

A GUIDE TO READING **POLITICAL SCIENCE**

Modules
for Undergraduates



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AY 2009-2010**

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ABOUT THIS GUIDE

For most students at NUS, this will be the first course of study they have undertaken since secondary school. This poses a number of challenges because university lecturers expect a lot from their students. For a start, study at university is much more independent than at the junior college level. It is up to you to exercise good time management, which means finding ways to balance family and other commitments with academic ones, and making sure that you are well equipped with the right technical skills to do well in your course. These include having a good idea about what lectures and tutorials are for and knowing how to prepare for them; being able to write competently and hopefully fluently in English; following correct procedure when you reference other people's work; and knowing how to answer examination questions.

For many students, getting to grips with all these things in the first year or two of study can be pretty tough. Some study and technical skills will just have to be gained through experience. However, we in the Political Science Department think that we can give you a head start by providing some detailed general advice that applies across all modules offered by the Department. That advice is contained in this guide. Some things are relatively easy to get right from the outset, such as knowing how to cite sources correctly, but if you have not have had to do such things before they can appear difficult at first. This is where this Guide can help. You should not only read through it thoroughly, especially if this is your first module in Political Science, but also keep it beside you and refer to it throughout the semester as you write essays, prepare tutorial presentations, and get ready to sit final exams.

CLASSES IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Lectures

Lecture attendance at university is not strictly compulsory, but it is very unwise to miss a lot of lectures in a semester. This is not only because you will miss out on ideas and insights that you need to complete assignments and prepare for exams, but also because you might miss notices given by the lecturer on what they expect in terms of deadlines, extra reading, and other important pieces of information. In other words, you will lose contact with what is going on in class, and miss out on advice that you can't simply catch up on by borrowing friends' notes. Lecturers can tell very easily when a student is "out of touch" with what has been discussed in class.

Most lecturers will prescribe a reading list that accompanies the course. Reading is likely the single most important activity an undergraduate student in Political Science engages in, and you should spend most of your study time reading and taking notes. It is also very important that you don't leave reading until the last minute. Students sometimes leave most of their reading until the seductively named "reading week" before final exams. This is not the best approach. If you want to receive better than average grades and retain a competitive edge, you need to keep up with the reading throughout the semester. Prescribed and suggested authors will complement rather than repeat what your lecturer is saying in class.

Political Science lecturers are increasingly using PowerPoint presentations during their classes. PowerPoint can be a wonderful tool for both teachers and students, but it has a serious downside. The problem is that some students have given up taking their own notes in lectures, instead relying solely on printouts of PowerPoint slides as study tools. This is a terrible idea, because it means that you are not making an attempt to rephrase things in your own words. Students who get high grades often find that the process of taking their own notes helps them understand and remember class content better. That's why some lecturers will choose not to put up PowerPoint slides on IVLE until after the lecture for the week. This is their right and should not be a source of complaint on the

part of students. If he or she chooses to do so, it is not because the lecturer is trying to make your life more difficult, but because he or she thinks that the class needs to develop its own note-taking and study skills. Look on the bright side: if your lecturer does choose this option, you will have two sets of notes to use for study.

There are a few simple points of courtesy that you should follow during lectures in order to make the experience more enjoyable and useful for everyone:

- Classes at NUS are supposed to end fifteen minutes before the scheduled end time. This should give you plenty of time to get to your next class if you do have back-to-back classes, so you shouldn't have to arrive late to lectures for any reason. Arriving five or ten minutes after the lecture has started can be very disruptive, so try to avoid this as much as possible.
- Hand phones should be turned off at all times, and this really does mean completely switched off. Do not have the phone on but turned on to "discreet", and do not have it set so that it can receive SMS messages. You should also never take photos or video clips during class—unless of course the lecturer has permitted it for some reason.
- If you wish to record the lecture on audio-tape, because for example if you have a disability, you need to seek permission for this from the lecturer involved.
- Classrooms can sometimes be very full of students and not have the best acoustics, so some students might find it hard to hear the lecture. For reason, and because it is distracting for the lecturer, you should refrain from talking to neighbours during the lecture.

Tutorials

Tutorials are very different from lectures. The classes are smaller and may be taught either by your lecturer or, more likely in the first year or so, a tutor. Tutorials in Political Science generally start in the third week of term, and you will have a tutorial every second week. The emphasis here is on discussion and thus student participation. Different lecturers may use the tutorials for slightly different purposes, so you should listen carefully at the beginning of the semester so that you know how best to prepare for them. Among activities undertaken in tutorials include:

- Student presentations that are graded as part of the continuous assessment component of the module.
- Clearing up or going over any confusing concepts from the lectures. This can only happen if the tutor knows what is causing confusion or at the very least subjects that the students want to know more about, so come armed with questions! Tutors really appreciate it when you do have substantive questions about class content. Having questions is not a sign that you are a weak student, but rather the reverse. Asking good questions could even help bump up class participation grades.
- Discussing prescribed readings for the module and how these fit in with lecture content.

However your teachers decide to use tutorial time, it is always important to attend tutorials, not only because attendance usually contributes toward your final grade, but because it will help you prepare for assignments and exams.

ASSESSMENT

Continuous Assessment

Sadly, many NUS students take a long time to understand how much “continuous assessment” can contribute to getting a good grade in a Political Science module. Continuous assessment can make up at least half of lower-level modules in this discipline, and refers to work done throughout the semester before the final examination. CA, as you might see it referred to, could be made up of a number of different components, such as class attendance and participation; mid-term in-class tests; or essays, policy document discussions, book reviews and other forms of written assignment. Much of the rest of this guide gives you advice and assistance for preparing and submitting written assignments, but it should be first noted that CA exercises are just as important as final exams. The best students work hard throughout the semester, and this is generally reflected in CA as well as final grades.

Exams

Exams make up a significant part of your final grade, if not most of it, and understandably cause anxiety amongst students. We have some advice on preparing for exams later in this guide that should help ease that anxiety.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

You will most likely be set at least one written assignment for each module that you take in Political Science. More often than not, this will take the form of an essay in which you have to weigh evidence or alternative points of view on a topic in order to come up with your own argument. However, lecturers may also require another kind of written assignment, such as a book review, literature review, country profile, or policy analysis. Make sure that you understand exactly what kind of assignment is expected of you before you begin work on it.

If the written assignment takes the form of an essay, you will either be given a set question or several questions to choose from, or you might be asked to come up with your own topic.

If you are given a number of essays questions to choose from, select the topic that interests you most. Make sure that you understand what the essay question is asking you to do. Words such as “compare”, “contrast”, “evaluate”, “analyze”, “discuss”, or “critically evaluate” often appear in essay questions, and you should consult with your tutor if you do not understand precisely what they mean. It is very important that you answer the question when it comes to essay writing. Below average essays are often off-topic. For instance, a question in a political theory class might ask you to examine the importance of the “noble lie” in Plato’s political thought. An “off topic” answer might give an extensive background on the life of Plato and a overview of his *Republic*, rather than focusing on the specific concept the question asks you to focus on. Similarly, “off-topic” essays in comparative politics or international relations modules give too much irrelevant history or descriptive detail.

Make sure that you also answer each part of the question and give each part appropriate weight. Consider this question: “Which Central and Eastern European transitions from communist rule after 1989 were top-down, and which ones were bottom-up? What implications did different transition paths have for democratic consolidation?” You would need to do several things in order to answer this question well. First, you would need to understand and outline the distinction that the literature makes between “top-down” and “bottom-up” transitions from authoritarian

rule. Second, you would need to research a number of different countries and decide how to group them according to this theoretical distinction. Third, you would need to make your own judgment, in light of the evidence you have collected on the different countries, about how the different paths influenced political outcomes in the new democracies. It is perfectly okay, if confronted with such a daunting task as this, to limit your analysis in some well thought out way. For instance, you might want to narrow your discussion to focus on two good examples of “top-down” and two “bottom-up” transition paths, rather than trying to cover all the countries in Central Eastern Europe that became democratic after 1989. All you need to do is be explicit at the beginning of the essay about how you are going to answer the question, including how you might limit your discussion.

If you are asked to design your own essay question, the main danger is trying to cover too much. You should define your research topic as narrowly as possible so that you can answer the question in depth. You should also frame your topic as a question that you then try to answer. Your answer to this question becomes the argument of your essay. Having a good argument gives you a chance to discuss the most relevant aspects of the topic and will help make your essay more argumentative and thus interesting for the reader.

Researching Your Assignment

Your lecturer may give you a reading list to accompany your essay topic, but you will often be required to go beyond that list to find your own resources. The library is the best place to start, and we are now very lucky in that there are so many academic journals available on-line through the library databases.

Ideally, you should start researching your topic at least three to four weeks before the assignment is due. This will give you enough time to place holds on books or locate other hard-to-find material. In addition, it will allow you to start thinking about how you are going to answer the question before time runs out and you have to sit down and write.

Appropriate and Inappropriate Resources

Increasingly, students rely on inappropriate resources for their assignments. This is often the result of bad time management. Instead of collecting library materials early on in the semester as suggested above, students leave things until the last minute, panic, and then rely on inappropriate and unreliable internet sources to make up the bulk of their research material. Some students, however, especially at the beginning of their university career, may not be aware of the difference between appropriate and inappropriate resources, so please keep the following in mind.

There is a big difference between academic or “peer-reviewed” publications and non peer-reviewed or non-academic publications. Peer reviewed resources should make up the bulk of your reading list as an undergraduate student, consisting of books in the library plus articles from academic journals. These works have been approved by several academics in the field before being allowed to be published, which acts as a quality control.

Works that have not been peer-reviewed include just about everything else, including working papers (which usually represent the early thoughts of academics working on an article or book); newspaper and magazine articles; television programs; and websites. There are many instances in which high quality newspapers and periodicals are useful and appropriate resources. A good example here is the UK-based *Economist*, which has particularly good coverage of current international events. In terms of the over-use of inappropriate sources, the internet is the biggest culprit. In particular, Wikipedia and similar websites should never be used as a source by undergraduate students. There are two reasons for this:

- (1) Wikipedia and similar sites are open-source, meaning that anybody can add information to an entry. Sometimes the information is just plain wrong, and in other cases it is presented in a biased fashion that students are not yet able to readily identify.

(2) Furthermore, Wikipedia and similar sites are nothing more than online encyclopedias. An encyclopedia might be an appropriate source to use at junior college, but not at university level. The writing you do at NUS should be based primarily on peer-reviewed published research, supplemented by high-quality newspapers and magazine material.

However, there are instances in which it is appropriate to use information from the internet. A good example would be if you are writing an essay on Malaysian political parties. You could go to the websites of specific Malaysian political parties in order to contrast their different policy platforms. However, you should always be cautious about such sources, and most importantly, use them as a supplement rather than the basis of your writing. A good rule that you could set yourself would be to consult at least five or six academic publications before you start consulting the internet. When you do use internet resources, you should be very sure that you know who or what organization has posted a particular document or page, and for what purpose. This will help you identify biases in the source material. Above all, whether or not you use an internet source should depend on the quality of the material that you have accessed.

Note-taking

Once you have gathered your research materials and begun reading, you should take notes on each book or article that you read. You should record down the complete bibliographic information as well as the page numbers from which you are taking specific bits of information, arguments, or ideas.

Many students these days write their essays straight onto a computer screen with a pile of books and articles stacked beside them, rather than working from notes. This is generally not the best way to write essays and other written assignments. There are two reasons why this is the case:

(1) It puts you in danger of committing plagiarism, because you are less likely to rephrase ideas or sentences in your own words before borrowing them from a specific author. (The problem of plagiarism and how to avoid it is further discussed below.)

(2) Essays written in this manner tend to come out as bits of other people's work pieced together rather than an attempt to develop your own thoughts and present a coherent view on the topic. Essays like this do not have a clear line of argument, and tend to jump between ideas and facts with no apparent reason. Your tutor, in this circumstance, will often describe the essay as "lacking clear organization".

Writing Your Assignment

Once you have taken notes from your sources, you should write an essay plan. Each major thought or step in your argument should be organized into a paragraph. Students are increasingly using lots of small sections and sub-sections when they write, but this is often unnecessary. Essays or other assignment of less than 1,500 words probably don't need to have separate sections and sub-headings; just organize your paragraphs and your overall essay structure well. Some further advice on paragraph writing follows below.

Ideally, you should start writing your assignment one to two weeks before it is due, revise it one or more times, and leave several days at the end to carefully edit your work. Most students would receive much better grades for their assignments if they would simply leave more time for editing at the end. Could your thoughts be organized better to present a stronger argument? Are your sentences overly complicated? Are there simple grammatical mistakes that could be fixed? The following section will give you some further ideas about what to keep in mind as you write, revise, and edit your written assignment.

Academic Writing

Learning to write clearly and precisely is one of the most important skills you will develop as an undergraduate, and the ability to write clearly, using correct and formal language where appropriate, is also a skill that will be transferable to the workplace. Many students, however, find writing quite difficult at first.

General Points of Advice

- Write as if you are writing for an intelligent person who is not an expert in the field, rather than directly for your instructor. If you give your essay or other assignment to a friend at NUS who is not a social science major, he or she should still be able to follow the

basic contours of your argument. Keeping this in mind will help you understand that you need to bring your reader up to speed with basic ideas about your topic, before you launch into your own take on those ideas.

- Much student writing suffers because it tries to be too complicated. Don't use words or phrases if you don't truly know what they mean. Keep your sentences short. One way to avoid convoluted, awkward, and unclear sentences is to read them aloud to yourself as you write them. If you run out of breath or lose the thread of what you are trying to say, you need to start breaking up those long sentences into shorter ones!
- The more you read, the more you will grow to understand what academic writing should look like. Be critical of what you read, and think about the following questions. Are there particular authors whose writing you really like or find easier to understand? How can you make your own writing as clear as theirs?
- Think about what is appropriate and what is not appropriate in formal writing. As readers of students' work, we are increasingly noticing the adoption of informal or "colloquial" language. This may have something to do with the increased use of the internet as a tool of research and information dissemination in general. (See on the use of appropriate and inappropriate sources, above.) Again, the more that you read academic articles, the more that you should understand what is and what is not appropriate. Here are some examples of language that is too colloquial for academic assignments.
 - "Aristotle really stuffed up when he thought farmers weren't capable of thinking about politics."
 - "Greek politicians are known for messing about with the constitution in order to get their own way".

Common Errors and Things to Avoid

In addition to heeding this general advice, you should try to avoid common error such as these:

- Unnecessary or incorrect prepositions. Common examples include the following, with the unnecessary word struck out:
 - Nancy Bermeo emphasizes ~~on~~ the fact that...
 - Rousseau mentions ~~about~~ the concept of the social contract in relation to...
 - Theda Skocpol discusses ~~about~~ revolutions in France, Russia, and China....
 - Alexis de Tocqueville argues ~~on~~ that civil society...
- Try not to use “etc”, “i.e.” and “e.g.” These abbreviations are generally a sign of laziness in sentence construction. Try not to use “etc.”, “i.e.” and “e.g.,” but substitute their English equivalents: thus “and so on/forth” instead of etc.; “that is,” for i.e.; and “for example” instead of e.g.
- There is some dispute over the use of the first person, or “I” in formal written English. You may have been told at secondary school to avoid using “I” as in “I will argue that...” However, in academic writing, it’s OK to use the first person—just don’t overuse it. Our advice is that “I” is better than a complicated, confusing sentence constructed simply in order to avoid writing in the first person.
- Try to avoid qualifiers or such as “quite,” “somewhat” or “a little”. These qualifiers come across as wishy-washy and uncertain. The hallmark of good writing is clarity and being unequivocal.

- When you are writing numbers, a convention is to use words up to the number twenty: one, two, fifteen and so on. When the numbers start getting bigger, you can switch to 21, 145, 36,000 etc.
- Avoid common clichés and over-used sayings such as “boon or bane”.
- Spell-checking programs have reduced the frequency of misspelled words, but you should still edit your work for spelling errors since the computer can’t tell whether you meant to say “two”, “to” or “too”, for example. You should also work on spelling if you have a problem with some particular words, since your lecturer or tutor could mark you down in tests and exams when you do not have the luxury of a spell-checker. Some commonly misspelled words include:
 - *separation*, not *seperation*
 - *comparative*, not *comparitive*
 - *argument*, not *arguement*
 - *bureaucracy*
- Watch your punctuation. Make sure that you use apostrophes correctly: there is a big difference in meaning between “its” and “it’s”. Another highly problematic item is the semi-colon or “;”. Many students add this without really knowing how it is meant to be used. In brief, there are two main instances in which the use of a semi-colon is appropriate:
 - Instead of a comma, when you have a list of items of some length. For example: “Among Linz’s key objections to presidentialism are the problem of dual legitimacy; the rigidity caused by fixed term limits; the tendency toward zero-sum outcomes that prevents power sharing; and a generally more authoritarian style of politics since power is concentrated in one individual.”
 - When you have two very closely related ideas that you want to link together. Note however, and very importantly, that

the two parts of the sentence need to be grammatically complete, meaning that they form complete sentences by themselves. For example: “In addition, central state jurisdiction rarely touched local peasants or communities directly; governmental functions were often delegated to landlords in their 'private' capacities, or else to non-bureaucratic authoritative organizations run by local landlords.”

- When to use a capital letter for a word in the middle of a sentence can often cause confusion. Remember that in English, the only words that should be capitalized (apart from the word “I” and those at the beginning of sentences) are proper nouns. Proper nouns are specific people or names of very specific things. Words like “government”, “party”, “executive”, “bureaucracy”, and “prime minister” generally do not need capitalization, unless you are referring to a specific case of the general thing. Thus, “George W. Bush’s Cabinet”, the “Singaporean Parliament”, and the “Conservative Party” are all correct.
- You should use acronyms only if you will refer to the same organization or name repeatedly throughout the essay. For example, if your essay mentions ASEAN several times in a single essay, you should write out Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) the first time that you mention it, then refer subsequently to ASEAN.

Writing in Paragraphs

You not only need to structure your essays well, but you should make sure that you are writing in complete and coherent paragraphs. Paragraph construction and organization is causing an increasing problem for students, and for many, learning to write good paragraphs takes a lot of hard work. Yet it is a skill that is worth working hard on because it improves the flow of your analysis and is thus likely to attract higher grades.

Bad paragraphs are often either too short or too long. Newspapers and online resources often start a new paragraph every sentence or two. However, academic writing requires more complete paragraphs; they are often six to eight sentences in length. On the other hand, if your paragraphs run over more than a page, they are probably too long and try to include too many ideas.

Good paragraphs are structured around a single clear idea or thread of your overall argument. They can be viewed as mini-essays in themselves, consisting of an introductory statement, an expansion or clarification of that main point, and some evidence to back up the claim made. Look at how the writers of good clear journal articles structure their essays; often, you can understand the author's main argument by reading the first line of every paragraph. See if you can do this when editing your own work.

Indent or place a space between paragraphs, but do not do both. Avoid the use of bullet pointed lists, as you can usually incorporate the same points into a complete paragraph and your essay will read better as a result. (Note: do not use this "Guide" as an example. It extensively uses bullet points because it is a different type of document from an academic essay.)

Sexist Language

Once upon a time, formal English used male pronouns when referring to people in general. Examples of such language include “he”, “his”, and “him”. Today writers generally avoid such usage, unless a really good case has been presented for talking exclusively about men. Ways of avoiding avoid sexist language include using “he or she”, or using “they” if the sentence can be made into a plural form. Remember always, however, that correct sentence construction should always be followed. It is relatively easy to achieve both goals.

Take this sentence for example:

“It is the President’s responsibility to appoint his own cabinet”.

Better alternatives include:

“It is the President’s responsibility to appoint his or her own cabinet”.

OR

“Presidents have the responsibility of appointing their own cabinet”.

Similarly, it is easy to find alternatives to terms such as “mankind” or “Congressmen”. “Humankind” or “members of Congress” are better.

In addition, there is no need to refer to countries as “she”. The lucky thing about English is that we have “it” as a gender-neutral pronoun, so stick with this. To give an example, “Singapore has almost doubled her size through reclamation” can easily be replaced with “Singapore has almost doubled its size through reclamation”.

Referencing and Citations

When to Cite

When you write essays, book reviews, policy analyses, or any other form of written assignment, you will and in fact are required to draw on other people's work. This is so that you can acknowledge other people's theoretical contributions to the field, as well as use their research to report facts.

There are at least three instances in which you must formally acknowledge that you are drawing on other writers.

1. When you are directly quoting from an author's work.
2. When you use an author's data or statistics.
3. When you do not directly quote from an author's work, but you draw on his or her ideas or arguments, whether you mention his or her name or not.

It may surprise you to learn that this third instance is generally the most common reason for adding a citation. It is also the one most overlooked by undergraduates. It is very important that you acknowledge arguments that you have borrowed, even if you are not quoting directly. If you do not, you might be accused of plagiarism (see the section on plagiarism below).

Students in their first year or two sometimes end up wondering if they need to footnote every single sentence in order to meet these requirements. Early on, it's probably better to over-reference rather than to under-reference, but keep in mind that you don't need to give sources for facts that are generally well known. To give an example, that World War One was fought between 1914 and 1918 does not need to be referenced. If you are unsure whether something needs a citation or not, check with your tutor.

Following are real examples of each of the three cases in which you should always acknowledge your sources and add a citation to your work.

- a. Quoting directly from a source.

Source: Charles Tilly, *Democracy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 40-41.

In the following excerpt from a recent book entitled *Democracy*, the author, Charles Tilly, includes a relatively lengthy quotation from John Markoff's *Waves of Democracy*. Tilly's paragraph reads:

As evidenced by such points as France's revolution of 1848, democratization and de-democratization do not usually occur just one regime at a time. During the middle of the nineteenth century, Belgium, Hungary, Germany, Bohemia, Austria, Italy, and Switzerland all experienced revolutionary bids for democracy, most of which were quickly reversed. Adjacent and connected regimes influence one another. John Markoff, from whose book *Waves of Democracy* I have adapted this section's heading, puts it this way:

During a democratic wave, the organization of governments is altered—sometimes by peaceful reform, sometimes by dramatic overthrow—in ways that are widely held to be more democratic. During such a democratic wave, there is a great deal of discussion of the virtues of democracy, social movements often demand more democracy, and people in positions of authority proclaim their democratic intentions. During antidemocratic waves, governments are transformed in ways that are widely held to be undemocratic, social movements proclaim their intentions to do away with democracy, and government figures proudly express their hostility to democracy.¹

¹ John Markoff, *Waves of Democracy: Social Movements and Political Change*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge, 1996, pp. 1-2.

How can we identify such waves concretely? Whether they follow constitutional, substantive, procedural, or process-oriented definitions of democracy, most people who study multiple cases of democratization and de-democratization simplify their work with a straightforward device. They identify a threshold, placing non-democracy on one side and democracy on the other, they ask, how, under what conditions, and why regimes cross the threshold in either direction. They adopt a procedural standard.

- b. Using data or statistics reported by an author.

Source: Manos Matsaganis, “The Limits of Selectivity as a Recipe for Welfare Reform: The Case of Greece”, *Journal of Social Policy* 34 (2005): 235-253.

Social protection expenditure in Greece has risen considerably in recent years. In 2000 it stood at 26.4 per cent of GDP, compared with 27.3 per cent in the European Union as a whole. The corresponding figures in 1991 were 21.6 per cent of GDP in Greece versus 26.4 in the EU-15.² Higher spending does translate into improved benefits for some categories of welfare recipients. Nevertheless, the overall effect in terms of the perceived quality of social services or the distributive impact of cash transfers is questionable. Take the case of poverty reduction. If social transfers (including pensions) had not existed, the poverty rate in 2001 would have been the same in Greece and the European Union as a whole (39 per cent). Social transfers brought poverty down to 15 per cent in the EU-15, but only to 20 per cent in Greece.³

² European Commission, “Statistical Annex to Draft joint inclusion report”, Commission Staff Working Paper, Com (2003) 773 final: 25.

³ European Commission (2003): 15.

- c. Using or referring to someone else's ideas or arguments, whether or not the author's name is used.

Source: Kun-Chin Lin, "Disembedding Socialist Firms as a Statist Project: Restructuring the Chinese Oil Industry 1997-2002," *Enterprise & Society: The International Journal of Business History* 7 (2006): 59-97.

Classic studies of the formation of market economies in Europe by Karl Polanyi and E. P. Thompson, and in Southeast Asia by James Scott, share two central "moral economic" premises. First, the transition from the premarket economy to a market economy entails the undermining of overarching social norms that govern economic actions.⁴ Second, the ascendant "self-regulating market" imposes an encroaching and integrative logic on the society as a whole.⁵ The second theme underlines the importance of the central state in breaking down social and institutional barriers to a national market, coordinating private initiatives, and supplying the capital and infrastructure down payments for industrialization.⁶ Furthermore, Max Weber examined the mutually supportive developments of a modern tax regime, the legal-rational bureaucracy, and the market.⁷ In short, an entrepreneurial state with capacities for institutional innovations is accepted as necessary in uprooting premarket mentalities, socio-political alignments, and rules and norms of economic activities.

⁴ Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation* (Boston, 1944), E. P. Thompson, *Customs in Common* (New York, 1991), E. P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (New York, 1964), James Scott, *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven, Conn., 1985), James Scott, *The Moral Economy of the Peasant* (New Haven, Conn., 1976).

⁵ These themes dovetailed with Ferdinand Tönnies's and Max Weber's anxieties about the vast potential for social dislocation and disorientation from the shift from premarket modes of production, exchange, and valuation to the market economy. See Andrew Janos, *Politics and Paradigms: Changing Theories of Change in Social Science* (Stanford, Calif., 1986), 22–25.

⁶ Polanyi, *Great Transformation*, Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge, U.K., 1990), Alexander Gershenkron, *Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective* (New York, 1962).

⁷ Weber stated that "the development of the money economy, in so far as a pecuniary compensation of the officials is concerned, is a presupposition of bureaucracy." Quoted in H. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford, U.K., 1958), 204.

Do I Have To Cite Page Numbers?

One further source of confusion for students is when and when not to cite page numbers when referencing others' work. For most purposes at undergraduate level, you should cite specific page numbers where you got the specific pieces of information or arguments from. The exception is when you are summarizing the argument of an entire book or article, rather than something that appears on a particular page.

Example 1: "Peter Evans, in his 1995 book, *Embedded Autonomy*, argues that successful post-industrial states combine embeddedness with autonomy". This summarizes the argument of the entire book, so it does not need a page citation. You should still cite the book, however.

Example 2: "Marx argues that bourgeois power in France only lasted between June 24th and 10th of December, 1848." This is specific argument taken from a specific page of the book, so it needs a page number in the citation.

Notes on Using Quotations

Occasionally, you will need to quote directly from an author's text. But it is best to quote sparingly. An essay should not be a number of quotes strung together, and your marker might take extensive use of quotations as a sign of laziness or your inability to rephrase an idea or argument your own words. In addition, extensive quotation disrupts the flow of your own argument. Summarize an author's argument or ideas in your own words— citing where appropriate of course!

If you do wish to use a quotation, the convention is that you keep it in the body of your paragraph, enclosed in double quotation marks, if it is under three lines long. If it is more than three lines, place the quote in an indented, separate, paragraph. You don't need quotation marks in this case.

If you want to cut some words out of a quotation, use three dots, and if you need to add a word to make the quote make sense because you have chopped it up, enclose your addition in square brackets. For example:

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of Warre, where every man is Enemy to every man; the same is consequent to the time, wherein men live without other security, than what their own strength, and their own invention shall furnish them withal... the life of man [is], solitary, poore, nasty, brutish, and short.

However, it's usually best to avoid extensively chopping up quotations, as this can distort the author's original meaning. You should also refrain from editing spelling mistakes, modernizing the language, or changing the original in other ways.

Bibliographies

Every written assignment should include a bibliography-- a list of the references that you have used in your written work. It needs to be in alphabetical order starting with the author's family name.

Remember that for most works written in English, the family name of the author is listed last. Do not list authors by their personal, or in most cases, first names. The obvious exception here is some Chinese authors. You can check to see how these authors generally have their name cited.

Sample short bibliography:

Chen An, "Socioeconomic Polarization and Political Corruption in China: A Study of the Correlation," *The Journal of Communist Studies and Transition Politics* 18, (2002): 53-74.

Esman, Milton J., and Norman Uphoff, *Local Organizations: Intermediaries in Rural Development* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984).

Evans, Peter B., "The State as Problem and Solution: Predation, Embedded Autonomy and Structural Change," in Stephan Haggard and Robert R. Kaufman, eds., *The Politics of Economic Adjustment* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1992).

Greenhalgh, Susan, "Families and Networks in Taiwan's Economic Development," in Edwin Winckler and Susan Greenhalgh, eds., *Contending Approaches to the Political Economy of Taiwan* (Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 1987), 224-45.

Hamilton, Gary G., William Zeile, and Wan-Jin Kim, "Network Structure of East Asian Economies," in Stewart R. Clegg and S. Gordon Redding, eds., *Capitalism in Contrasting Cultures* (Hawthorne, N.Y.: De Gruyter, 1990), 105-29.

How to Use Citations

There are two main ways of citing the books, articles, and other sources that you use. These are the (a) footnoting style, and (b) the brackets in text style. The social sciences and humanities have traditionally used the former, the physical sciences the latter. Many social science journals now use the brackets-in-text style however. You may use either method, but you must not mix the two styles. Different lecturers may have different preferences, just as different journals do—if you learn both, you will be able to adapt easily to whatever style is required. However, we have noticed that the most mistakes are made with the brackets-in-text style, so be very careful with this referencing system in particular.

The Footnote Style

If you are using this method of referencing, drop a footnote where the citation should go. This is very easy to do using the <Reference> <Insert footnote> function in Microsoft Word. The footnotes will appear at the bottom of each page. Most lecturers prefer that you use footnotes rather than endnotes (notes that appear at the end of the essay) so that they can see your citations without having to turn repeatedly to the end of your essay.

There are many variations on the footnote referencing style. For example, you will notice when you are reading works produced by different publishers that some use “p. or pp.” to designate page numbers, while others do not. However, the most important thing here is that you remain consistent in the style that you use. To be on the safe side, we suggest that you adopt the style suggested here and stick to it unless your lecturer prefers something different. This style is adopted from the Chicago Manual of Style and is often referred to as “Chicago A”. It is also the style adopted by the journal, *World Politics*, if you would like to see a concrete example of its use. Further details are provided in the *Chicago Manual of Style*, available at <http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org> or as *The Chicago Manual of Style*. 15th edition. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Following are some examples of how different types of documents should appear in your footnotes.

Single-authored book:

Hussin Mutalib, *Islam in Malaysia: From Revivalism to Islamic State?* (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 1993)

Co-authored book:

Paul G. Buchanan and Kate Nicholls, *Labour Politics in Small Open Democracies: Australia, Chile, Ireland, New Zealand and Uruguay* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003)

Edited volume:

Andrew Martin, and George Ross, eds., *Euros and the Europeans: Monetary Integration and the European Model of Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Chapter in an edited volume:

Reuben Wong, "The Europeanisation of Foreign Policy", in eds. Christopher Hill and Michael Smith, *International Relations and the European Union* (Oxford: Oxford University, 2005), 134-153.

Article in journal:

Ethan Putterman, "Realism and Reform in Rousseau's Constitutional Projects for Poland and Corsica", *Political Studies* 49, (2001), 395-418.

Newspaper article:

He Zongying, "US grad students to get a taste of research in Singapore", *The Straits Times*. June 17 2008: H4.

Report:

OECD, *Education in OECD Developing Countries: Trends and Perspectives* (Paris: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 1974).

Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform [Ireland], *Immigration and Residency in Ireland: Outline policy proposals for an Immigration and Residency Bill* (Dublin: Stationery Office, 2005).

Paper presented at conference:

Alan Chong, "The Foreign Policy Potential Of 'Small State Soft Power' Information Strategies", (paper presented at Sixth Pan-European Conference on International Relations, Torino, Italy 12-15 Sep 2007).

Book review:

Robert W.T Martin, review of *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought* by Annabell Brett and James Tully eds., *Perspectives on Politics* 5 (2007), 803-04.

Thesis or dissertation:

Erik Moberg, "Internal Migration and State Retreat in Chinese and South Korean Industrialization", (PhD dissertation, Princeton University, 2006).

Website:

National Trade Union Congress [Singapore], "Our vision",
<http://www.ntuc.org.sg>. Accessed 19 May 2008.

Further Notes on the Footnoting Style

In addition to the above, there are a few other points that you should keep in mind when using the footnoting style in order to reference your work. Some of this also applies to writing up bibliographies in general and therefore to the brackets-in-text style as well.

- It is customary to use "in" before the book title when citing a chapter in an edited volume (see above), but do not place "in" before a journal title when citing a journal article.
- According to publishing and academic convention, underlining something and italicizing mean the same thing. This means that (a) you should never do both at the same time, anywhere, and that (b) you should italicize or underline journal and book titles, but don't alternate or use both at the same time.
- Don't italicize or underline titles of articles. These should be in plain text, within quotations marks. Italicize book or journal titles.
- Don't use "pp" for just one page. It is p.16 for something that appears on a single page, or pp.70-73 if you are citing an argument or idea that occurs over several pages.
- It is quite common for students to need to cite the same source more than once in a single written piece of work. The second time you cite a source, you may shorten the reference, but again, be consistent in the way that you do this. Here are some examples of how to shorten references the second time that you cite a work.

Single-authored book, first and second times cited in the same essay:

Terry Nardin, *Law, Morality, and the Relations of States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 16.

Nardin, *Law, Morality, and the Relations of States* (1983), 56-58.

Journal article, first and second times cited in the same essay:

Yoshinori Nishizaki, "The Moral Origin of Thailand's Provincial Strongman: The Case of Banharn Silpa-archa," *South East Asia Research* 13, (2005), 189.

Nishizaki, "The Moral Origin of Thailand's Provincial Strongman" (2005), 190-192.

Brackets-in-text Style

If you choose to adopt this style of referencing, the citations appear in the body of the essay in abbreviated form rather than in footnotes. A complete list of references is then provided at the end of the essay.

Further advice on the brackets-in-text (sometimes referred to as the “Harvard” system), can be found at:

<http://www.lse.ac.uk/library/guides/Endnote/whatisharvard.htm>

http://www.uwe.ac.uk/library/resources/general/info_study_skills/harvard2.htm

The following rules should be observed when using this referencing style:

- By “shortened reference” it is meant that you need to cite the author’s family name and the year that the work was published—for example (Nardin 1983).
- If you are referring to a specific page or pages, add in the page number or numbers: (Mutalib 1993: 4-5). Don’t use “p” or “pp” in this system.
- If the reference has two authors, the citation should include both their names: (Buchanan and Nicholls 2003).
- If the work you are citing has more than two authors, include all the names the first time you cite the source, then subsequently abbreviate—for example first time cited (King, Keohane and Verba 1994), thereafter (King et al 1994).
- If the reference appears at the end of a sentence, place it before the full-stop.

- If you mention the author's name in the sentence, you don't need to mention it again in the reference: "Atul Kohli has more recently used the concept of a "cohesive-capitalist" state (2004: 2)."
- If you need to cite more than one work published by the same author in the same year, you can differentiate between them by using *a, b, c etc*, after the date of publication. You need to then note this in your bibliography as well: (Wang 1998a: 65), (Wang 1998b: 12)
- If you want to cite more than one source as part of the same reference, enclose all references in the same set of brackets in alphabetical order: (Haque 1981: 12, Lee 1983: 34, Nardin 2000)
- If referencing a work by an organization or government, the author is the organization or government and the above rules apply: (Government of Singapore 1995: 89), or (OECD 2002: 56).

An example of the brackets-in-text style:

Source: Herbert Kitschelt, "Linkages Between Citizens and Politicians in Democratic Politics", *Comparative Political Studies*, 33 (2000): 845-876.

Two other critiques of spatial political competition models also confirm rather than challenge the idealization of programmatic linkages as the essence of democratic accountability and responsiveness. First, Kirchheimer's (1966) claim that catchall parties replace ideological parties only says that the dimension on which parties distinguish themselves from one another in spatial programmatic issue competition shrinks dramatically and explodes into a multiplicity of disparate issues on which opportunistic politicians take positions as they see fit to satisfy their desire to maximize electoral support and win political office. Second, theories of directional voting confirm the significance of politicians' policy appeals for electoral competition but suggest a calculus of how voters compare alternatives that is slightly

different from standard spatial models (Iversen, 1994; Merrill & Grofman, 1999; Rabinowitz & McDonald, 1989; Westholm, 1997).

These references appear in the bibliography as:

Iversen, Torben, "Political leadership and representation in West European democracies. A test of three models of voting", *American Journal of Political Science* 38 (1994): 45-74.

Kirchheimer, Otto, "The transformation of the Western European party systems", in eds. Joseph LaPalombara & Myron Weiner, *Political parties and political development* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1966), 177-200.

Merrill, Samuel, & Bernard Grofman, *A unified theory of voting. Directional and proximity spatial models*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press: 1999).

Rabinowitz, George, & Elaine Stuart McDonald, "A directional theory of issue voting", *American Political Science Review*, 83 (1989): 93-121.

Westholm, Anders, "Distance versus direction: The illusory defeat of the proximity theory of electoral choice", *American Political Science Review*, 91 (1997): 865-884.

Plagiarism and How to Avoid It

What is Plagiarism?

Plagiarism means taking ideas from sources without proper acknowledgement. Unfortunately, plagiarism is sometimes deliberate. In such cases, students might download an essay from the internet or copy whole or parts of an article or book, then pass the words off as if their own. However, plagiarism can also be unintentional. Sometimes students copy whole sentences out of books into their essays, or forget to add footnotes when they are “borrowing” arguments from specific authors. This latter form of plagiarism is very common, and you must make a special effort to avoid it. Some advice for avoiding accusations of plagiarism follows. The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences treats all cases of plagiarism very seriously. For further details on the Faculty’s policy see: http://www.fas.nus.edu.sg/pol/undergrad2_2_3.htm.

How to Avoid Plagiarism

Taking notes as you gather data and ideas for your written assignments instead of having books and articles in front of you as you write will help you avoid copying passages straight into your assignment. This will be especially true if you make a good effort to rephrase ideas in your own words when you take notes. It is usually obvious to lecturers and tutors when a student is using someone else’s words instead of their own.

Another way to avoid plagiarism is to make sure that you put footnotes or brackets-in-text references as you write, rather than leaving this task until you have finished your draft. It is far too easy to forget to fill in references or remember where they are supposed to go after you have finished your writing.

Handing in Your Written Assignments

Presentation of Assignments

There are several things you can do to make it easier for your lecturer or tutor to read and grade your work and, more importantly, provide useful comments that will help you improve your writing in the future.

- Please use a simple and conventional font, such as Times New Roman, 12 point size.
- Remember to provide page numbers on your assignment.
- Please one-and-a-half or double-space your work.
- Leave one inch margins, which some lecturers and tutors will want to have in order to write comments.
- There is no need to place assignments in plastic folders. In particular, please do not bind assignments, as this makes it difficult to write in the margins.
- Do provide a cover page. This should have your name, matriculation number, module code, tutor's name, and tutorial group.
- Students sometimes forget to include their bibliography, missing pages, or stapling together pages in the wrong order without using page numbers. You may lose marks because of these errors, so make sure that you have enough time to check through your assignment before you hand it in.

Handing in Written Assignments

Essays and other written assignments should be placed in your tutor's mail box (your lecturer's box if the lecturer takes your tutorial) by 5pm on the day that the assignment is due, unless otherwise specified by your lecturer.

Late Penalty Policy and Extensions

If you hand in assignments late without penalty and without official approval, this is extremely unfair to your classmates who have handed their work in on time. This is one reason why your marker will deduct grades for lateness.

Lecturers may grant extensions in exceptional cases, but all extensions are at the discretion of the lecturer. Exceptional cases include serious illness and unexpected bereavements. However, even in these circumstances, the lecturer is only likely to grant an extension only if two conditions are met:

- The request is made before the essay is due. If you are at home sick or can't make it into university just before the essay is due, call or email your lecturer to notify them of the problem.
- The request is accompanied by appropriate documentation if the lecturer requests it. This might mean a doctor's certificate in the case of physical or mental illness or evidence that a death in the family has occurred.

Remember that lecturers and tutors do talk to one another, so that students who ask for requests every semester will be noted.

Final Exams

Final exams really don't have to be as stressful as some students find them, if you work consistently throughout the semester instead of leaving a lot of work until the end. You will inevitably try to pack a lot of study into the last week or two of the semester, but avoid all-night cramming sessions. Get enough sleep and exercise, and take proper meals during the exam period.

Political Science exams usually require you to write essays. Keep in mind that lecturers are looking for many of the same things that they are looking for in essays written during the semester. You need to present a clear argument in a well-organized essay that has a short introduction, a conclusion, and a series of complete paragraphs. Spend a couple of minutes before starting each answer to come up with an essay plan and then stick to it as you write out your answer.

Your marks will be greatly reduced if you run out of time in the exam. It is frustrating for markers when this happens—they can't give any marks for an answer that simply isn't there! The secret here is to understand how much time you have for each question, preferably before you go into the exam, take a watch, and keep to the time limit you have worked out for each question.

Some specific study pointers consist of the following:

- Don't review everything you studied during the course of the semester. This is especially the case if the lecturer has given you a good idea of what might and might not be in the exam. You may be able to focus on several topics of interest to you that you are pretty sure will be in the exam, while not having to study the others so much in depth. Get advice from your lecturer on this.
- Don't study too narrowly. You should always keep a "reserve" study topic in case your favourite one fails to come up.
- A final exam is not simply a place to show that you can rote-learn facts or merely repeat arguments or theories learned in the module. Most

lecturers will design at least part of the exam so that you can demonstrate not so much your skills in rote-learning, but your originality, skills of reflection, and creativity in response to questions. This means that part of your study should involve thinking about the general themes of the module and what some of the “big” things that you’ve thought about during the course might be.

FURTHER ADVICE

Grades and What To Do About “Bad” Grades

When you get your essay or other written assignment back from your tutor or lecturer, you will receive some comments and a grade. The grade scale is as follows and note that markers do use the full scale:

Possible grades that you may receive:

A+, A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D+, D, D-, F

Pay as much attention to any comments as you do to the grade you receive, as the marker’s advice will help you improve your writing in the future.

You should see your tutor or lecturer (starting with the person who actually marked your assignment) if you receive a C or below and are not sure how to improve, or if your grade is seriously below your expectations. Remember that receiving a B+ or B is not necessarily a bad grade at all; not everyone will receive As.

Counselling Centre

If you are feeling overwhelmed by work, or more particularly if your family life, financial situation, or relationship problems are making study very difficult, help is available through the university's Counselling Centre.

The Counselling Centre is open between 8.30 and 6.00pm Monday to Thursday and 8.30 to 5.30 on Fridays, and is located at:

Alumni House

20 Lower Kent Ridge Road

Ph: (65) 6516 2376

counselling@nus.edu.sg

Academic staff are usually very happy to help out students who are struggling, but they are best trained to help out with the assignments and other coursework requirements rather than anything else. If it is the work itself that is the main problem, make an appointment to see your tutor or lecturer early on in the semester, and don't leave things until the final week before the exam!

Political Science Peers Programme

The Peers Programme is a resource for students to improve their written assignments. Peers are appointed by the Department to offer assistance with writing to students enrolled in Political Science modules. Showing a paper to a friend or talking over ideas with a classmate is often helpful in making our writing better. The Peers Programme operates in a similar way, as our trained Peers function as sounding boards for your ideas and as constructive critics of your writing. We provide one-on-one consultations with our Peers. These consultations supplement advice students can receive from instructors.

Writing conferences comprise the core of the Peers Programme. The format of these sessions varies with student needs. Our tutors deal with students at any stage of the writing process. You might have a full paper that you would like to discuss once with a peer before submitting. Our tutor can then raise issues that you might not have considered. Or you might have an assignment and not know how to approach it. Our tutor will help you brainstorm possible approaches to the assignment.

Conferences are scheduled for 50 minutes. During this time, the tutor will read your paper or what you have written so far of it. You should bring your own concerns and questions to the conference, so that the session can be as productive as possible.

The Peers Programme aims to assist students with writing issues they encounter. The Peers Programme is not several things:

- Peers will not discuss the content of particular topics, readings, or modules with students. We aim to help you express your ideas about political science material, not to tell you how you should understand any subject.
- The Peers Programme is not a service only for weaker students. We believe that anyone can improve his or her writing by talking about it with someone else. Strong writers can gain from our services.

- Writing conferences are not for purposes of editing. Our goal is not to check grammar and spelling in student essays. Instead, we share our thoughts on bigger issues, such as how well your paper expresses your ideas.





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