

**NATIONAL RESEARCH UNIVERSITY
HIGHER SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS**

**St. Petersburg School of Social Sciences and Area Studies
Programme in Political Science and World Politics**

APPROVED

**St. Petersburg School of
Social Sciences and Area Studies**
Minutes No. _____
as of _____

Chairperson
Dr. Andrey V. Starodubtsev

SYLLABUS

Final State Exam

Field of study: 41.03.04 “Political Science”
BA level

Academic Director

_____ Dr. Anna A. Dekalchuk

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. State Exam Subject-Matter

The State Exam (field of study: 41.03.04 “Political Science”) covers the contents of the following disciplines pertaining to the Professional Programme Part (the Major):

1. Political History of Russia and Foreign Countries;
2. History of Political Thought;
3. Contemporary Russian Politics;
4. World Politics and International Relations;
5. Comparative Politics;
6. Introduction to Policy Analysis;
7. Qualitative Methods in Political Research;
8. Quantitative Methods of Political Research.

1.2. State Exam Format

The State Exam comes in the form of a written test. This test consists of two parts and lasts 1 hour 40 minutes (100 minutes).

Part One is a simple one correct answer quiz (24 questions: 3 questions per each discipline from the list available in provision 1.1 of this syllabus). Below you will find an example of a Part One question (within the contents of the *World Politics and International Relations* discipline):

Q1. The tragedy of the commons:

- a. results from an inherent tension between collective and individual responsibility.*
- b. can always be resolved through privatization and nationalization of the commons.*
- c. is independent of the carrying capacity of the common.*
- d. all of the options given are correct.*

Part Two consists of open-ended questions where students have to demonstrate their deeper knowledge of the subject by providing a 4-to-8 sentences answer (8 questions: 1 question per each discipline from the list available in provision 1.1 of this syllabus). Below you will find an example of a Part Two question (within the contents of the *World Politics and International Relations* discipline):

Q1. Briefly outline what the security dilemma is about and within which IR theoretical school it is relevant. Please provide a relevant historical example which clearly illustrates this concept.

1.3. State Exam Assessment Criteria and Grading System

Part One: a student gets 1 point per one correct answer (and 0 points otherwise). The total amount of points here is 24 points max.

Part Two: depending on how comprehensive the answer is, a student gets from 3 to 0 points per one question. The total amount of points here is 24 points max.

3 points are given for a comprehensive, analytical and well-structured answer which shows an excellent overall understanding of the subject-matter, the ability to put it in a broader academic and contextual perspective, and a broad background knowledge rooted in the primary sources listed below.

2 points are given for a analytical and clearly organized answer which shows a good overall understanding of the subject-matter, the ability to highlight the key points pertaining to this subject-matter (yet, leaving some minor issues not covered), and some background knowledge rooted in the primary sources listed below.

1 point is given for a largely unstructured answer which takes a very basic approach to the subject-matter, uses broadly appropriate notions but lacks focus, and shows evidence of a piecemeal understanding of the subject-matter.

0 points are given when no answer is provided or if an answer does not show any evidence of even a piecemeal understanding of the subject-matter.

The total for both parts is therefore 48 points max (100%). We use the following scaling system to translate the percentage of points obtained into the 10-point grade:

Percentage	Grade
100,00 – 95,00	10
94,99 – 90,00	9
89,99 – 80,00	8
79,99 – 75,00	7
74,99 – 65,00	6
64,99 – 60,00	5
59,99 – 50,00	4
49,99 – 45,00	3
44,99 – 35,00	2
Less than 35%	1

2. STATE EXAM CONTENTS

POLITICAL HISTORY OF RUSSIA AND FOREIGN COUNTRIES

What is political history? Early Modern European state building. Early Modern East and Southeast Asia state building. The Russian Empire in the making, XVI–XVII centuries. The politics of the world colonial empires. European politics in the XVIII century. The French Revolution and its political legacy. European wars and revolutions in XIX century. The making of a nation state in XIX century. European Imperialism and colonial rule in the XIX century. The Russian Empire in the XIX century: power and reforms. The making of modern ideologies: Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism.

World politics in the First World War. The Russian Empire in the revolutions, 1905–1921. The Soviet political system. Comparative history of Totalitarian regimes. World politics in the Second World War. The Cold War, 1946–1961. The Cold War, 1962–1991. Communist politics in global history. Political development of China in the XX century. Decolonization in Asia, part I. Resistance, revolutions, wars. Decolonization in Asia, part II. Making independency. The “Global Sixties”: new political movements across the world. Democracy and the post-WW2 political regimes in the West. The making of a neoliberal state. The anti-communist revolutions of 1989–1991. The political crisis and the dissolution of the USSR.

HISTORY OF POLITICAL THOUGHT

Political ideas and religion in Ancient Egypt. Political ideas in Ancient China (Confucius and Laozi). Ancient India and Hindu Political thought. Thucydides: fear, power, interests and necessity. Ancient Greece: Socrates and Plato (Visions of Good and Just Society). Political Ideas of Aristotle.

Augustine’s Political Philosophy. Political Ideas of Thomas Aquinas. Islam and Political Ideas in The Middle East. Political Ideas of Machiavelli. Political Ideas of Grotius and Pufendorf. Natural Law. Political Ideas of Hobbes. Political Ideas of Locke. Montesquieu: Forms of Government and Their Principles. Rousseau and the French Revolution. Jefferson, American Revolution and Idea of Democracy. Kant’s Political Thought. Political Ideas of Hegel. Political Ideas of John Stuart Mill. Marxism and Socialism.

Schopenhauer, Nietzsche and development of their political ideas in the XX century. Politics of Carl Schmitt. Political Ideas of Hanna Arendt. Political Ideas of John Rawls. Communitarianism: M. Walzer's Spheres of Justice. A. MacIntyre: communitarian neoAristotelism. Charles Taylor: from communitarianism to multiculturalism. Feminist Political Theory and its critics. Political Thought in Russia: a Historical Overview.

CONTEMPORARY RUSSIAN POLITICS

Brief overview of Russian political history (1990-2010s): Perestroika: why did it fail, or did it? August putsch and the collapse of the Soviet Union. Early Russian super-parliamentarism, Yeltsin's rule by decree and October 1993 stand-off. Presidential elections 1996 and the rise of oligarchs. “Who is mister Putin?” Popular and unpopular reforms of the first and second Putin administrations. Putin's political reforms and return to authoritarianism. Medvedev and the economic crisis in Russia. “The Return of the King”, “stolen elections” and 2011-2012 protests.

Puzzle of Russian political trajectory: struggle between president and legislature in the 1990s, with regions idle. Building power vertical in 2000s and embedding regional political machines.

Presidentialism: First electoral cycle and the birth trauma of Russian politics. The 1992-1993 stalemate and the new Constitution. How big a role does president have in Russia? Presidentialism and government instability in late 1990s. Economic crisis and the Primakov left-wing government. 1999 impeachment attempt.

Parties, media and opposition: Political parties in Russia. Where do they come from? Fate of the CPSU and the new communist party. What role did media play in Russian politics in the late 1990s? Oligarchs and the television.

Federalism: “Federalism by default”: Soviet matryoshka federalism and chocolate-bar break-up after the Soviet collapse. The all-mighty governors and gubernatorial elections in 1990s. Regional machines and the Fatherland – All Russia party in 1999. Adverse effects of federalism on party formation. Defederalization of Russia and building governors into the power vertical.

Corruption, bureaucracy and state building in Russia: Russia's surprisingly weak state. What is state weakness? State autonomy, state capacity and corruption. Is Russian state stronger under Putin than under Yeltsin? Descending to the local level and seeking societal explanations. Blat. Political machines.

Protests and color revolutions. Who are the Russian protesters and what do they want? Why revolutions happen in the Post-Soviet countries?

What state weakness tells us about institutions and the rule of law? Formal and informal institutions in Russian politics. Are courts another victim of the regime? How is law made in Russia?

Business and state in Russia. Oil and resource curse. Oligarchs: Is Russia swinging between state-capture and business-capture? How big is the Big Oil in Russian politics? What is resource curse and why is it a curse?

Societal, economic and political sources of autocratic resilience in Russia. A normal country? Do Russians support their political regime? What are the major correlates of this support? Is it economy? Is it stability? Is it law and order? Are Russians autocratic by nature? What does regime do to stay? How popular are regime policies?

WORLD POLITICS AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Major Theories of International Relations. Political Realism and Liberalism: The Story of Confrontation and Inter-action. Neo-realism and Neo-liberal Institutionalism: the Neo-Neo Debate. Marxist and Neo-Marxist International Relations Theories. Social Constructivism. Post-positivist Turn in IR and Poststructuralism. Postcolonialism. Feminist Theories of IR. Geopolitics as a Theory of International Relations.

Selected Issues in World Politics and IR. Diplomacy and Foreign Policy. Major Trends of Globalizations. Hard and Soft Security. Terrorism as a Hard Security Challenge. Development-related Problems as a Soft Security Challenge. Environmental Issues as a Soft Security Challenge.

COMPARATIVE POLITICS

Intro to Comparative Politics and Comparative Research Methods: Comparative Politics. Comparative Method. Research design. Research question and answer. Variables and hypotheses in comparative politics. Old institutionalism. Behavioral revolution. Systemic approach. Rational choice approach. (Neo)institutionalisms. Problems of comparison. Five alternative approaches in comparative politics. Institutions, ideas, international environment, interests.

Political Regimes and Regime Change: Political regimes. Typologies and classification. Scalar vs sortal approaches. Hybrid regimes. Democracies and non-democracies. Democracy. R. Dahl. J. Schumpeter. Substantive and procedural definitions. Polyarchy. Common good. Classic and modern definitions of autocracies. Totalitarianism and authoritarianism. Electoral and competitive authoritarianism. Personalist, one-party and military regimes. Hybrid regimes. Regimes change. Democratization and democratic transitions. Types of transitions. Waves of democratization. Diffusion and bandwagon effects.

Institutions and Institutional Designs: Assemblies, parliaments, congresses. Committees. Legislative process. Legislative oversight. Filibustering and logrolling. Parliamentary autonomy. Rational bureaucracy. New Public Management. Principal-agent problems. Policy implementation. Models of public service (civil service). Parliamentarism. Presidentialism. Mixed designs (president-parliamentary and premier-presidential systems). Perils of presidentialism. Presidential power and separate survival.

Elections and Electoral Systems: Elections as instruments of democracy. Plebiscites and referendums. Direct and indirect participation in politics. Direct democracy vs representative democracy. Variety of democracies. Majoritarian democracies. Consensus democracies. Westminster democracies. Accountability and representation. Responsiveness and responsibility. Electoral formulae. Thresholds. District magnitude. Families of electoral systems. Plurality systems. Proportional systems. Mixed systems. Preferential vote. Quota and divisors' methods.

Parties and Party Systems: Political parties. Functions of political parties. Types of parties. Maurice Duverger. Cadre and mass parties. Catchall parties. Cartel parties. Party systems classification. Duverger's laws. Giovanni Sartori. Effective number of parties. Fractionalization. Volatility.

Political Culture and Participation: Political culture. Civic culture. Critical citizens. Paradox of voting. Traditional, modern and emancipative values. Modernization and post-modernization. Political participation. Conventional and unconventional participations. Institutionalized and direct participation. Models of voting behavior. Theories of protest. Critical mass theory. Absolute and relative deprivation. Tipping-point models. Political opportunity structure.

INTRODUCTION IN POLICY ANALYSIS

What are public policies and why do (not) we want to analyze them? What are public policy problems?

Why State? State's role in making public policies. "Carrots, Sermons and Sticks". Types of public policies. Market Failures. Market efficiency as a public policy rationale. Market failures: externalities, public good provision, natural monopoly, information asymmetries.

The Essential: The Policy Cycle approach to public policy studies. Policy cycle model. Stages of the policy cycle. Policy cycle as descriptive and prescriptive model.

Agenda Setting: Multiple Streams Framework. Problem, Policy, and Politics streams. Coupling. Policy entrepreneurs.

Policy Formulation & Shaping: Advocacy Coalition Framework. Advocacy coalitions, beliefs and their levels, coalitional resources. Policy Transfer, policy diffusion, policy learning. Evidence-Based Policy-Making or Policy-Based Evidence-Making: Evidence-based policy-making, the problem of evidence manipulation, values in evidence-based policy analysis.

Policy Legitimation: Iron Triangle, Issue Networks, Policy Communities and Public Opinion.

Decision Making and Policy Change: Punctuated equilibrium theory and analysis of budget spendings.

Policy Implementation: Bureaucracy, Compliance and Multilevel Governance. The role of bureaucracy in policy implementation, bureaucratic stimuli. Multi-level governance and compliance.

Qualitative and Quantitative Policy Evaluation: Where the Money Goes. Quantitative and qualitative tools in policy evaluation.

Policy-making in Russia. Factors of successful reforms.

Developing as a Policy Analyst: Designing Interventions and Writing Policy Papers. Intervention designs. How to write good policy papers. “Speaking Truth to Power”: Policy Advisory Systems. The role of policy advisors in policy-making. Policy Advisory Systems. Public Policy as a Subject and a Profession: Who is a Good Policy Analyst How to be a good policy analyst? Skills and competencies.

QUALITATIVE METHODS IN POLITICAL RESEARCH

Introduction to Qualitative Methodology: Cartesian doubt, Positivism and Interpretivism, Qualitative and Quantitative research, and Mixed Method Design.

Observation and Self-Ethnography: Researcher neutrality, interview data as topic/resource, how to develop a research guide, and common mistakes.

Interview: Structured, semi-structured and narrative interviews.

Focus-Groups: planning, moderation, analysis: Focus Groups – when and where; the selection process.

Visual methods: Visual ethnography – when, and why, it should be used.

Digital Ethnography: Photography, motion pictures, hypermedia, the web, interactive CDs, CD-ROMs, and virtual reality.

Mental Mapping: Kevin Lynch and the five elements.

Planning a qualitative project: Focus Groups – when and where; the selection process.

Qualitative analysis: Theoretical, purposive, accidental, quota, snowball and systematic matching sampling; research ethics. Grounded Theory, Codes and Categories.

How to present qualitative data: Structures of presentation, key principles of research dissemination.

QUANTITATIVE METHODS IN POLITICAL RESEARCH

Introduction to the discipline. R Basics. Introduction to the course content: forms of current and final control, cumulative and final grade. A brief review of the main literature on the course. The place of quantitative methods in modern political science research. Specialized statistical software: types, examples, advantages and limits of different programs. Algorithm of installation R and R-Studio. Interface of R and R-Studio. Main commands, objects and functions in R. R as a basic specialized statistical program for the course. Installation and launching R. Console and script editor. Help call commands. Downloading and running statistical packages. R as a calculator. Saving the results of work in R. Exit the program. Assignment operator, objects and functions in R. Examples of actions with objects. Methods of data entry in R: `c()` function. Import data into R from different programs: packages *foreign* and *readxl*. Functions `read.spss()`, `read.dta()`, `read.scv()`, `read_excel()`. Creating tables. Opening saved scripts.

Descriptive statistics and basic statistical concepts. Types of data. Descriptive statistics: measures of dispersion and measures of central trend. General population and sampling. Normal distribution and central limit theorem. Methods for calculating descriptive statistics in R. Working with data from a specific political science study.

Data Visualization: Principles, Tools, Examples. The role of data visualization in the presentation of the research results. Principles of data visualization. Chart types: scatter chart, distribution chart (histogram), boxplot, violin diagram, bar graph, pie chart. Examples of diagrams from a political science research. Consideration of functions for creating various types of diagrams: `plot()`, `hist()`, `boxplot()`, `vioplot()`, `barplot()`, `pie()`. Consideration of functions for adjusting chart parameters: `par()`, `title()`, `lines()`, `legend()`. Saving charts in different formats.

Comparison of samples: statistical tests. Statistical hypotheses: alternative and zero. Statistical errors: first and second type. Statistical significance. Chi-square statistics. Manual chi-square calculation. Examples of using chi-square statistics in political science research. Calculation of chi-square and binomial test statistics in R. Work with electoral statistics. Comparison of samples: general idea of statistical tests (parametric – non-parametric; bilateral – left side – right side). Binomial test. Parametric tests: t-test for independent and paired samples. Nonparametric tests: Wilcoxon test (Mann-Whitney) for independent and pair samples. Shapiro-Wilks Test to check the normality of distribution. Illustration of the work of statistical tests. T-test calculation, Wilcoxon test (Mann-Whitney), Shapiro- Wilks test in R. Work with electoral statistics: comparing the values of different indexes of ENP.

Correlation. Correlation: Pearson and Spearman coefficients, significance of correlation coefficients. Correlation matrix. Conducting a correlation analysis and building correlation matrices in R. Analysis of political studies where correlation analysis was in use.

OLS-regression: the essence, the interpretation of the results, the presentation of regression outputs. Difference between correlation and regression. Dependent and independent variables.

Method of least squares (OLS): essence, assumptions. Paired linear regression: regression equation, interpretation of regression output. Coefficient of determination (R^2). Multiple linear regression: regression equation, the value of t- statistics for independent variables, the F-statistic value for the regression model. Comparison of regression models. The nuances of the interpretation of the coefficient of determination and standardized coefficients for independent variables. Presentation of multiple linear regression results: examples from political science research. *Stargazer* package. Structural composition of articles with a regression analysis. Using categorical and ordinal variables. Implementation of the pairwise linear regression in R. Visualization of the essence of the method of least squares. Interpretation of the results of regression analysis. Realization of multiple linear regression in R. Comparison of regression models using the `anova()` function. Interpretation of the results of regression analysis. Consideration of the compositional structure of political science research, using multiple linear regression as the primary data analysis method. Consideration of the use in the regression analysis categorical and ordinal variables. Work with *Duncan* database.

Technical and substantive problems of regression models. Diagnostics. Technical problems of regression models: multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, emissions, influential observations. Diagnostics and ways to solve technical problems of regression models. Essential problems of regression models: endogeneity, exclusion from an analysis of relevant explanatory variables, the inclusion of irrelevant explanatory variables. The problem of sample bias. Detailed consideration of the essence of the technical problems of regression models: multicollinearity, heteroscedasticity, emissions and influential observations. Working with *Duncan* database and student databases. Work with multicollinearity identification functions: `vif()`; heteroscedasticity: `ncvTest()`, `spreadLevelPlot()`; emissions: `qqplot()`, `outlierTest()`; influential observations: `influencePlot()` and others. Consideration of the problem of sample bias (selection of units of analysis on dependent variable). Consideration of the problems of endogeneity bias, exclusion from the analysis of relevant explanatory variables and the inclusion of irrelevant explanatory variables in the analysis.

Generalized linear models: a brief overview. Generalized linear models: logistic regression. Predicted probabilities and odds ratio. Implementation of logistic regression in R. Consideration of political science research, using logistic regression as the main method data analysis. Generalized linear models: ordered logistic regression. Predicted probabilities and odds ratio for ordered logistic regression.

3. PRIMARY SOURCES

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