

## Introduction to Political Economy

### First year module

Lecturer: [Professor Peter Burnham \(/schools/government-society/departments/political-science-international-studies/staff/profiles/burnham-peter.aspx\)](/schools/government-society/departments/political-science-international-studies/staff/profiles/burnham-peter.aspx)

*Introduction to Political Economy* will provide students with a thorough introduction to the field of political economy. The module will provide students with the cognitive skills to progress to further study in the field of political economy, as well as a more generic training in understanding economic issues that impact upon everyday life.

In the first term, the teaching will be organised around an attempt to locate the field of political economy within the broad tradition of the social sciences. Students will understand the contested nature of 'political economy' across the social sciences, and they will analyse key theoretical developments in the history of the discipline. In particular, students will be encouraged to recognise the distinction between i) 'economics' as a way of thinking and ii) 'the economy' as a range of issues of contemporary public and political concern. The teaching will focus centrally around the issues of markets – or, more precisely, how to understand the economic dimension of everyday life within a social context bounded by 'market values' and 'market norms'. As part of the general assessment of the field of political economy, students will be asked whether established forms of scholarship privilege certain experiences of 'market value' and 'market norms' over others – e.g., western over non-western, economically 'visible' persons over economically 'invisible', male over female, 'First World' over 'Third World', etc.

In the second term, the focus of the teaching will shift to the role of the contemporary state in globalisation. The aim is to introduce students to the field of IPE through knowledge of the different ways by which states are developing competitive stances in the world economy. We will examine a variety of state strategies, from joining large regional organisations such as the European Union or the North American trade Association, to the minute tax havens of the world.

### Learning Outcomes

At the end of this module the student should be able to:

- Demonstrate a critical appreciation of the scope and contested nature of the study of political economy.
- Show awareness of how the study of political economy relates to the academic discipline of political science
- Have an ability to engage with discussions and debates regarding the contemporary context of political economy

### Assessment

- Term One: 1,500 words assessed essay (40%)
- Term Two: Presentation (10%)
- Term Three: 2 hour examination (40%)