

POLITICS I

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Do Proportional Representation electoral systems produce more representative governments or just permutations in government formation?
2. 'This narrow world, strewn with prohibitions, can only be called in question by absolute violence' (FRANTZ FANON). Is violence the only way to meet societal oppression?
3. Should the state make people work in exchange for income or other forms of public assistance?
4. What does contemporary political theory have to learn from the global South?
5. In the light of recent changes to the Chinese Constitution, is global politics experiencing a turn towards authoritarianism?
6. 'The European Union is the most successful historical example of a peaceful union of formerly warring countries.' Discuss.
7. 'To introduce into the philosophy of war a principle of moderation would be an absurdity' (CARL VON CLAUSEWITZ). What, if any, is the role of moderation in war?
8. Does the rise of religious fundamentalism reveal a fatal flaw in Max Weber's theory of disenchantment?
9. 'The alt-right are merely the latest standard-bearers of fragile masculinity.' Discuss.
10. 'We are, as bodies, vulnerable to others and to institutions, and this vulnerability constitutes one aspect of the social modality through which bodies persist' (JUDITH BUTLER). Can a 'politics of vulnerability' address contemporary issues of social justice?
11. Have we seen the end of the 'end of ideology' ideology?
12. Is there a role for 'state of nature' theories in contemporary political thought?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. What explains 'how democracies fail' (LEVITSKY AND ZIBLATT)?
2. Do emotions rather than material calculation explain voting choices?
3. Does Stokely Carmichael's 1966 proposition that 'integration is a subterfuge for the maintenance of white supremacy' still hold in the United States?
4. In a world of mass displacement, migration, and civil war, do states have a right to regulate immigration?
5. Does Mary Wollstonecraft overestimate the capacity for education to improve the lot of women in society?
6. 'Political science provides answers, but political theory asks the questions.' Discuss.
7. Does a nation's foreign policy go beyond mere self-interest?
8. 'Americans and Europeans kept telling themselves their tales of inevitability for a quarter-century after the end of communism, and so raised a millennial generation without history' (TIMOTHY SNYDER). What does this tell us about accounts of progress?
9. What are the bases of prime ministerial power?
10. 'The only people who care enough about us to work consistently for our liberation are us' (COMBAHEE RIVER COLLECTIVE). Does this view erase the role of 'allies' in liberation movements?
11. 'Anti-capitalist in theory, capitalist in practice.' Is this a fair assessment of identity politics?
12. What is the place of public opinion in Jean-Jacques Rousseau's political thought?

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1. 'I think the people in this country have had enough of experts from organizations with acronyms saying that they know what is best and getting it consistently wrong' (MICHAEL GOVE). What should be the role of experts in public life?
2. Has feminism lost its radical impetus?
3. Does twentieth-century social contract theory improve on its early modern and modern predecessors?
4. Is a super-majority requirement anti-democratic?
5. **EITHER** Discuss the relationship between religion and politics in **ANY TWO** South Asian countries. **OR**
What role should religious values play in informing public policy?
6. Does the US Democratic Party stand for any ideology?
7. Is a nuclear second-strike ever permissible?
8. Is the state entitled to punish wrongdoers?
9. Should historical materialism be revived?
10. Should the criteria for permanent membership of the UN Security Council be revised?
11. 'The fairest way to redress economic inequality is not a universal basic income but a maximum wage.' Do you agree?
12. To what extent, if any, is contemporary world politics still shaped by the 1917 Russian Revolution?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. 'A revolution is not a trail of roses. A revolution is a fight to the death between the future and the past' (FIDEL CASTRO). Should political theory always side with the future over the past?
2. 'You put them first, and they put you last, 'cause you're a chump, a political chump' (MALCOLM X). Can oppressed social groups trust political parties to bring about their emancipation?
3. Why not anarchism?
4. 'A neoliberal is someone who believes that markets are astonishingly good at creating wealth, but not always good at distributing wealth' (SAM BOWMAN). If this is true, who bears responsibility for wealth distribution?
5. 'Social democracy has failed. Only socialism offers a future for the left.' Do you agree?
6. Is the European project a reckoning with history, or a utopian vision?
7. 'We know better what we measure, and what measurement means, when we calculate the dynamic mass of a galaxy than when we quantify by polling a state of opinion' (RÉGIS DEBRAY). If this is true, are all attempts to measure public opinion doomed to fail?
8. Discuss the importance of colonialism for post-independence state-building in **ANY TWO** African countries.
9. 'Fukuyama won the battle, but Huntington is winning the war.' Do you agree?
10. Can conflict in the South China Sea be prevented?
11. 'Love means in general terms the consciousness of my unity with another, so that I am not in selfish isolation but win my self-consciousness only as the renunciation of my independence and through knowing myself as the unity of myself with another and of the other with me' (G.W.F. HEGEL). What is the case for a 'politics of love'?
12. Do the governments of former white settler colonies (e.g. Australia, Canada, New Zealand) owe reparations to the descendants of their indigenous inhabitants?

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1. 'The only way we transform this country is through a political revolution.' (BERNIE SANDERS) Discuss.
2. 'It is far better to be feared than loved if you cannot be both.' (NICCOLÒ MACHIAVELLI) Should emotions play a role in political argument?
3. 'At the core of conservatism lies an irreconcilable tension between nationalism and free-market economics.' Do you agree?
4. 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.' (MARTIN LUTHER KING) Is social progress inevitable?
5. Are presidential systems inherently susceptible to authoritarianism?
6. 'A nation is a historically constituted, stable community of people, formed on the basis of a common language, territory, economic life, and psychological make-up manifested in a common culture.' (JOSEF STALIN) If this is true, could the world ever become a nation?
7. Is European party politics experiencing a 'return to Weimar'?
8. Does the rise of the so-called Islamic State show that the sectarian divisions in the Middle East are ultimately irreconcilable?
9. With real wages stagnant or falling, should redistribution focus less on employment income, and more on wealth?
10. 'Equalization payments between regions are supposed to hold federal states together. Instead, they only make them more likely to break apart.' Do you agree?
11. 'Britain's past is European, but its future is global.' Discuss.
12. Is there a solution to the security dilemma?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Has the Cold War ended?
2. Is the US state a weak state?
3. Has the politics of economic conditionality been a success or a failure in Sub-Saharan Africa?
4. 'Truth and reconciliation commissions have been a crucial instrument of democratization in Latin America.' Discuss.
5. Does a currency union require a political union?
6. 'We will have so much winning if I get elected, that you may get bored with winning.' (DONALD TRUMP) Is there more to politics than winning?
7. 'Covenants, without the sword, are but words and of no strength to secure a man at all.' (THOMAS HOBBS) Discuss.
8. Socrates refused his friends' offer to help him flee Athens and thereby escape from his death sentence, on the grounds that he was under an obligation to submit to the authority of his fellow citizens. Was he right?
9. Should prostitution be lawful?
10. Is the family a site of justice?
11. Does judicial activism fatally undermine representative democracy?
12. 'White women and black men have it both ways. They can act as oppressor or be oppressed.' (BELL HOOKS) Is intersectionality an unachievable ideal?

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1. In what sense, if any, do credible threats reduce freedom?
2. Is VAT unjust?
3. Research suggests that in the US, the costs of prosecuting capital punishment cases far exceed the costs of prosecuting non-capital cases (including long-term imprisonment in both cases). Is that a good argument *against* capital punishment?
4. Should artwork stolen during WWII be returned to the descendants of their original legal owners?
5. What can IR theory tell us about international relations?
6. Would it be fair to say that Russia is a dictatorship in all but name?
7. 'The operation of modern democracy is virtually inconceivable without political parties.' [E. E. SCHATTSCHEIDER]. Discuss.
8. Is electoral support for radical left and right parties driven by ideological considerations or by discontent with the establishment?
9. Why did EU member states develop a Common Security and Defence Policy in the shadow of NATO?
10. 'All politics is local.' Discuss.
11. 'If there were a nation of Gods, it would govern itself democratically. A government so perfect is not suited to men.' [ROUSSEAU]. Discuss.
12. 'Liberalism ... is a corrosive which eats away unity, undermines cohesion, causes apathy and creates dissension.' [MAO]. Can liberalism defend itself against such an assessment?
13. 'Hope in reality is the worst of all evils, because it prolongs the torments of man.' [NIETZSCHE]. Is there a role for hope in contemporary politics?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. Does the 'principle of fairness' provide an adequate justification for political obligation?
2. Is it morally permissible to make the provision of aid to foreign countries conditional upon liberal-democratic reforms?
3. Is China a superpower?
4. Can one analyse contemporary politics in the Middle East without understanding the relationship between civilians and the military?
5. Is the stability of authoritarian regimes dependent on good economic performance?
6. 'Elections allow citizens to act as a rational god of vengeance and reward.' [V. O. KEY]. Discuss.
7. Why does a large part of the European citizenry oppose further European integration?
8. Can power-sharing political institutions help countries deal with deep ethnic divisions?
9. 'Revolution is the war of liberty against its enemies: the constitution is the system of liberty victorious and at peace.' [ROBESPIERRE]. If this is true, can revolutions against constitutional government ever be justified?
10. When the people speak, who listens?
11. When does private activity become a public concern?
12. Is 'feminist conservative' a contradiction in terms?
13. Can the UK Independence Party be accurately described as a fascist party?
14. 'Social democracy for the rich, slavery for the poor.' Is this a fair assessment of modern society?

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1. 'Better government means more legalistic constitutions and a bigger role for judges.' Discuss.
2. Should the state make it harder or easier for interest groups to organize?
3. Is weak leadership in politics under-rated?
4. Does *phronesis* have any place in the tool-kit of modern political scientists?
5. What if any are the positive functions of negative campaigning in elections?
6. Is 'authoritarian rule of law' a contradiction in terms?
7. 'The "investment theory of politics" is a better predictor of public policy than the 'median voter theorem.' Discuss.
8. What if anything has been settled by the Scottish referendum result?
9. 'It is organization which gives birth to the domination of the elected over the electors, of the mandatories over the mandators, of the delegates over the delegators. Who says organization says oligarchy,' [ROBERT MICHELS, originally 1911]. Has modern information technology changed this 'iron law'?
10. Is the state's right to restrict immigration derivative from any right that people would have in a state of nature?
11. How illuminating is the comparison between the 'Arab Spring' of 2011 and the 'Springtime of the Peoples' in 1848?
12. On what grounds, if any, are people morally obliged to wage war?

POLITICS II

Candidates should answer **THREE** questions

1. If debates about class in politics have reached the point of diminishing intellectual returns, might the same be happening to debates about gender?
2. When, if ever, is government by ‘technocrats’ appropriate?
3. Would British withdrawal upset received understandings of the development of the European Union?
4. What’s so good about fixed-term Parliaments?
5. Is there anything about democratic politics that explains why a given country is less likely to go to war *against* a democracy?
6. Has geography hitherto been more important ethnicity in shaping states? If so, has the relative importance of those two factors now reversed?
7. Can the principle of *laïcité* be implemented in a consistent and sensible way?”
8. What kinds of equality, if any, should be guaranteed in a constitution?
9. Is it wrong for the ultimate control of nuclear weapons in a democracy to be vested in just one person?
10. If ‘Weberian’ institutional qualities are really associated with economic performance, how can we understand China’s economic performance over the past thirty years?
11. In international relations, is there any valid objection to targeting economic sanctions against individuals rather than whole countries?
12. Nietzsche said that ‘as the power and self-confidence of a community grows, so its penal regulation is always relaxed.’ Was he right?