

# **Introduction to Political Science – FALL 2021**

Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts ([www.BISLA.eu](http://www.BISLA.eu))

**Instructor:** Samuel Abrahám, PhD

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Tuesday: 13:00-14:30; 14:40-16:10 Group tutorials (The Garden or Tatarka Room)

Thursday: 13:00-14:30 Lecture-Seminar (The Garden or Tatarka Room)

## **Office Hours:**

Tuesday 16:10-17:00 Set up an individual meeting through email or send SMS or contact Lucia. My Mobil is: 0905 727-785

## **Course Description:**

Historically, political science has been plagued by disagreements over the purposes it serves, the basic questions it should be addressing, and the methods of analysis by which we gain knowledge of politics. Introduction to Political Science should begin to teach students to organize and connect factual information by using their analytical abilities to think critically about politics. In this course, students should learn about the basic nature of political science and the connections between the sub-divisions of the field. The course will introduce students to the basic concepts, institutions, and processes of politics. It will also provide the conceptual meaning and concrete information needed in order to understand and cope with the political events and governmental actions that affect every individual. The beginning of the course will be devoted to the concept of “Liberal Education”.

## **Class Participation and Exams**

50% Written work – Short essays (200-500 words), tests, quizzes (7)

40% Active participation, class preparation

10% Final Exam

## **The Structure of Sessions & Teaching Methods**

Each week there will be 3 (academic) contact hours of teaching divided into 1.5 hour seminar/tutorial. The seminar (Thursday) will cover the reading material. During the tutorials (Tuesday) the class will be divided into 2 groups. The focus will be on the topics from assigned material and the topics covered during the seminar as well as student presentations. Student must read all the required text before classes. We will use Moodle for most of the assignments. However, some assignments will be given in class and handed in the class.

If a student is absent for a class, he or she has to find out from other student the material covered in the lecture/seminar as well as does the assignments for the next lecture/seminar. If absent, student must send the assignment before the class to [abraham@bisla.sk](mailto:abraham@bisla.sk)

## **Materials**

The basic textbook is

**Michael G Roskin, Ed.: Political Science: An Introduction** (2017, 14th Edition.

**Slavenka Drakulić: Café Europa Revisited: How to Survive Post-Communism** (2021)

Leo Strauss: “**What Is Liberal Education?**”

## **Additional texts:**

Martha Nussbaum: “**Skills for Life**”

Stanley Fish: “**The Task of Higher Education**”

Fareed Zakaria: **In Defense of a Liberal Education (Ch.2: “A Brief History of Liberal Education”)**

Isaiah Berlin: “**On the Pursuit of the Ideal**“, NYRB 1988 (In Slovak: K&K 2/1999 [www.kritika.sk](http://www.kritika.sk))

## **PART I. The Bases of Politics (2-107)**

*Ch.1 Politics and Political Science*

*Ch.2 Political ideologies*

*Ch.3. States*

*Ch.4 Constitutions and Rights*

*Ch.5 Regimes.*

## **PART II. Political Attitudes (108-146)**

*Ch. 6 Political Culture*

*Ch. 7 Public Opinion*

## **PART III. Political Interactions**

*Ch 8. Political Communications(147-167)*

**Last Week of Classes: Exams Week**