**Response to feedback on the POLIS papers and Politics and International Relations Part II, 2015**

The Department asked students to rate their papers across four dimensions: the overall scope and content, the paper guide, the lectures, and the supervisions. They used a seven-point scale from '1', which was 'very dissatisfied', to '7', which was 'very satisfied'.

Some papers received very positive feedback and there were aspects of all papers that were complimented. Nonetheless, there were some pertinent issues of concern. Some of these issues pertained to several papers and some to individual papers. Where concerns were expressed about individual supervisors the paper organiser has reviewed these with the supervisors concerned. The actions listed below are changes that will be implemented for next academic year in light of the feedback and the Department’s own consideration of its teaching this year.

**General issues**

• The Department was pleased that there were no significant comments about the fairness of supervision allocation in Part II (where the Department itself organises supervision) this year and we hope that the measures we introduced after last year’s feedback to endeavour to ensure that no student is an inexperienced supervisor for a paper for the whole of the academic year went a considerable way to address the issue. The Department will continue to ask paper organisers to allocate supervision on this basis for next year.

• The Department will offer a new international politics paper in Part IIB for 2015-16: China and the international order.

• The Director of Undergraduate Education will remind paper organisers for Part II that all supervisors should spread the three supervisions for examined papers evenly across the term.

• The Director of Undergraduate Education will write to all Part II supervisors and remind them that they must provide substantial written feedback on individual essays and that this written feedback should, where essays are submitted by the deadline, be given to students at the supervision and not after.

• The Director of Undergraduate Education will also ask supervisors to be as flexible as possible if and when students miss supervisions due to illness or family difficulties. At the same time students should accept that they cannot expect to rearrange supervisions simply because an agreed time stops being convenient or because they have not done the work.

• The Department recognises there have been some problems with the introduction of a fourth paper into Part IIA, particularly given the demands of the history of political thought papers. There will be changes to the reading lists for POL7 and POL8 (see below). The Department also recognises that it has not really made clear what it expects in terms of time for supervision essays and working on long essays and dissertations. As a starting place, students should expect, and supervisors should set reading accordingly, to work in Part I and Part IIA for around 20 hours on any supervision essay and around 24 hours in Part IIB.

**Part I**

*POL1 The analysis of modern politics*

• The set texts will remain the same for next year, but the paper organiser will

will write to all supervisors for the paper and ask them to offer at least two supervisions on texts written after 2000.

• The paper guide will include some reading on representation and gender.

*POL2 International Relations I*

• The rubric for the exam will be revised so that in future there will be 16 questions rather than 12. The exam paper will also be divided into two sections. The first will cover history and war and the second will cover order and ethics. Candidates will be asked to answer at least one question from each section.

**Part IIA**

*POL 3 Ethics and world politics*

• The paper organiser will set out in the first lecture how the normative concerns in this paper relate to understanding the possibilities and limits of international politics.

• Moralism and realism will not be a compulsory supervision topic.

• The political violence case study will be replaced for 2015-16 by one on humanitarian intervention.

• The reading list for section A of the paper will be reduced.

*POL 4 Comparative politics*

• The lectures for the case study on western Europe will be significantly revised and restructured.

*POL 5 Conceptual issues in Politics and International Relations*

• The Pol 5 paper guide will be revised to ensure that all the guidance is appropriate to the paper.

*POL 7 The history of political thought to c. 1700*

• The Department will issue new supervision reading lists for the paper designed for Politics and International Relations students and the paper organiser will ask all supervisors of students in the single and joint Politics and International Relations Part IIA tracks to use these reading lists in setting supervision work.

*POL 8 The history of political thought from c. 1700 to c. 1890*

• The Department will issue new supervision reading lists for the paper designed for Politics and International Relations students and the paper organiser will ask all supervisors of students in the single and joint Politics and International Relations Part IIA tracks to use these reading lists in setting supervision work.

**Part IIB**

*POL 6 (POL 11 in the HSPS Tripos) Political philosophy and the history of political thought since 1890*

• The Department recognises that there are some issues with the present structure and spread of the paper and is in discussion with the History Faculty, whom share the teaching for the paper, about making changes.

*POL 7 (POL 12 in the HSPS Tripos for 2015-16)* *The politics of the Middle East*

• The material on Iran and the political economy of the Middle East will be incorporated into the core lectures for the paper.

*POL 8 (POL 13 in the HSPS Tripos for 2015-16) The politics of Europe*

• Handouts for lectures will be uploaded to Moodle, which will replace CAMTOOLS next academic year.

*POL 9 (POL 15 in the HSPS Tripos for 2015-16)* *The politics of Africa*

• There will be some revisions to the presentation of essential reading in the paper guide.

*POL 11 (POL14 in the HSPS Tripos for 2015-16)* *The politics of Asia*

• For 2015-16 there will be a new IIB paper that will cover China and international politics. This paper will be POL 19: China and the international order.

*PO12* *The politics of the international economy*

• This paper will not be taught next year. When it returns there will be a class to support the general handout on economic policy terms and relationships.

*POL 13* (POL 9 in the HSPS Tripos) *Conceptual issues and texts in politics and international relations.*

• There will in Lent 2016 be four streams of classes with two lecturers taking two streams each; the two lecturers will coordinate closely with each other to ensure that the content covered in each of the class streams is the same.

• There will be a short handout with each class to cover the basic points of that class.

• College directors of studies in POLIS will have responsibility for organising two supervisions for their students for this paper.

Department of Politics and International Studies, Undergraduate Education Committee

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