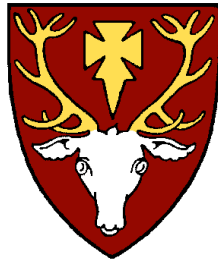


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First, we would like to congratulate you again on receiving an offer of a place from Hertford College. The competition for places was intense, and you can be proud of your achievement. We very much hope that those of you who recently sat examinations have done well in them and will satisfy your entrance offers, and that all of you are looking forward to coming up to Oxford in the autumn. We also hope that you are determined to make the most of your time here, and to justify the great privilege of being taught at one of the very best universities in the world, with a level of personal attention that is unique. We had many extremely well-qualified candidates who would have loved to win a place, but whom we had to disappoint: you owe it to them to give of your best. Our job as tutors is to help you in this, and you can be sure that your efforts will be reciprocated, especially when the going gets tough. Oxford has an extremely low drop-out rate, despite the high standards and big demands, and much of the reason for this is the level of personal support achieved through small-group teaching and individual attention. So although you can expect sometimes to find things very challenging, you can also be confident of getting through it successfully if you take it seriously. No Hertford PPEist has dropped out, or finished without either First or Upper Second Class Honours, for as long as any of us tutors has been here.

Once you arrive, you will find that Oxford is a place where people “work hard and play hard”. The workload is far greater than at most British universities (with around 36 essays or equivalent per year), but there are also plenty of opportunities to enjoy yourself and develop your talents in other ways. Each term lasts only 8 weeks, but those weeks are packed with activity, and usually everyone – both students and academic staff – will be pretty exhausted by the end! Moreover all three terms are full of teaching (so you get 24 weeks altogether), and the first year examinations take place after the end of the summer term, in “Week 9”. This means that it’s a very good idea to try to get a bit ahead during the summer, so that when term starts you don’t find things too stressful, and you can spare more time for things other than keeping up with your work. Right now, you might feel that you’ve earned a rest after those demanding examinations you took recently. But the pressure at Oxford is likely to be much greater than at school, so it’s worth investing some holiday time to make life easier for yourself next year, and you may well find that it’s actually really interesting too!

The first essential aspect of your preparation is to ensure that you are up to speed in mathematics, because deficiencies here could lead to your quickly falling behind in Economics. Philosophy and Politics tend to be absorbed gradually, and you can learn from lectures and reading even while initially finding things confusing (indeed in Philosophy, especially, some confusion is entirely to be expected!). But in Economics – as in other technical disciplines – you need to be able to build quickly on a solid foundation of understanding, and if you cannot follow the relevant calculations and methods, you will be in serious trouble. Dimitra’s handout gives advice on appropriate preparation, which you should certainly act on, especially if you have not studied Mathematics recently. Once you have the mathematics under control, you should try to give a reasonable amount of time to reading around the three main subjects, and we hope that our handouts will help here. These give you details of the various texts that will be studied formally in the first year, and also more general reading to get you thinking in the right way. Try to devote, say, at least one hour each day to each subject, choosing books that interest and stimulate you to think for yourself about the issues. Exercising your mind like this may be hard to start with, but it should become easier and enjoyable, as well as excellent preparation for Oxford. And if at any stage you find yourself in need of help, feel free to email us (addresses on the last sheet).

With best wishes for the summer, and looking forward to welcoming you in October!

Peter (Philosophy), Radek (Politics), and Dimitra (Economics)

Hertford College, Oxford

Recommended Readings for Philosophy

General Philosophy

The first year “General Philosophy” course covers topics particularly associated with Descartes and Hume, who also feature strongly in the second year “History of Philosophy” course. The most useful editions are:

René Descartes	<i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i> , with selections from the Objections and Replies (ed. John Cottingham, Cambridge, 1996)
David Hume	<i>Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding</i> (ed. Peter Millican, Oxford World’s Classics, OUP – i.e. Oxford University Press – 2007)

The Introduction to this Hume edition gives a general overview of the development of philosophy over the relevant period, written with first year Oxford students in mind.

Moral Philosophy

The set text for the first year “Moral Philosophy” course is Mill’s *Utilitarianism*, for which the best edition is:

J. S. Mill	<i>Utilitarianism</i> (ed. Roger Crisp, OUP, 1998)
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Crisp, who is himself at Oxford, has also written an excellent *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Mill on Utilitarianism* (Routledge, 1997), though – as with most “secondary” literature – you might prefer to borrow this rather than buy your own.

Logic

The logic course is now taught using a book (by Volker Halbach) produced by the Philosophy Faculty, details of which can be found at <http://philosophy.hertford.ox.ac.uk/logic.htm>. A useful book for background reading, which used to be the set text, is:

Wilfrid Hodges	<i>Logic</i> (Penguin, 2001)
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Background Reading

Perhaps the best way to prepare yourself for studying Philosophy is to spend time thinking for yourself about philosophical problems in the company of books such as:

Stephen Law	<i>The Philosophy Gym</i> (Headline, 2004)
Simon Blackburn	<i>Think</i> (OUP, 2001)
Laurence Goldstein	<i>The Philosopher's Habitat</i> (Routledge, 1990)
Bertrand Russell	<i>The Problems of Philosophy</i> (OUP, 2001)
Edward Craig	<i>Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction</i> , (OUP, 2002)

It's also well worth looking at books by authors such as Julian Baggini and Nigel Warburton, who have produced several good introductions to aspects of the subject. The ideal reading material before coming to Oxford are books that really grab you, and are able to make you feel the interest and significance of the sorts of problems that Philosophy presents.

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Recommended Readings for Politics

Political Theory Texts

(These are compulsory reading for the Political Theory tutorials.)

- Alexis de Tocqueville *Democracy in America* (Vol 1: Author's Introduction; Part 1, chs 3-5; Part 2, chs 6-9; Vol 2: Part 2, chs 1-8; Part 4, chs 1-8), e.g. translated by Gerald Bevan (Penguin, 2003)
- John Stuart Mill *On Liberty* (in Mill, ed. Alan Ryan, Norton Critical Editions, 1997, which has the text and useful commentary)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau *The Social Contract*, e.g. translated by Christopher Betts (OUP, 2008)
- Karl Marx *The Communist Manifesto; The German Ideology and Critique of the Gotha Programme* (excerpts). All in David McLellan (ed.), *Karl Marx: Selected Writings* (OUP, 1977), pp. 159-91, 221-47, 564-70)

Further reading for Political Theory

(You may find these useful introductions to the study of political theory.)

- Stears & Leopold (eds) *Political Theory: Methods and Approaches* (OUP, 2008)
- Michael Freedon *Rights* (OUP, 1991)
- Jonathan Wolff *An Introduction to Political Philosophy* (OUP, 2006)
- David Miller *Political Philosophy: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2003)

History and Institutions

Britain

- Kenneth Morgan *Britain since 1945: The People's Peace* (OUP, 2001)
- Dennis Kavanagh (et al.) *British Politics* (OUP, 2006)
- Tony Wright *British Politics: A Very Short Introduction* (OUP, 2003)

Germany:

- Peter Pulzer *German Politics 1945-95* (OUP, 1995)
- Manfred Schmidt *Political Institutions in the Federal Republic of Germany* (OUP, 2003)

France

- Robert Elgie *Political Institutions in Contemporary France* (OUP, 2003)
- Anne Stevens *Government and Politics of France* (OUP, 2003)

USA

- Nigel Bowles *Government and Politics of the United States* (Palgrave Macmillan, 1998)
- M. J. C. Vile *Politics in the USA* (Routledge, 2007)

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Recommended Readings for Economics

Mathematics

The best preparation for the Introductory Economics course is to brush up on your Mathematics. You should be able to rearrange equations and solve simultaneous equations with ease. Reviewing logarithmic and exponential functions, as well as linear and quadratic equations will make your progress through the Microeconomics part of the course far smoother. Moreover, familiarizing yourselves with rules of differentiation, including the product and quotient rules, is particularly important. There are lectures for students without A-level Mathematics, which run alongside the Introductory Economics course. It is, however, well worth your while spending some time over the summer reviewing or introducing yourself to calculus *before* starting the Introductory Economics course.

The McGraw-Hill *Demystified* maths books are very clear. The *How to Ace Calculus* book is both amusing and quite good at the same time. Full details are:

- Adams, C., Hass, J. and Thompson, A., *How to Ace Calculus: The Streetwise Guide* (W. H. Freeman & Co., 1998)
- Huttenmueller, R., *Business Calculus Demystified* (McGraw-Hill, 2007)
- Huettenmueller, R., *Algebra Demystified* (McGraw-Hill, 2002)

Introductory Textbooks

For those with no economics background, two popular introductory texts are the following. Begg *et al.* is arguably the better of the two:

- Begg, D., Fischer, S. and Dornbusch, R., *Economics* (McGraw-Hill, 8th edition 2005)
- Lipsey, R. and Chrystal, K., *Principles of Economics* (OUP, 11th edition 2007)

Earlier editions are also fine. These books should be used in conjunction with the main textbooks over the first few weeks at Oxford to get to grips with key concepts. You may wish to read up on consumer theory and concepts such as elasticity over the summer. This may help you ease into the course to some extent, though your priority should definitely be building up your Mathematics.

Main First Year Textbooks

The main texts for Microeconomics and Macroeconomics are Varian, and Mankiw and Taylor respectively. It is probably wise to purchase these books, though the College and University libraries hold many copies of both. While Varian is the main textbook, some students find it very condensed and rather dry. Bernheim and Whinston or Katz and Rosen are very clear and readable alternatives.

Microeconomics textbooks:

- Varian, H., *Intermediate Microeconomics: A Modern Approach* (Norton, 7th edition 2006)
- Bernheim, D. and Whinston, M., *Microeconomics* (McGraw Hill, 2008)
- Katz, M. and Rosen, H., *Microeconomics, European Edition* (McGraw-Hill, 2nd edition 2009)

Macroeconomics textbooks:

- Mankiw, G. and Taylor, M., *Macroeconomics, European Edition* (Worth, 2007)
- Blanchard, O., *Macroeconomics* (Prentice Hall, 5th edition 2008) – *more advanced*
- Miles, D. and Scott, A., *Macroeconomics* (McGraw-Hill, 2nd edition 2004) – *more advanced*

General Economics Reading

There are some very good, popular economics books about, which include the following. These do not directly relate to the Introductory Economics syllabus, but are great for seeing how the core concepts taught can be applied to every day issues, as well as offering you some insight into the world's economic problems.

- Levitt, S. and Dubner, S., *Superfreakonomics: Global Cooling, Patriotic Prostitutes and Why Suicide Bombers Should Buy Life Insurance* (Penguin, 2009)
- Levitt, S. and Dubner, S., *Freakonomics: A Rogue Economist Explores the Hidden Side of Everything* (Penguin, 2007)
- Collier, P., *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What Can Be Done About It?* (OUP, 2008)
- Hartford, Tim, *The Undercover Economist* (Little Brown, 2007)
- Sachs, J., *The End of Poverty: How We Can Make it Happen in Our Lifetime* (Penguin, 2005)
- Kay, John, *The Truth About Markets: Why Some Countries are Rich and Others Remain Poor* (Penguin, 2004)
- Kay, John, *The Everlasting Lightbulb: How Economics Illuminates the World* (Erasmus Press, 2004)
- Krugman, Paul, *The Accidental Theorist* (Penguin, 2009)
- Landsburg, S., *The Armchair Economist* (Free Press, 1995)
- Dixit, A. and Nalebuff, B., *Thinking Strategically* (Norton, 1993)

More generally, you should read through *The Economist*, as well as economics articles in the broadsheet newspapers and the *Financial Times*. Staying abreast of current economic affairs will make the Economics course more rewarding (particularly the Macroeconomics component), as your understanding of the economics behind fiscal and monetary policy decisions develops.

And finally ...

Please feel free to contact us by email at peter.millican@hertford.ox.ac.uk (Peter, Philosophy), radoslaw.zubek@hertford.ox.ac.uk (Radek, Politics), or dimitra.petropoulou@hertford.ox.ac.uk (Dimitra, Economics) should you have any further queries.

Again, we wish you all an enjoyable summer, success in meeting your Oxford entrance offers, and look forward very much to welcoming you at Hertford College in October.

Peter, Radek, and Dimitra