition and measurement of ‘progress’ or ‘good change’. We examine the different priorities attached to development efforts, critically challenging mainstream economic growth perspectives with alternative or ethical feminist, humanistic and ecological approaches. In current times of multiple crises and challenges, this course suggests that ideas about global ‘progress’ matter a lot and urgently need to be debated.

The course opens by discussing four main approaches to ‘progress’ – economic growth, equality, human rights, and capabilities. Economy-focused perspectives are different from ethical or values-based perspectives. The question of sustainability adds a fifth perspective that places limits on progress defined as economic growth, while the question of gender equality pushes us to question what is happening within aggregate populations or countries. The issues illustrate how ‘development’ involves problems of data and measurement, but also deeply philosophical and political questions of meaning and purpose. Persisting demands for growth are challenged by pressures of inequality, both within and between the societies of the Global South and Global North. We explore these contrasting perspectives on progress through the lenses of three major global issues for policy and public action: agriculture and food, health, and security. An issue-based approach enables us to open out debates with evidence and perspectives from Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America, and Europe.

The course material invites you to question conventional assumptions about economic and societal progress or ‘development’. It also introduces leading actors in global development – which include UN agencies and programmes, governments, notionally ‘free’ and globalized markets, and non-governmental and grassroots organization. These have different roles and niches in directing policy, organizing social protection and security, and protecting and fulfilling rights.

SP3197 Thinking Politically: The Power of Ideas

Lecturer: Allyn Fives and Kevin Ryan

This module explores the practical application of political theory to real-world issues and problems, thereby exploring ‘the power of ideas’. Topics include the use of torture against accused terrorists, restricting freedom of expression so as to maintain order, parental power over children, gender equality and queer identities, whistle-blowing, and the climate emergency.

In terms of how the module is organised, it introduces and overview of some of the key arguments in two of the main approaches to political theory: analytical (e.g. Isaiah Berlin, John Rawls, Judith Shklar, Alasdair MacIntyre) & continental (e.g. Michel Foucault, Judith Butler, Chantal Mouffe, Jacques Rancière). By exploring the ‘power of ideas’, this module highlights an apparent ‘incommensurability’ between the analytical and continental traditions in political theory, which is important in terms of how we use political theory to both ‘think politically’ but also ‘think critically’. From a standpoint of ‘epistemic toleration’, motivated in part by an awareness of family resemblances between the traditions,

the aim of this module is not to overcome incommensurability, but rather to make students aware of, and encourage their critical analysis of, the two traditions.

SP4134 Politics of Peace and Conflict

Lecturers: Niall Ó Dochartaigh and Sarah Jenkins

Political sociology seeks to understand the social origins and dynamics of political phenomena such as the modern state, nationalism, political mobilisation, civil war, conflict, and citizenship. Located at the boundary between the disciplines of sociology and political science it takes a sociological approach to the analysis of politics. It focuses in particular on the changing relationship between society and state. This course covers key themes and issues in political sociology, providing an overview of the major debates and perspectives in the field, tracing the changing relationship between state and society in the modern era. It introduces both classical and contemporary issues in political sociology and reviews the leading theoretical and historical approaches in the field in a way that illustrates theory with concrete empirical work and case studies. The course explores how the nation-state became the dominant form of political organisation in the modern world and why it persists; why nationalism is such a powerful political and social force; why people get involved—and stay involved—in political parties and social movements; how civil wars break out and why people take up arms; how governments maintain their legitimacy and why it matters; the changing nature of warfare and its role in shaping societies and states; and how practices and concepts of citizenship have developed and changed in the modern era.

SP3195 Equality, Diversity & Collective Action

Lecturers: Stacey Scriver and Danielle Kennan

In this module, students will have the opportunity to deepen knowledge on, and engage with, contemporary issues of diversity and equality advocacy. Students will explore the kinds of social movements and collective activism that have driven, shaped or challenged human rights internationally, taking a 'bottom-up' approach. Case studies will be used for in-depth exploration of tensions between equality and diversity and to examine the forms, functions, and outcomes of collective action in relation to the cases considered. Students will be assessed through a combination of mid-term assignment and a final written exam.

SP3208 Contemporary American Politics

Lecturers: Kevin Leyden and Colleagues

This module explores contemporary politics and political institutions in the United States. Students are introduced first to the basics of the American democratic system and then to examples of contemporary political issues. The module examines the basic American policy-making system, contemporary public opinion and voting behaviour, and the election of Donald Trump in 2016 and his defeat in 2020. The module will also examine pressing contemporary issues such as race-relations, gun violence, economic inequality, concerns about the election process, and America's changing position in the world economically and politically.

SP3199 Care, Power, Information

Lecturers: Su-Ming Khoo and Judith O'Connell

The 20th century was the century for which social scientists had described and analysed an ongoing process of "globalization". In the first two decades of the 21st century, it has become clear that we

already have and continue to be living together on one single but increasingly “ruinous”/”ruined” planet (e.g. Anthropocene) and in an integrated and vulnerable planetary society (e.g. COVID), but simultaneously we also exist and dwell in one world that is “made of many worlds”. Scholars, politicians, and activists propose unified responses to the processes that damage our one and very material World and that lead to various forms of injustice and inequality globally and across many different worlds through plans to “build back better” or establish “circular economies”, as well as integrate digital technologies, ecosystem services, global health, and economic development policy, finance, and law. At the same time, much of social, cultural, and economic life has migrated away from so-called “meat-space” into digital realms. These different developments are, however, related: They beg the question how do we relate to one another today? In this module, we will address this question through three connected registers of how we relate to another as all these developments require the creation and the exchange of information (I), wherein different actors establish, circulate, and execute different forms of power (P), which enable as well as constrain, ultimately, how we care (C) for one another. Social scientists (political scientists and sociologists) not only study these three CPI registers traditionally, but with the increasingly global and local challenges we are now facing, the role of the social scientists and the demands made on them by individual and institutional stakeholders is significantly changing. In this module, not only will the above sketched questions and the theoretical and methodological tools to analyse them be addressed, but also will possible futures of scholarship be developed that establish how social scientists can play the role of a critical friend that brings stakeholders and vulnerable communities together across power and information through mutual established practices of care. In conclusion, the question will be addressed If there can or even must be such a thing as a “transnational welfare state”.

There are additionally two 3rd/Final year modules based on small group teaching that are available to you:

SP3119: Green Political Thought

Lecturer: Gerry Fitzpatrick

Timetable: Wednesday 11am-1pm, AMB-G036

Description:

The module aims to analyse current ecological contradictions in public affairs through historical, philosophical, political theory, political economy and IR methodologies. The theoretical underpinnings of contemporary environmental policy-making and practice shall thus be articulated by setting them in a larger metaphysical context.

SP3207 Public Policy & Government

Lecturers: Hanna-Kaisa Hoppania and colleagues

Timetable: Tuesday 3-5pm, ENG-2001 Lecture Room 01

Description:

This module examines public policy in terms of how governments act to achieve their goals, solve problems and respond to various demands. Different regulatory measures and institutional courses of action will be explored. The module covers the historical development of public policy and public administration, the new public management reforms and contemporary debates over the role of government. The role of the citizen and democratic participation in public policy is also discussed. From the perspective of the policy process, the focus is on the implementation and evaluation of policy.

General Guidance

Essays & assignments: deadlines, extensions & deferrals

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

Submitting coursework late without an extension or a deferral, will be subject to penalty of 2%/2 points per overdue day for up to 10 working days (Monday – Friday & excluding weekends).

For extension request up to 7 working days with a valid reason and supporting evidence, please contact your module coordinator. For extension request beyond 7 working days, please contact the College of Arts under Extenuating Circumstances policy:

collegearts@universityofgalway.ie

If you need to defer a module (in which case you will be examined for that module during the Autumn sitting 2nd sitting), you can find the relevant information here:

<https://www.nuigalway.ie/exams/timetable-advice/deferrals/>. Applications for deferral should be sent to Catherine McCurry in the College Office at this email address:

collegearts@universityofgalway.ie

If you fail a module then you will have the opportunity to be repeat that module during the Autumn examinations.

Academic Integrity Policy

The University of Galway Academic Integrity Policy is available here: <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 2023).

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, QA220 Academic Integrity Policy)

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.*

If you encounter difficulties with any aspect of a module 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 module/year coordinator in the first instance can also be raised with our Deputy Head of School, Dr. Mike Hynes (mike.hynes@universityofgalway.ie).

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

The Examinations Office has a procedure for dealing with queries relating to marks awarded for modules. For details on ‘rechecks’ and ‘appeals’ please use this link: <https://www.nuigalway.ie/exams/results/>.

Student Support Services: Information on University Support Services can be found here:
<https://www.nuigalway.ie/student-life/student-support/>

NOTE:

If you have specific queries regarding modules, please direct them to the module coordinator or year coordinator responsible for that year of study:

1st year: Gerry Fitzpatrick at gerard.fitzpatrick@universityofgalway.ie

2nd year: Brian McGrath at brian.mcgrath@universityofgalway.ie

3rd/Final year: Jackie Murphy at jacqueline.murphy@universityofgalway.ie

If you have general queries regarding study in the School of Political Science and Sociology, please direct them to the International Students Coordinator Dr Vesna Malešević at Vesna.Malesevic@universityofgalway.ie

I wish you the very best with your studies at University of Galway!

Date: August 2026

Disclaimer: Every effort has been made to ensure that the details contained in this handbook are accurate. The School reserves the right to make changes or correct errors as necessary and, in this event, we will ensure that changes are amended into the latest version of the Handbook which is available on the School website.

School of Political Science & Sociology

Visiting Student Registration Form

Please indicate all the modules that you intend to take in the School. If you wish to drop a module, please inform module lecturer AND Vesna Malesevic immediately, as there is a Waiting list for each module. Separately, you must de-register from the module through UG Student Registration Portal.

UG ID number	First name	Surname	Course instance	UG E-mail address	Home University	Ireland phone number	No. of modules required in SOC&POL for credits:

	Module code	Module title	Order of preference	Is the module required at your Home University (yes/no)	SOC&POL Office use only:

Signature:

Date: