



DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

PRE-PHD COURSE (SYLLABUS)

The Pre-Ph.D. Course Work in Political Science is designed to provide advanced research orientation, methodological grounding, and analytical skills necessary for doctoral-level inquiry in the discipline. The coursework spans four core papers carrying a total of 16 credits (400 marks). It aims to ensure that research scholars acquire the intellectual tools, ethical foundations, and technical competence required for independent and high-quality research in Political Science and its allied subfields. Research Training and Ethics paper familiarizes research scholars with the principles and practices of academic research, emphasizing research integrity, ethical standards, plagiarism prevention, and responsible scholarship. It also covers publication ethics, authorship norms, data transparency, and professional conduct in academic life.

Research Methodology course introduces key research designs and methodological approaches used in Political Science, including qualitative and quantitative methods. It covers problem formulation, hypothesis construction, data collection, sampling techniques, and analysis. The paper also highlights the philosophical and theoretical foundations of social research. Computer Applications in Research and SPSS paper provides practical training in the use of digital tools and statistical software for research. It focuses on MS Excel, SPSS, and data visualization techniques for managing and analysing political data. Emphasis is given to statistical interpretation, data presentation, and empirical research skills. Research Trends in Subfields of Political Science paper surveys major research trends across various subfields of Political Science—such as Political Theory, Comparative Politics, International Relations, Public Administration, and Indian Politics. It encourages scholars to identify research gaps and formulate potential doctoral research proposals aligned with contemporary debates. The successful completion of the coursework is mandatory for registration in the Ph.D. program.

PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

s.no	Title of the Course	Credits	Marks
1.	Research Training & Ethics	4	100
2.	Research Methodology	4	100
3.	Computer Applications in Research and SPSS	4	100
4.	Research Trends in Subfields of Political Science	4	100
Total		16	400

PAPER-1

RESEARCH TRAINING & ETHICS

UNIT I – RESEARCH TRAINING

- Preparation of research proposal, long abstract and research paper: Format and steps
- Preparations of qualitative and quantitative report, thesis, and research paper: Significance, Format and Style of Reporting.
- Evaluation of research proposal, report, and paper.
- Reference:
 - Meaning, Difference Between Reference and Citation,
 - Methods of Citations (In Text, Quotations, Direct Citation),
 - When to Cite,
 - Citation Elements,
 - Types of Citation (Book Citation, Journal Article Citation, Internet Source Citation etc.)
- Style Manuals:
 - Meaning and Definition,
 - Different Style Manuals According to Discipline,
 - Examples of Select Style Manuals- American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Style Manual

UNIT II – IMPORTANCE OF ETHICS IN SOCIAL RESEARCH

- Ethics: definition, moral philosophy, nature of moral judgement, and reactions.
- Ethics with respect to social science and research. intellectual honesty and research integrity.
- Ethical code of conduct and issue of objectivity
- Ethical considerations in social research
 - research debriefing,
 - informed consent
 - vulnerability of research participants
 - anonymity and confidentiality
 - conflict of interest
 - integrity, transparency, and knowledge of results

UNIT III – SCIENTIFIC MISCONDUCT

- Promotion of academic integrity & prevention of misconduct.
- Falsification and fabrication. redundant publications.
- Duplicate and overlapping publications.

- Selective reporting and misrepresentations of data.
- Best practices/standards setting initiatives and guidelines: COPE, WAME etc. Conflict of Interest. violation of publication ethics, authorship and contributionship.
- Analysing, and resolving ethical dilemmas.

UNIT IV – RESEARCH AND PUBLICATION ETHICS: TOOLS AND TECHNIQUES

- Intellectual Property Rights, Licensing, Open Sources
- Open access publications and initiatives.
- Identifying predatory publications, journals.
- Journal finder/Journal suggestions tools viz. JANE, Elsevier journal Finder, Springer journal suggesters etc.
- Research Citation Management: meaning, citation management software, free citation management software: Mendeley, Zotero, commercial citation, citation machine, management software: EndNote, Microsoft Word

UNIT V – PLAGIARISM

- Plagiarism: meaning and definition, types of plagiarism, plagiarism and internet, copyright and fair use, avoiding plagiarism.
- Subject specific ethical issues, authorship, conflict of interest.
- Complaints and appeals: examples and fraud from India and abroad
- Using plagiarism detection software tools (like Turnitin, Urkund and other open-source software tools), reference management tools.
- Databases and research matrix: indexing data bases, citation data base, web of science, Scopus etc.
- Impact factor of journal as per journal citation report, SNIP, SJR, IPP, Cite Score.
- Metrics: h-index, g-index, i-10 index and altmetric.

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PAPER-2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

UNIT I – RESEARCH: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

- Epistemology and Knowledge
- Philosophical foundations: positivist social science; interpretive social science, critical social science; normative theory, feminist, structuralism, post-structuralism, modernism, postmodernism, and subaltern perspective.
- Continuum of knowledge, theory, hypothesis concept and construct.
- Interdisciplinary and trans-disciplinary perspectives of research.
- Explanation in social sciences: the issue of objectivity, subjectivity, and bias in research.
- Scientific Method: attitude or orientation; characteristics of scientific method.
- What is Research?
 - Use, audience and purpose of research.
 - Types of research: fundamental, applied and action research.
 - Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods: basic features, types, scope, and limitations.

UNIT II – A GUIDE TO QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

- Selection of research problem: characteristics, sources and importance, deriving research questions; limitation, and strengths.
- Review of related literature: process, steps, sources, and its importance in problem selection.
- Variables: meaning and types- continuous and discrete, independent, and dependent, extraneous, and confounding, defining the variables in operational terms.
- Objectives of research: primary, secondary, and concomitant
- Hypothesis: characteristic of a good hypothesis, sources, types, and importance.
- Population and sample: probability and non-probability samples, methods of drawing random sample, sampling population, representativeness of sample and sampling error.
- The need for measurement: types and transformation of scales; and indexes.
- Selection and types of tools used for collection of primary and secondary data.
- Construction of different types of tools in research: tests, scales, and questionnaire.
- Triangulation.

UNIT III – RESEARCH SETTING

- Field: field observation and field experiments.
- Survey Research: types of survey: construction of questionnaire: principles of good item writing; questionnaire design issues.

- In-depth Study: case study; in-depth study in anthropological, educational geographical, historical, political, psychological, sociological setting.
- Experimental and quasi-experimental: design, process, and steps
- Non- Experimental research: correlational, ex-post facto: design, process, and steps
- Participatory action research
- Ethical issues in experimentation.

UNIT IV – A GUIDE TO QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

- Narrative Inquiry, Focus Group Discussion, Content Analysis, Discourse and Conversation Analysis and Ethnography
- Grounded Theory, Social Constructionism, Historical Research Methods, Hermeneutics, Dialectical Method, Phenomenology and Symbolic Interactionism.
- Observation Method
 - Concept, use, purpose, types, methodology and analysis
- Secondary Sources
 - Concept, use, purpose, types, methodology and analysis
- Mixed Method Approach
 - The importance of combining quantitative and qualitative research methodologies; understanding the core idea of mixed methods research.
 - Learning the assumptions about research needed to conduct this form of inquiry.

UNIT V – DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS IN RESEARCH

- Measures of central tendency: Mean, median, mode.
- Measures of variability: Range, average deviation, standard deviation, quartile deviation
- Use of computer/software for analysing quantitative and qualitative data
- The Research Report
 - Types of reports; basic components and methods of writing research reports; steps in writing report
 - Making of notes, bibliography, reference writing

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PAPER-3

COMPUTER APPLICATIONS IN RESEARCH AND SPSS

UNIT I – BASICS OF COMPUTER AND USING INTERNET FOR RESEARCH

Characteristics of Computers and Evolution of computers.

- The Internet: quick look, what is internet, Use of Internet, major internet services, electronic mail, www, Internet and the society, News and multimedia, archives, Searching research material across boundaries of subscription.

UNIT II – APPLICATION IN SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

Application of computer in research:

- Conception Phase (Use of E-Journals, Use of E-library, searching the keyword, search engines, academic search engines for extensive literature survey, Introduction to INFLIBNET and ERNET etc., storing relevant published articles);
- Design and Planning Phase (deciding population sample and sample size through software, questionnaire designing and data collection through software, if online, conducting pilot study);
- Data Collection Phase and Storage (data editing, data entry, and data management including follow up actions.)
- Data Exposition and Analysis [exposure for analysis of data through different software, interpretation (display of result in charts, graphs) and hypothesis testing].
- Reference Writing (and Bibliographic references in world wide web, writing different styles of references)

UNIT III – RESEARCH RELATED TOOLS AND UTILITIES

- Spreadsheet Tool: Introduction to spread-sheet applications.
- MS Word (File handling in window).
- PowerPoint (Creating presentations and adding effects, customising presentation)
- Microsoft Excel (features & functions, using formulae & functions).
- MS-Office or Open office and its application, Adobe Acrobat, other advanced tools
- Subject/field specific tools on www.freeware.com

UNIT IV – INTRODUCTION TO SPSS

- SPSS Environment: data editor, output viewer, syntax editor, data view window, SPSS syntax, data creation, importing data, variable types in SPSS and defining variables, creating a Codebook in SPSS.
- Computing variables, recoding (transforming) variables, recoding categorical string variables using automatic recode, rank cases, sorting data, grouping or splitting data.

UNIT V – BASIC DATA ANALYSIS USING SPSS

- Descriptive statistics for continuous variables, the explore procedure, frequencies procedure, descriptives:
- Frequency Distribution, Charts and Graphs
- Measures of central tendency of mean, median, mode.
- Measures of variability of range, average deviation, standard deviation, quartile deviation, compare means and frequencies for categorical data.

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PAPER-4

RESEARCH TRENDS IN SUBFIELDS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

UNIT I – POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

- Contemporary approaches in Political philosophy (post-modern, post-structural & environmental)
- Research trends in political Philosophy.

UNIT II – COMPARATIVE POLITICS

- Approaches: Behavioural, post-behavioural, and rational choice.
- Emerging trends in political culture

UNIT III – POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

- Institutional Structures and institutional change.
- Electoral systems and party systems in developing world.

UNIT IV – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

- Terrorism, and Regionalism in the contemporary world
- Emerging Research in Peace, Conflict, and Indian Foreign Policy

UNIT V – GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS IN INDIA & PUBLIC POLICY

- Evidence-based policy.
- Citizen participation, and policy impact assessment.

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