MPS-001

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAMME IN POLITICAL SCIENCE (MPS)

ASSIGNMENT

(First Year)

July 2025 and January 2026 Sessions

School of Social Sciences
Indira Gandhi National Open University
Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-11006

M.A. (Political Science)
CORE COURSES

Dear learner,

As explained in the Programme Guide, you will have to do a Tutor Marked Assignment for each course in Political Science. This booklet contains the assignments of the first year courses of the Masters Programme in Political Science.

You need to submit all the assignments within the stipulated time for being eligible to appear in the term-end examination. Before you attempt the assignments, please read the instructions carefully provided in the Programme Guide.

It is important that you write the answers in your own words. Your answers should be within the approximate range of the word-limit set for a particular section. Remember, writing answers to assignment questions will improve your writing skills and prepare you for the term-end examination.

All assignments, including these, have to be **submitted to the Coordinator of your Study Centre**. Remember to obtain a receipt from the Study Centre for the assignments submitted and retain it. If possible, keep a Xerox copy of the assignments with you.

The Study Centre will have to return the assignments to you after they are evaluated. Please insist on this. The Study Centre will note down the marked awarded for each assignment and forward them to the Student Evaluation Division (SED) at IGNOU, New Delhi.

Submission:

The completed assignments should be submitted as per the following schedule.

Session	Last Date of Submission	To be Submitted to
For July 2025 Session	March 31, 2026	The Coordinator of the Study Centre allotted to you
For January 2026 Session	September 30, 2026	

Wishing you all the best,

Faculty of Political Science

POLITICAL THEORY (MPS-001)

TUTOR MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Course Code: MPS-001

Assignment Code: ASST/TMA/2025-26

Marks: 100

Note: Answer five questions, selecting at least two questions from each section. Each question must be answered in about 500 words. Each carries20 marks.

SECTION – I

1. What is Political Theory and why should we study it? Explain.
2. Trace the historical background of Democracy.
3. Explain the meaning and nature of rights.
4. Discus negative liberty.
5. Write a note on the struggle for equality.

SECTION – II

Write a short note in each of the following in about 250 words.

6. (a) Classical Liberalism
   (b) Welfare State

7. (a) Libertarianism
   (b) Karl Marx

8. (a) George Lucpas
   (b) Socialism

9. (a) Conservatism
   (b) Fundamentalism

10. (a) Nationalism
    (b) Multiculturalism

1. What is Political Theory and why should we study it? Explain.

Answer

Political theory is a systematic study of political ideas, values, institutions and practices. It asks basic questions about political life: What is the state? Why should people obey political authority? What makes power legitimate? What do liberty, equality, justice, rights and democracy mean? It also asks how political institutions ought to be organised and how existing arrangements can be understood and evaluated. Political theory therefore connects facts about political life with arguments about values and desirable forms of social order.

Meaning and scope of political theory

Political theory is broader than a collection of opinions about government. It tries to clarify concepts, examine arguments and build a reasoned understanding of political relationships. The word political points to matters involving power, authority, collective decisions and the organisation of public life. The word theory refers to a connected body of ideas used to explain, interpret or judge these matters. A political theory may explain why a particular institution developed, analyse the values on which it rests, or assess whether the institution is justifiable.

The subject has both normative and empirical dimensions. The normative dimension asks what ought to be: what justice requires, what rights people should enjoy, how liberty should be protected, or what equality demands. The empirical dimension considers how institutions and political behaviour actually operate. Political theory does not simply choose between the two. Good theory often uses knowledge of real political life while also examining the principles by which that life may be judged.

Political theory is also historical and conceptual. Political ideas arise in particular social and historical settings, so the works of thinkers such as Plato, Aristotle, Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Marx and Mill are better understood when related to the problems of their times. At the same time, their arguments continue to matter because questions about authority, freedom, property, participation, inequality and citizenship remain important. Political theory studies both the development of these ideas and their continuing relevance.