

OLLSCOIL NA hÉIREANN, GAILLIMH  
NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND, GALWAY

SUMMER EXAMINATIONS 1999/2000

**SOCIOLOGICAL & POLITICAL STUDIES**

FIRST YEAR

Professor Huw Beynon  
Professor Pelle Svensson  
Professor Chris Curtin  
Dr. Niall O Dochartaigh  
Dr. George Taylor  
Mr. Brendan Flynn

**SP102/104 INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS/IRISH POLITICS**

Time allowed: Three Hours

Answer THREE questions in all.

1. What are the core themes which underpin the social democratic welfare state. To what extent have these been challenged in recent years.
2. Critically assess environmentalism as a political ideology.
3. Examine the core elements of liberalism. What are the conservative criticisms of such a position.
4. "Racism and immigration are fast becoming important political issues in the Republic of Ireland." Discuss.
5. *"The Irish are an increasingly unpredictable mob of voters, although still divided by a bitter civil war and obsessed in their preferences for charismatic local personalities. Consequently, neither ideology nor party matter much for the Irish voter."* Discuss how accurate you think this portrayal of the Irish electorate really is?
6. Do you think Ireland needs a new electoral system? Consider in your answer the advantages and disadvantages of our present system as well as some merits and flaws of possible reforms.
7. Is the Irish civil service the 'real government of Ireland'?
8. Why is local government so weak in Ireland, and why does this matter for democracy?
9. "A deeply divided society such as Northern Ireland can not be governed according to the simple principle of majority rule." Discuss in relation to past and present structures of government in the North.
10. "If paramilitary organisations decommission their weapons and the police force is reformed it will remove two of the principal causes of conflict in Northern Ireland." Discuss.