



PRELIMINARY READING IN POLITICS FOR UNDERGRADUATES INTENDING TO READ
PHILOSOPHY, POLITICS & ECONOMICS OR HISTORY AND POLITICS

1. You are required to write an essay before you arrive in Oxford based on reading J.S. Mill's *On Liberty*. (Lots of editions of this are available, and any of them will be fine.) The essay title is

"The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it." (J.S. Mill)
Do you agree?'

This essay should be handed in to the Lodge, labelled for Dr Amogh Sharma, by Friday of 0th week.

2. You should also read Arend Lijphart's *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries* (2nd ed., 2012), chapters 1, 2, 6 and 7. Based on this reading, please make notes on the following questions:

- What is the difference between a presidential, semi-presidential, and parliamentary system?
- What other variables do the real-world operation of a regime depend on, besides those found in constitutions?

These notes should be handed in to the lodge with the Mill essay - by Friday of 0th week. You will get these notes back, to use when writing your first tutorial essay. 3.

Two other books that it would be useful to read are:

- Jonathan Wolff, *An Introduction to Political Philosophy* (Revised ed., 2006)
- Daron Acemoglu and James A. Robinson, *Why Nations Fail: The Origins of Power, Prosperity, and Poverty* (2012)

Reading these two texts is recommended, but not compulsory. Points 1 and 2 are compulsory.