

ADVANTAGES OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AS OPTIONAL SUBJECT

- **2016 – Performance of Political Science** Optional Subject. In the last few years the results are brighter with Political Science.
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- **2015 batch IAS topper, Tina Dabi** - Political Science Optional Subject. In the last few years the results are brighter with Political Science.
- It is very much **GS-Friendly**. In Preliminary Exam every year, 8-10 questions are asked from Indian freedom movement and 15 to 20 questions are asked from Indian polity and Governance section. Nowadays the level of difficulty of these questions is increasing per year, therefore a student with in-depth knowledge of Indian Constitution and Politics is much better equipped to successfully handle such questions and gain crucial marks. Besides 3 to 8 questions can be expected from International Affairs/International Institutions section. And to remind you, the questions from this section would be basically answerable and won't be complicated. A Political Science student is mandated by his syllabus to master these sections anyway.
- Also it is quite helpful in tackling other sections sometimes for e.g. in CSAT 2014; the geography question regarding the location of Turkey was a sifter for students with Sci. optional as area in question was integral to the "Ukraine Crisis". Similarly questions on Arab Spring, BRICS Summits, AGNI –IV and Region often in news (Chechnya, Darfur & Swat Valley) were directly from IR portion of Pol. Sci. (Paper 2). Consequently the student found these areas in prelims to his advantage.

YEAR	No. Of Questions From Polity (Including Indian National Movement , IR And Defence)
2010	5
2011	8
2012	18
2013	18
2014	15
2015	> 30
2016	15
2017	> 26

- In other words, anyone who intends to clear prelims can never neglect Indian Polity section. Anyone who takes Political Science as optional would study Indian Polity and Governance along with International Relations anyway consequently saving time for other topics for the preliminary exam. In this way the preparation for Prelims and Mains would get integrated for a Political Science student.
- **"I made no distinction in study for Prelims and Mains till April 2010, and later only started paying more attention to factual details"**– **Karthik Iyer**, All India Rank 7 in 2010 CSE with Political Science as one

- of the optional while referring to his preparation of Paper 1 – Section B of Political Science.
- In the newly revised General Studies Mains syllabus nearly 60 Percentage of Political Science Syllabus topics is covered. If one sees the questions from General Studies Paper 2 –Governance, Constitution, Polity, Social Justice, Indian Diaspora and International relations – and relate with Political Science Question Papers I and II, it could hardly make any difference between the two. For example in the year 2013, all questions from International Relations section in GS-II were directly from the topics covered in Paper 2 of Political Science and International Relations.
- In Essay paper [200 marks] almost every year there is one topic related to Indian Government and Politics and International relations.
- The subject being very dynamic because major area of focus under Political Science syllabus is on applied dimensions. [For instance-**actual working** of principal organs of the Union Government and those of the state government (paper 1 topic no 4 (a) & (b)], you are constantly mandated to keep in touch with the newspaper. A Political Science student would feel that the entire newspaper every day is some way or the other related to his syllabus. **Extracting useful information every day from newspapers and magazines is a cumbersome and time consuming task, therefore guidance from an expert faculty becomes indispensable in terms of which topics to focus on and which ones to avoid.**
- Since almost all the factual parts of the syllabus have been deleted in the new syllabus, the conceptual understanding in Political Science theory section would make a better presentation of the answers possible.
- Also, answer writing practice especially for the conceptual portions of the subject gives experience for answering questions in the general studies papers.
- **There is general notion that Political Science syllabus is exhaustive and extensive, technically it's not as**
 - ✓ Repetition of Topics is there-Marxism, Marx, Gramsci, Marxist notion of state.
 - ✓ Topics are interrelated –Thoughts of Mill, Bentham and Liberal notions of state, democracy, justice are complementary to each other.
 - ✓ Ideas of Marxism, Liberalism, Feminism, new social movement and issues like environment, democracy, Human rights is in Paper-1 as well as in paper-2.
- Lastly, in interview the subject comes to be extremely handy as a good knowledge of Governance, Polity and IR can result in very good marks and finally scale the gap between getting a recommendation and missing it by a few marks and investing one more year of your life in preparation.