



SREENARAYANAGURU OPEN UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

MASTER OF ARTS (POLITICAL SCIENCE)

DISSERTATION / PROJECT REPORT

Guidelines for Learners

Fourth Semester | Core Course | 4 Credits

Sreenarayanaguru Open University
Kollam, Kerala

1. Introduction

Dissertation/Project Credits: 4

As a part of the Postgraduate Curriculum, students are required to submit a Dissertation/Project Report (Individual) to the University through the Learner Support Centre in their fourth Semester which will be evaluated by the external examiner. The MA Dissertation/Project, offered in the fourth semester, is a core component of all postgraduate programmes at Sreenarayanaguru Open University (SGOU). This course carries four credits and is designed to give learners an opportunity to engage in independent research in the respective fields. Under the guidance of a faculty supervisor, each learner selects a topic and develops a Project through a process that combines academic inquiry and research skills. Each thesis or Dissertation is unique but all share several common elements. The following is not an exact guide but rather a general outline.

2. General Guidelines

- Carefully read these guidelines for a detailed understanding of the procedure.
- The Dissertation should be prepared using standard text processing software such as MS Word, LaTeX, or may be handwritten.
- The Dissertation should be free from typographical errors. One should ensure uniformity in fonts, text, spacing, margins, figures, tables, etc.
- Please ensure that you remove all personal information from your Dissertation (e.g., email address, mailing or home address, etc.) except your Enrollment Number and Name.
- The learners shall submit their Dissertation/Project in consultation with their respective guides in the set format as described in these guidelines.
- The learners shall submit the Dissertation to their respective Learner Support Centres before the last date notified by the University.
- The Controller of Examinations will announce the last date for the Dissertation/Project submission and the Viva Voce examination.

Note: There shall be **no revaluation** for the Dissertation/Project Report or the Viva Voce Examination. The evaluation carried out by the appointed examiner(s) shall be treated as final. Learners are therefore advised to ensure that their Dissertation is complete, well-structured, and meets all prescribed guidelines before submission.

3. Selection of Topic for Dissertation/Project Report

Choosing the right topic is one of the most critical steps in the dissertation process. A well-chosen topic provides clear direction for your research and ensures you remain focused on a specific area of inquiry within Political Science. The selection must align with your academic interests, be feasible within the allotted time, and contribute meaningfully to the discipline.

In Political Science, the scope for original research is vast — ranging from classical political thought and constitutional law to contemporary issues such as electoral democracy, global governance, environmental politics, and public policy. Learners are encouraged to identify a topic that is not only academically relevant but also socially significant and amenable to systematic investigation.

Step-by-Step Approach to Topic Selection

1. Identify your areas of interest: Consider your academic background, previous coursework, and any specific areas within Political Science that you find particularly engaging — such as Indian politics, international relations, political theory, or local governance. Selecting a topic you are passionate about keeps you motivated throughout the research process.
2. Explore existing research: Review recent dissertations, scholarly articles, and conference proceedings to understand current research trends and identify potential gaps in knowledge. Consult journals such as the Indian Journal of Political Science, Economic and Political Weekly, and International Political Science Review.
3. Consult with your Guide/Supervisor: Discuss potential topic ideas with your Dissertation supervisor, who can provide guidance and insights based on their expertise and familiarity with the field.
4. Assess feasibility: Evaluate whether you have access to the necessary resources, data, and literature, and ensure the topic can be realistically researched within the allotted time and available tools.
5. Consider originality: While building upon existing research is important, aim for a topic that offers a novel perspective, tests a new hypothesis, or addresses a previously underexplored aspect of the field.
6. Refine and define: Once you have a potential topic, further refine it by developing a clear research question and formulating a specific scope for your research.
7. Develop a title: A good Dissertation title should be descriptive, precise, and accurately reflect the scope and focus of your research. Avoid overly broad or vague titles.

Qualities of a Good Research Topic in Political Science

- Grounded in a clear context or background (political, historical, or institutional)
- Addresses a specific and identifiable problem or gap in existing knowledge
- Supported by adequate evidence, data, or scholarly literature
- Identifies who is affected and why the problem matters

- Demonstrates academic justification for undertaking the study
- Is clear, focused, and original in its framing

Note: Learners are free to choose topics of their own interest provided the same is approved by the supervising teacher. The topics listed in Section 14 are indicative, not exhaustive.

4. Literature Review

A literature review is a critical and systematic survey of the existing body of knowledge related to your research topic. In Political Science, a robust literature review situates your study within broader scholarly debates — whether in political theory, comparative politics, Indian politics, international relations, or public administration. It demonstrates your mastery of the field and helps establish the intellectual foundation for your own research.

Purpose of a Literature Review

- Provides a comprehensive understanding of existing knowledge in your chosen research area
- Helps identify gaps, contradictions, or underexplored aspects where your research can contribute
- Assists in selecting the most appropriate theoretical framework and research methods
- Provides evidence and context for your arguments, making your research more persuasive
- Demonstrates your engagement with established scholarship in Political Science

Types of Literature Reviews

Depending on your research objectives, you may adopt one of the following approaches:

8. Narrative Review: A comprehensive overview that summarises and discusses existing research on a broad topic. Suitable for general contextualisation and introductions to research papers.
9. Systematic Review: A structured and methodical approach that identifies, evaluates, and synthesises all relevant studies on a specific question. Ideal for evidence-based policy analysis.
10. Theoretical Review: Focuses on evaluating and synthesising theoretical frameworks related to a topic. Particularly useful in political theory, comparative politics, and normative studies.
11. Critical Review: A comprehensive, deeply analytical review that evaluates existing studies and supports the development of new theoretical insights.

How to Conduct a Literature Review

12. Define Scope and Objectives: Clearly define the scope of your literature review and set specific objectives. Decide what aspects — empirical, theoretical, methodological — you want to focus on.
13. Search and Gather: Use academic databases (JSTOR, Google Scholar, Shodhganga, ScienceDirect), libraries, and reputable sources to gather relevant literature. Keep track of sources for citation purposes.

14. **Read and Analyse:** Read the selected literature critically, taking notes on key findings, theoretical arguments, methodologies, and any gaps or contradictions in the research.
15. **Organise and Synthesise:** Categorise the literature based on themes, debates, or chronological development. Synthesise the information to highlight key trends, schools of thought, and gaps in knowledge.
16. **Write Critically:** Do not merely summarise what others have said. Engage critically — compare perspectives, highlight tensions, and show how the existing literature informs and justifies your own research.

Tip for Political Science learners: When reviewing literature, pay attention to competing theoretical frameworks (e.g., realism vs. liberalism in IR; Marxist vs. pluralist approaches to the state). Identifying these debates will strengthen your conceptual foundation.

5. Executing the Research Project

The execution of a research project in Political Science involves a series of carefully planned steps. Given the nature of the discipline — which spans normative inquiry, empirical analysis, historical interpretation, and policy evaluation — learners must select methods that are appropriate to their specific research questions.

Research Approaches in Political Science

- **Qualitative Research:** Suitable for in-depth studies of political phenomena, processes, movements, or institutions. Methods include case studies, interviews, discourse analysis, archival research, and ethnography.
- **Quantitative Research:** Appropriate for studies involving measurable variables such as electoral data, survey results, public opinion polls, or socioeconomic indicators. Uses statistical tools for data analysis.
- **Mixed Methods:** Combines qualitative and quantitative approaches for a more comprehensive understanding of complex political issues.

Steps in Research Execution

17. **Define the Research Approach:** Choose qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods based on your research question and objectives.
18. **Describe the Research Design:** Explain the overall plan and structure of your study — whether it is a case study, comparative analysis, historical study, or survey-based research.
19. **Explain Population and Sampling:** Detail who or what constitutes your unit of analysis (individuals, institutions, states, texts) and how you will select them.
20. **Detail Data Collection Methods:** Specify primary data collection tools (interviews, questionnaires, field observations, official documents) and/or secondary sources (government reports, academic journals, newspaper archives).
21. **Describe Instruments and Tools:** Explain how your data collection instruments work — including interview schedules, survey questionnaires, or analytical frameworks.
22. **Address Validity and Reliability:** Demonstrate how you will ensure that your findings are trustworthy, consistent, and credible.
23. **Discuss Data Analysis Methods:** Explain how you will interpret the data — through thematic analysis, content analysis, statistical analysis, comparative method, or textual interpretation.
24. **Address Ethical Considerations:** Detail how you will maintain ethical standards in your research (see Section 9 for Academic Integrity).
25. **Acknowledge Limitations:** Honestly discuss the methodological and contextual limitations of your study.

Research Ethics in Political Science

Maintaining ethical standards is essential in all forms of research. Political Science research often involves human subjects, sensitive political data, and community contexts. Learners must observe the following principles:

- **Informed Consent:** Obtain voluntary and informed participation from all research subjects.
- **Confidentiality and Anonymity:** Protect the privacy and personal data of all participants.
- **Do No Harm:** Minimise risks and ensure the safety of participants.
- **Integrity and Honesty:** Report findings truthfully; avoid falsification of data or sources.
- **Transparency:** Be open about your research methods, limitations, and sources.
- **Respect and Fairness:** Treat all participants and sources with respect and without bias.

Throughout the research process, seek regular guidance from your Supervisor. They can provide valuable feedback on methodology, relevant sources, and overall research direction.

Note: For Political Science research involving field work (interviews with political actors, grassroots surveys, or community-based studies), always secure prior consent and maintain a field diary or interview log. These records must be referenced appropriately in the Dissertation.

6. Writing and Presentation

Writing a Dissertation in Political Science is not merely an academic exercise — it is an opportunity to demonstrate your capacity for independent critical thinking, systematic analysis, and scholarly communication. Your Dissertation should present your research findings, analysis, and conclusions in a clear, structured, and intellectually rigorous manner.

Structuring Your Dissertation

Outline your Dissertation with clear sections. Each chapter must flow logically and build progressively towards your conclusions. The recommended structure is:

26. Introduction: Background, rationale, significance of the study, and an overview of the dissertation structure.
27. Literature Review: Critical survey of existing scholarship and identification of research gaps.
28. Research Objectives and Hypothesis: Clear statement of what your research aims to achieve and your testable propositions.
29. Research Methodology: Explanation of your research design, data collection methods, and analytical tools.
30. Data Collection and Analysis: Presentation of findings with appropriate analysis and interpretation.
31. Discussion: Interpretation of results in relation to existing literature, theoretical frameworks, and research objectives.
32. Summary and Conclusion: Summary of the study, key findings, and their broader implications for Political Science.
33. References: All sources cited in accordance with the recommended referencing style (see Section 11).

Writing Tips

- **Start with the Research Background:** Introduce the broad context of your study, narrow to the specific problem, integrate relevant literature, identify the research gap, justify the need for the study, and lead to the problem statement.
- **Maintain Academic Style:** Write in formal, precise, and consistent language. Avoid colloquialisms and ensure grammatical accuracy throughout.
- **Cite All Sources:** All ideas, data, and arguments drawn from external sources must be properly cited. Do not present others' work as your own.
- **Revise and Edit:** After completing a draft, take time to revise for clarity, coherence, logical flow, and grammatical accuracy.
- **Consistent Formatting:** Maintain uniformity in fonts, headings, spacing, and citation style throughout the document (see Section 12 for typographical instructions).

Successfully writing and presenting your Dissertation marks a significant achievement in your academic journey and contributes to the collective knowledge of your field.

7. Dissertation Supervisor

Active supervision by an experienced teacher is the most important aspect of any Project work. The candidates should finalise the topics in consultation with the Supervisor and seek his/her approval well in time.

Eligibility of Dissertation Supervisor

Dissertation/Project Supervisor may be drawn from the following categories:

- Full-time faculty members of Sreenarayanaguru Open University
- Full time/permanent faculty members in government or aided colleges (including guest/contract with NET/Ph.D)
- Retired faculty members of government/aided colleges or Universities
- Academic Counsellors associated with the Sreenarayanaguru Open University with NET/Ph.D.
- Ph.D. holders in the relevant subject/discipline

8. Bio Data cum Certificate of Supervisor

Submit the Bio Data cum Certificate of your supervisor in the prescribed format (See Annexure I) along with your Dissertation/Project Report to the Learner Support Centre, before the last date notified by the University for Submission.

9. Academic Integrity

Learners should be aware of various forms of academic misconduct which are strictly prohibited by the University. Any violation will lead to cancellation of the report and punishments as per University Regulations.

Forms of Academic Misconduct

34. Plagiarism: Presenting work or ideas from another source as your own, with or without consent of the original author, by incorporating it into your work without full acknowledgement. This includes published and unpublished material in any form, including electronic. The use of material generated wholly or in part through Artificial Intelligence will also be considered plagiarism.
35. Self-Plagiarism: Reusing your own previously published work, whether text, data, or ideas, without proper acknowledgement or permission, as if it were new.
36. Fabrication: Inventing or manipulating data or sources.
37. Cheating: Unauthorised assistance in academic work.
38. Misrepresentation: Providing false information about academic work.

39. Unauthorised Collaboration: Working with others when individual work is required.

Important: Intentional or reckless plagiarism is a disciplinary offence under University Regulations. Always cite your sources correctly and use plagiarism detection tools before final submission.

10. Submission

- Learners must submit one hard copy of the completed Dissertation/Project before the last date notified by the University to their respective Learner Support Centre.
- The Dissertation should be hard bound/spiral-bound with double-sided printing.
- Do not use plastics as cover, facing sheet, or for lamination.
- Students may choose to submit either a printed or handwritten Dissertation. Printed Dissertations should not exceed 40 pages, while handwritten Dissertations may go up to a maximum of 50 pages.
- The Project must be submitted on or before the last date notified for submission with the certificate, signature and seal of the Supervisor to the respective Learner Support Centre.
- The learner must attend a Viva Voce of the Dissertation Project for the completion of the course on a date and venue notified by the University.
- One hard copy of the Dissertation should be kept by the learner and brought while appearing for the Viva Voce Examination.
- It is advisable to retain a soft copy of the Dissertation.

11. Format

The University recommends the following general format for M.A. Dissertation/Project in Political Science:

11.1 Cover Page

The cover page must include the following:

- Title of the Dissertation/Project
- Name of the learner
- Enrollment number
- Program name (MA Political Science)
- Name of the University (Sreenarayanaguru Open University)
- Submission date

11.2 Certificates

- Certificate from the Supervisor: Signed by the supervisor certifying that the work is original and completed under their guidance (See Annexure II).
- Declaration by the Learner: A statement signed by the learner declaring that the Dissertation/Project is their original work (See Annexure III).

11.3 Acknowledgment

A brief section where learners express gratitude to those who supported them in the completion of the Project — including the supervisor, institution, and any individuals or organisations who facilitated access to data or resources.

11.4 Table of Contents

A list of all sections and subsections of the Dissertation with corresponding page numbers.

11.5 Dissertation Chapters

The structure of the Dissertation should follow this format:

- Introduction: Provide background information, the rationale of the study, and the significance of the research in the context of Political Science.
- Research Objectives/Questions: Outline the goals and what the research aims to achieve.
- Hypothesis and Research Methodology: Frame the hypothesis and explain the research methodology, data collection techniques, and tools used.
- Data Collection and Analysis: Present the collected data and analyse using appropriate qualitative or quantitative tools.

- Discussion: Interpret the results, compare with other studies, and explain their significance for Political Science scholarship.
- Summary and Conclusion: Summarise the entire Dissertation, correlating with the hypothesis, restating key findings, and offering conclusions and policy recommendations where appropriate.
- References: Include all sources cited in the Dissertation using the recommended referencing style.

12. Reference Styles and Citation Guidelines

Proper referencing is a fundamental requirement of academic writing. All sources consulted and cited in your Dissertation must be acknowledged in a consistent and recognised referencing style. The University recommends the use of APA (7th Edition), Harvard, or Chicago referencing styles. Learners must select one style and apply it consistently throughout the Dissertation.

12.1 APA 7th Edition

The APA style is widely used in social sciences. It uses an author-date citation system.

In-Text Citations (APA)

- Paraphrasing: (Author, Year) — e.g., (Kohli, 2019)
- Direct Quotation: (Author, Year, p. page number) — e.g., (Kohli, 2019, p. 45)
- Two Authors: (Smith & Jones, 2020)
- Three or More Authors: (Brown et al., 2022)

Reference List (APA)

Source Type	Format and Example
Book	Author, A. A. (Year). Title of book. Publisher. <i>Kohli, A. (2012). Poverty amid plenty in the new India. Cambridge University Press.</i>
Edited Book	Editor, A. A. (Ed.). (Year). Title of book. Publisher. <i>Chatterjee, P. (Ed.). (2011). Empire and nation: Selected essays. Columbia University Press.</i>
Journal Article	Author, A. A. (Year). Title of article. Journal Name, Volume(Issue), pages. DOI <i>Varshney, A. (2002). Ethnic conflict and civic life. The Journal of Asian Studies, 61(3), 1005–1007. https://doi.org/10.2307/3096436</i>
Online Resource	Organisation. (Year). Title of page. Website Name. URL <i>Election Commission of India. (2024). Statistical report on general elections. https://eci.gov.in/statistical-report/</i>
Newspaper Article	Author, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Title of article. Newspaper Name, page. or URL <i>Nair, R. (2023, August 12). Panchayat elections and shifting power dynamics in Kerala. The Hindu, p. 7.</i>
Interview	Interviewee, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Personal communication [Interview]. Location. <i>Kumar, P. (2024, January 10). Personal communication [Interview]. Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala.</i>
Field Work / Observation	Researcher, A. A. (Year, Month Day). Field notes: Title/Description [Unpublished field notes]. Institution or Location.

Dissertation / Thesis	<i>John, S. (2024, March 5). Field notes: Grassroots participation in gram sabha meetings [Unpublished field notes]. Kozhikode, Kerala.</i>
	Author, A. A. (Year). Title of dissertation [Doctoral dissertation / Master's thesis, University Name]. Repository Name. URL <i>Menon, A. (2021). Electoral reforms and democratic consolidation in Kerala [Master's thesis, University of Kerala]. Shodhganga. https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/</i>

12.2 Key APA Rules

- Use hanging indent in the reference list
- Italicise book and journal titles
- Double-space all references
- Use sentence case for article titles (only first word and proper nouns capitalised)
- Include DOI or URL where available

12.3 Harvard Referencing Style (Brief Guide)

Harvard referencing uses an author-date format similar to APA but with some differences in punctuation and presentation.

- In-text: (Author, Year: page) — e.g., (Brass, 1994: 33)
- Book: Author (Year) Title. Place: Publisher. — e.g., Brass, P.R. (1994) *The Politics of India since Independence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Journal: Author (Year) 'Article title', Journal Name, Volume(Issue), pp. pages. — e.g., Varshney, A. (1998) 'Why democracy survives', *Journal of Democracy*, 9(3), pp. 36–50.

12.4 Chicago Referencing Style (Notes and Bibliography)

Chicago style uses footnotes or endnotes and a bibliography. It is commonly used in historical and humanistic approaches in Political Science.

- Footnote/Endnote (Book): Author First Last, Title of Book (Place: Publisher, Year), page. — e.g., Suhas Palshikar, *Indian Democracy* (New Delhi: Oxford, 2017), 45.
- Bibliography (Book): Last, First. Title of Book. Place: Publisher, Year. — e.g., Palshikar, Suhas. *Indian Democracy*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- For Journal Articles: Last, First. 'Title.' Journal Name Volume, no. Issue (Year): pages.

Reminder: Select one referencing style and apply it consistently throughout your entire Dissertation. Mixing styles is considered poor academic practice.

13. Typographical Instructions

Element	Specification
Paper Size	A4 only
Minimum Pages (Printed)	40 pages
Minimum Pages (Handwritten)	50 pages
Binding	Spiral-bound or hard bound, double-sided printing
Page Margins	2.5 cm on each side
Page Numbers	Right of page, 1 inch from bottom-right edge; hidden on first page
Line Spacing	Double spacing (MLA format); double space between paragraphs
Chapter Headings	Times New Roman, Size 16, Bold, Double Spacing, Centred
Sub-Headings	Times New Roman, Size 14, Bold, 1.5 Spacing, Justified
Body Text	Times New Roman, Size 12, 1.5 Spacing, Justified
New Chapter	Start each chapter on a new page

14. Assessment and Evaluation

The purpose of the Dissertation/Project report is to enable you to demonstrate your capacity to carry out a substantial piece of independent research work on a selected topic of your choice. The evaluation carries a total of 100 marks, distributed as follows:

- 70 Marks: Dissertation/Project Report Evaluation
- 30 Marks: Viva Voce Examination (based on the Dissertation/Project Report)

Your Dissertation/Project report will be assessed according to the following four criteria:

- Novelty and originality
- Quality and coherence
- Inclusion of necessary components such as methodology and framework
- Overall contribution to knowledge

Detailed Criteria of Evaluation

Criterion	Marks	Max (70)
Introduction	5	
Statement of Problem	5	
Review of Literature	5	
Research Objectives/Questions	5	
Research Methodology	10	
Data Collection and Analysis	20	
Findings and Conclusion	15	
References	5	
Total (Report)	70	70
Viva Voce Examination	30	30
Grand Total	100	100

15. Sample Topics

The following thematic areas and illustrative topics are provided to guide learners in identifying a suitable research focus for their Dissertation. These areas represent key domains within Political Science and reflect both classical concerns and contemporary debates in the discipline. Each theme encompasses a broad range of issues; learners are encouraged to identify specific sub-topics, localised case studies, or comparative perspectives that align with their individual interests and academic strengths.

Learners are reminded that these topics are indicative and not exhaustive. They may choose topics from within these themes or propose entirely new ones, provided they are approved by the supervising teacher.

15.1 Political Processes and Development Trajectories in Kerala

- Decentralisation and participatory governance
- Welfare policies and their socio-economic impact
- Electoral politics and party competition
- Role of social movements in shaping development
- Migration and remittance economy
- Public health and education systems
- Environmental concerns and sustainable development

15.2 United Nations and the Changing Dynamics of Global Order

- Transformation of the UN in the post-Cold War context
- Functioning and limitations of the Security Council
- Nature and outcomes of peacekeeping missions
- International human rights framework and enforcement
- Challenges to multilateralism and global governance
- Sustainable development agenda and global cooperation
- Debates on UN reforms and power distribution

15.3 Constitutionalism and Democratic Governance in India

- Judicial review and the basic structure principle
- Federal relations and distribution of powers
- Expansion of fundamental rights
- Directive principles and social justice
- Role of judiciary in democratic processes
- Constitutional amendments and political change
- Protection of rights of marginalised communities

15.4 Decentralisation and Local Governance Politics

- Democratic decentralisation and grassroots democracy
- Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local governance
- Fiscal decentralisation and local resource mobilisation
- Participatory governance and people's planning
- Centre-State-local relations and power dynamics
- Social justice, inclusion, and local governance
- Governance challenges, accountability, and transparency
- 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments

15.5 India's Foreign Policy in a Changing Global Order

- Evolution and principles of India's foreign policy
- India's neighbourhood policy and regional diplomacy
- India and major powers (USA, China, Russia, EU)
- Multilateralism and India's role in global institutions
- Security, defence, and strategic partnerships
- Economic diplomacy and trade relations
- Emerging issues: climate diplomacy, diaspora, and soft power

15.6 Environment, Development, and Political Processes

- Politics of sustainable development
- Environmental movements and civil society
- State, policy, and environmental governance
- Development projects, displacement, and resistance
- Climate change politics and global negotiations
- Natural resource management and conflicts
- Ecology, livelihoods, and social justice

15.7 Public Policy and Governance

- Policy formulation and decision-making processes
- Role of institutions and governance structures
- Public administration and service delivery
- Policy implementation and evaluation
- E-governance and digital administration
- Transparency, accountability, and good governance
- Role of civil society and non-state actors

15.8 Political Theory

- Classical and modern political theory traditions
- Concepts of justice, liberty, and equality
- Democracy: theories and practices
- Power, authority, and legitimacy
- Rights, duties, and citizenship
- Contemporary theories: feminism, postmodernism, multiculturalism
- State, civil society, and political obligation

15.9 Western Political Thought

- Ancient political thought: Plato and Aristotle
- Medieval political ideas and the Church-State debate
- Social contract theorists: Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, Jean-Jacques Rousseau
- Liberalism and utilitarianism: J. S. Mill
- Idealism and modern state: G. W. F. Hegel
- Marxism and critique of capitalism: Karl Marx
- Contemporary Western thought and debates

15.10 Nationalism, Identity, and Politics

- Theories of nationalism and their application in South Asia
- Communalism, secularism, and political conflict in India
- Caste, politics, and social movements
- Gender and political participation
- Religious identity and political mobilisation
- Minority rights, citizenship, and the politics of recognition
- Regional identity and sub-national politics

15.11 Comparative Politics

- Comparative study of democratic systems
- Electoral systems and political representation
- Political parties and party systems in comparative perspective
- Civil society and democratisation
- Authoritarianism and democratic backsliding
- Welfare states and social policy in comparative context
- Post-colonial state formation and governance challenges

15.12 Human Rights, Justice, and Security

- International human rights law and its enforcement
- Humanitarian intervention and responsibility to protect (R2P)
- Transitional justice and post-conflict societies
- Terrorism, counter-terrorism, and human rights
- Refugees, migration, and statelessness
- Digital rights, surveillance, and civil liberties
- Social justice movements and rights-based advocacy
- Human Rights in India: A study of Constitutional Safeguards and Judicial Activism.
- The role of National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) in addressing human rights violations.
- Protection of Women’s Rights in India: Legal Framework vs. Social Realities.
- Rights of the Child: An Analysis of Child Labor and Right to Education in the Indian Context.
- Human Rights of Marginalized Communities in India: Challenges and Prospects.

Note to Learners: The themes and illustrative topics listed above represent the key areas of inquiry within MA Political Science at SGOU. They are intended to help you identify a direction for your research, but they do not limit your choices. You are free and encouraged to choose a specific topic that reflects your own interests, field experience, or local context — such as a case study from your region, a comparative analysis between two political phenomena, or an original theoretical argument. All topics must be discussed with and approved by your Dissertation Supervisor before you begin formal research.

Annexure I: Bio Data cum Certificate

BIO DATA CUM CERTIFICATE

1. Name (As in service records):

.....

2. Designation and Official Address:

.....

3. Communication Address:

.....

(a) Mobile No(s):

(b) E-mail id:

4. Category of the Supervisor (Please put a tick mark):

Full-time faculty member of Sreenarayanaguru Open University	<input type="checkbox"/>
Faculty members in government or aided colleges (guest/contract/permanent faculty)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Retired faculty member of government/aided colleges or Universities	<input type="checkbox"/>
Academic Counsellor associated with the Sreenarayanaguru Open University	<input type="checkbox"/>
Ph.D. holders in the relevant subject/discipline	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Date of Regular Appointment:/...../..... Completed years of service:

6. Educational and Professional Qualifications:

Sl.	Degree	Year	Specialisation	University
1	Master's Degree			
2	Doctoral Degree			
3	Others			

7. Teaching Experience:

(a) Under Graduate Level: years months

(b) Post Graduate Level: years months

8. Field of Specialisation (if any):

- I.
- II.

I am willing to serve as Project/Dissertation Supervisor for UG/PG programme of Sreenarayanaguru Open University subject to the rules in force.

I hereby declare that the details furnished above are true and correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature:

Name:

Date:

Annexure II: Certificate from Supervisor

CERTIFICATE

It is certified that the work contained in the Dissertation titled:

".....
.....
.....
....."

by "..... (Name
of the Learner)"

has been carried out under my/our supervision and that this work has not been submitted
elsewhere for a degree/diploma/certificate.

Signature of the Supervisor:

Name:

Official Address:

Date:

Seal:

Annexure III: Declaration by the Learner

DECLARATION

This is to certify that the Dissertation titled:

".....
.....
.....
....."

has been authored by me. It presents the research conducted by me under the supervision of

To the best of my knowledge, it is an original work, both in terms of research content and narrative, and has not been submitted elsewhere, in part or in full, for a degree/diploma/certificate. Further, due credit has been attributed to the relevant state-of-the-art and collaborations (if any) with appropriate citations and acknowledgements, in line with established norms and practices.

Signature of the Learner:

Name:

Enrollment Number:

Date:

(Model of Title Page)

DISSERTATION TITLE

*In partial fulfilment of the requirement
of the degree of (Name of the Program)*

Submitted by:

FULL NAME OF LEARNER

Enrollment Number

Program Name

Under the Supervision of:

NAME OF THE SUPERVISOR



SREENARAYANA OPEN UNIVERSITY

MONTH & YEAR OF SUBMISSION