

Exam POL2000, V2015

ENGLISH

Take one of the articles from the class reading, and pair it with a chapter from Leftwich's book, *What is Politics?* Which concept of politics is being employed by the article author(s)? In other words, "What is politics" for the article author(s)? Which methodology do they employ (both the article and the book chapter authors)? How do you know?

NOTE: Make sure to include your candidate number on the first page of your take-home exam. There is no page limit to this essay. I expect explicit arguments, properly supported and referenced, in either Norwegian or English. Plagiarism is strictly forbidden. Use whichever reference system you prefer, just be consistent and ensure that the reader is able to follow your tracks. These answers should be delivered electronically to *It's Learning* before **16:00 (4pm) on Tuesday 17 February**. Remember to turn a hard (paper) copy into the department office by the end of the week. Good luck!

NORSK

Velg en av artiklene på pensum og sammenlign den med en av kapitlene i Leftwich sin bok *What is Politics?* Hvordan er politikkbegrepet brukt av artikkelforfatteren(e)? Med andre ord: «Hva er politikk?» for artikkelforfatteren(e)? Hvilken metodologi bruker de (både artikkel- og bokkaptitelforfatterne)? Hvordan vet du det?

NB: Husk å påføre kandidatnummeret ditt på hjemmeeksamenens første side. Det er ingen begrensning på antall sider i besvarelsen. Du kan bruke norsk eller engelsk. Jeg forventer konkrete argumenter, støttet av teori og med referanser. Bruk hvilket som helst referansesystem så lenge du er konsistent og leseren kan følge dine spor. Plageri er sterkt forbudt. Besvarelsen skal leveres elektronisk via *Its Learning* innen **tirsdag den 17. februar klokken 16.00**. Husk at du også må levere en papirkopi til instituttkontoret innen slutten av uken. Lykke til!

SENSOR VEILEDNING

First of all, it is essential that students have a firm argument/statement, which they prove in a coherent and convincing manner. Rambling descriptions, with no point, should be severely marked down. The answer should have a hypothesis statement and a clear outline or road map of how that hypothesis statement will be proven. Evidence for this argument, as well as the operationalization of important concepts (e.g., constructivist/naturalists; rational choice, political theory, etc.) should be done with explicit references to the course readings. Traditional academic and referencing standards should be maintained, although the students are free to choose a particular referencing system (so long as it used consistently, and contains enough information to track down the underlying evidence).

Students will first need to choose an article from the class readings. I have already used the class lectures to pinpoint each reading in a particular theoretical tradition (behavioralism, rational choice, political theory, etc.), so the hardest part has already been done for them. E.g., John Rawls' article is an example of political theory. Political theory (as a theoretical tradition) approaches tend to embrace a constructivist methodology and deductive methods. Grounding the methodology can be done with reference to the *Ways of Knowing* book.

The next step is to pair this article with one of the chapters in the Leftwich book. Here the students will find some room to maneuver, as some of the concepts of politics are very broad and could be linked to several theoretical traditions, while other chapters employ more narrow concepts of politics. If we stick to the example of Rawls, the student might link it to the Adam Swift's chapter on "Political Philosophy and Politics", as there is a clear an explicit linkage in the title.

In the third step, the students need to document why they believe that the article and the Leftwich chapter employ the methodology attributed to them (here constructivism). References/citations to both works should be used as evidence. In the example used here, Rawls uses a constructivist methodology, but it borders on naturalism (it has a strong rational choice component to it). This "positioning" should be documented with references to the text.

Some linkages (like the political theory one) will be easier than others. For example, several chapter titles in the Leftwich book align with concepts discussed in class (feminism, rational choice/collective choice, etc.); others are more of a stretch. Students that try to establish the more difficult linkages should be rewarded.

There are two parts to the question, both of which rely on Leftwich and an article from the reading. The first part asks the student to compare a Leftwich chapter with an article from the reading in light of the concept of politics being used (what is politics?). The second part asks to compare the two pieces in terms of methodology. Both parts of the question ask the student to draw on two pieces. Hence, the question implies that there is something different between a concept of politics ("What is politics?") and a methodology. The better students will see this, and respond to it directly.

In my lectures, I implied that methodology was mostly about ontology, and hence "what is politics?" is an ontological question. But in the book, methodology includes both ontology and epistemology—so this would require the student to consider the role of methods (deductive/inductive as well). How the student defines methodology will determine how they will need to respond to this challenge. Consequently, some students may wish to make a clear distinction between "concept of politics" and methodology. If this is the case, then the introduction to the Leftwich book offers a nice trichotomy that can be used (process/arena; extensive/limited; science/interpretation).