



# **REFORMING THE EXISTING SELECT POLICIES OF BANGLADESH**

OSUN Connected Learning Contest Winner

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**Course: Introduction to Political Science (POL 101)**

## **Course: POL 101 - Introduction to Political Science**

This course aims to introduce students to key concepts, approaches, and debates in political science by exploring some of the foundational and groundbreaking work in the discipline's subfields of political theory, comparative politics, and international relations. Connecting important works in the discipline with salient current events will enable students to engage in critical evaluation of political outcomes and explanatory narratives about politics.

### Course objectives:

1. Analyze political phenomena by examining interactions among institutions, interests, and ideologies
2. Evaluate political institutions and systems and their impact on individuals and society
3. Apply the concepts and analytical approaches discussed in class to identify and address policy challenges in Bangladesh

### Key Teachings to Impart:

1. Understanding the fundamental political theory and schools of thought
2. Developing the creative thinking ability of students about society, politics and social process' that shape up individual's behaviour or lives
3. Analysing the ways socio-economic institutions are shaped through policymaking

## **Assignment:**

The final assignment, which is 20%-30% of student's overall grades, invites students to consider themselves policy makers and to try and reform any policies in Bangladesh they believe require amendments and reformulations. They were asked to consider the failed policies or policy paralysis of Bangladesh which were mostly caused due to the lack of enforcement or maybe the policies were ill-framed, etc. Examples of failed policies or policy paralysis in Bangladesh are: policies in the fiscal sector, financial sector and low shares of public spending on education and health.

This assignment was used to test the students' ability to answer non-hypothetical questions with the use of secondary research.

**If you are asked to change any one of the aspects of select existing Bangladeshi policy (policy paralysis), what would it be? Can policy implementation succeed in the cases where there is discontentment of people towards that policy? The paper must include:**

1. The policy and area that requires most of the changes; why is this important?
2. Historical background of the issues
3. Current progress or degradation of the issue and policy solutions
4. Are your solutions future proof? What are some possible limitations of these policy changes?

The assignment enabled the students to:

1. Think analytically about what political concepts are and how well these theoretical concepts fit in the real-world political views
2. Learn how policies can be reformed through evidence and evaluation--a state-of-the-art method, which has proven to be effective
3. Attain the capability of choosing their own subject, relate with the reading materials provided for the course and do extensive research on them to write a paper
4. Collaborate in an open platform
5. Albeit, it was not a group assignment, students were given the liberty to discuss with each other (often asynchronous) and to complete their individual papers

## **Practical and pedagogical value**

Observations:

1. The take home online paper and opening a platform to be collaborative allowed the students to gather more ideas
2. Students were more critical and researched well before putting their thoughts in the paper

3. All the assignments along with the feedback are now archived and accessible to the students. This gives them a platform to go over their paper's limitations and drawbacks and make their writing better in the future. One of the real benefits the students got was individual feedback on their papers. According to the students, this allowed them to understand their paper's limitations and drawbacks and make their paper writing abilities better for future courses.

The remote learning context allowed:

1. Fostering knowledge creation through a connected learning environment. Albeit, students were not able to go to the university to do their classes, the institution still ran on a digital platform.
2. Upholding human values by boosting their cognitive skills. The online platform is new in Bangladesh and has allowed great collaboration among departments through increased communication and sharing of knowledge. Teaching became easier and more interactive with students.

Experience to share with Colleagues:

1. Longer hours of online classes were necessary to compensate for the lack of in-person instruction.
2. More tutorial hours were offered to the students
3. One-on-one sessions were provided a week before students started preparing for their assignment. Notes were provided to them in their private chat room to help them structure their thoughts