



# *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

## *Syllabus*

### *Approaches and Theories in Political Science - 56865*

*Last update 28-09-2023*

*HU Credits: 4*

*Degree/Cycle: 2nd degree (Master)*

*Responsible Department: Political Science*

*Academic year: 0*

*Semester: Yearly*

*Teaching Languages: Hebrew*

*Campus: Mt. Scopus*

*Course/Module Coordinator: Dr. Charles Lesch*

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*Coordinator Office Hours:*

*Monday: 11:30-12:30*

*Tuesday: 12:00-13:00*

*Office 4315B*

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Teaching Staff:

Dr. Lesch Charles

Course/Module description:

*How should we understand the relationship between theory and the empirical world? In what form should our research proceed? What, in short, are we trying to do as political scientists? This seminar introduces MA students to our field's most prominent approaches to the study of politics.*

Course/Module aims:

Learning outcomes - On successful completion of this module, students should be able to:

*Course participants will gain a broad understanding of the foundations of political science inquiry. By the end of the course, they will be able to 1) understand and critically appraise the field's key conceptual discussions and debates; 2) compare and contrast the major research paradigms through which the study of politics is currently approached; and 3) be positioned to frame their proposed research within these approaches and incorporate them in their own work.*

Attendance requirements(%):

100

Teaching arrangement and method of instruction:

Course/Module Content:

*The course is divided into three units. In Unit 1 we examine a number of foundational topics in social science inquiry: falsification and research paradigms; views about causality and originality; the role of concepts and their formation; differing definitions of "power" and their uses; contested understandings of core disciplinary terms, such as revolution, democracy, peasant, and institutionalization; and the place of historical analysis in political science. Unit 2 shifts to consider ten different approaches to political science: behavioral analysis; rational choice; institutionalism; constructivism and interpretive theory; feminist and gendered*

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*approaches; Marxism; poststructuralism; political psychology; normative political theory; and the history of political thought. Each of these approaches will be evaluated for their main principles and assumptions, as well as subject to discussion, debate, and critique. Finally, in Unit 3 our focus turns to student-developed presentations and research proposals.*

*Required Reading:*

*Ian Shapiro, "Problems, Methods, and Theories in the Study of Politics, or: What's Wrong with Political Science and What to Do About It," in Problems and Methods in the Study of Politics.*

*Karl Popper, "Science: Conjectures and Refutations," in Conjectures and Refutations.*

*Thomas Kuhn, The Structure of Scientific Revolutions, pp. 1-65, 77-135, 144-173, 198-210.*

*John Gerring, "Causation: A Unified Framework for the Social Sciences," Journal of Theoretical Politics.*

*Joshua Guetzkow, Michèle Lamont, and Grégoire Mallad, "What is Originality in the Humanities and the Social Sciences?" American Sociological Review.*

*Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," American Political Science Review.*

*John Gerring, "What Makes a Concept Good?" Polity.*

*Peter Bachrach and Morton S. Baratz, "The Two Faces of Power," American Political Science Review.*

*Steven Lukes, Power: A Radical View, Introduction and chapter 1.*

*John Gaventa, Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley, chapter 1.*

*James C. Scott, Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts, selections.*

*Christoph Kotowski, "Revolution," in Concepts and Methods in Social Science.*

*David Collier and Steven Levitzky, "Democracy with Adjectives," in Concepts and Methods in Social Science.*

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Marcus Kurtz, "Understanding Peasant Revolution," in *Concepts and Methods in Social Science*.

Steven Levitsky, "Institutionalization and Peronism," in *Concepts and Methods in Social Science*.

Paul Pierson, *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis*, chapters 1-3 and conclusion.

James Mahoney et. al., "The Logic of Historical Explanation in the Social Sciences," *Comparative Political Studies*.

David Sanders, "Behavioral Analysis," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*.

Harold D. Clarke et. al., "Why Britain Voted for Brexit: An Individual-Level Analysis of the 2016 Referendum Vote," *Parliamentary Affairs*.

Andrew Hindmoor and Brad Taylor, "Rational Choice," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*.

Daniel P. Carpenter, "Protection without Capture: Product Approval by a Politically Responsive, Learning Regulator," *American Political Science Review*.

Vivien Lowndes, "Institutionalism," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*.

George Tsebelis, "Veto Players and Institutional Analysis," *Governance*.

Craig Parsons, "Constructivism and Interpretive Theory," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*.

Shaul Shenhav, "Once Upon a Time there was a Nation: Narrative Conceptualization Analysis. The Concept of 'Nation' in the Discourse of Israeli Likud Party Leaders," *Discourse & Society*.

Meryl Kenny and Fiona Mackay, "Feminist and Gendered Approaches," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*.

Sheila Jeffreys, "They Know it When They See it: The UK Gender Recognition Act 2004," *The British Journal of Politics and International Relations*.

Ray Kiely, "Marxism: A Global Perspective," in *Theory and Methods in Political Science*.

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*Antonio Gramsci, The Prison Notebooks, selections.*

*Mark Wenman, "Poststructuralism," in Theory and Methods in Political Science.*

*Michel Foucault, Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, selections.*

*Frank Mols and Paul 't Hart, "Political Psychology," in Theory and Methods in Political Science.*

*Pazit Ben-Nun Bloom et. al., "Religious Social Identity, Religious Belief, and Anti-Immigration Sentiment," American Political Science Review.*

*Chris Armstrong, "Normative Theory," in Theory and Methods in Political Science.*

*Avner de Shalit, "The Ethics of Academic Boycott," The Journal of Politics.*

*Richard Whatmore, The History of Political Thought: A Very Short Introduction, selections.*

*Yiftah Elazar, "Liberty as Caricature: Bentham's Antidote to Republicanism," Journal of the History of Ideas.*

*Additional Reading Material:*

*Grading Scheme:*

*Essay / Project / Final Assignment / Home Exam / Referat 40 %*  
*Submission assignments during the semester: Exercises / Essays / Audits / Reports / Forum / Simulation / others 25 %*  
*Presentation / Poster Presentation / Lecture 25 %*  
*Attendance / Participation in Field Excursion 10 %*

*Additional information:*