

## **POLS 1000: Introduction to Politics**

**Instructor:** Wm McCormick, SJ

**Office:** McGannon 127

**Office Hours:** M, 3-6 & by appointment

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**Semester:** Spring 2018

**Class Location:** McGannon 122

**Class Time:** MWF 11-11:50 A.M.

Everyone has opinions about politics. But can we move beyond ideological opinions and partisan allegiances to say something meaningful about political activity? And can we do so in ways that disclose truths about everyday political life rather than abstract from it? Charting a middle course between unreflective convention and unrealistic aspirations to scientific precision, in this course we will explore the basic aims and challenges of political science across four subfields: political theory, comparative politics, international relations and U.S. politics. Since SLU is a Jesuit and Catholic university, we will also be mindful of how political science can aid in our *cura personalis* as human beings and citizens.

### **Readings**

I. Grigsby, Ellen. *Analyzing Politics: An Introduction to Political Science*, 6th ed., Cengage Learning (2015).

II. Primary texts available online or on Blackboard.

Students should bring to class and be prepared to discuss the week's assigned readings.

### **Assignments**

Attendance: 15% of grade

Quizzes: 25%

Attendance at ATLAS Week and Social Justice conference: 10% (5% each)

Exams: 50% (25% each)

Attendance is critical to your success in this class, and will be checked regularly. Periodic unannounced quizzes will be easy if you have done the reading. Quizzes cannot be made up, but I will drop your two lowest quiz grades. The two exams will be a combination of short-answer and essay-form questions.

### **Grading Scale**

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	60-70
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	F	below 60
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

## **Office Hours**

Office hours are for your benefit. Professors have set this time aside specifically to listen to your questions and concerns and respond to them. Take advantage of that. Make a habit of going to office hours early on in each course you take, particularly if you are interested in the material, think that you might have difficulties in the course, or if the professor might later write letters of recommendation for you. Do not be shy about asking to set up an appointment with a professor if the scheduled office hours conflict with your schedule. And do not be afraid to bring up subjects not related to the class in office hours. As teachers at a Jesuit university, your professors care about you as a whole person.

## **Electronics**

Consider this class a digital vacation. Laptops are forbidden from the class, unless we have assigned online readings that day; please speak to me if think you should be exempt from this rule. All other electronic devices, including cell phones, tablets, Blackberries, PDAs and Tamagotchis, should be turned off and stowed before the beginning of class.

## **Writing Center**

The University offers writing help and other academic support that your tuition dollars are already paying for. Make use of it! You can visit them at Busch Student Center, Suite 331, or go to their website:

<http://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/student-success-center/academic-support/university-writing-services/index.php>

Additionally, the English Language Center provides specialized writing support for Saint Louis University students whose native language is not English. You will find the ELC's help most effective if you schedule an appointment with sufficient time to revise your work before the assignment is due. To make an appointment, log on to <http://myslu.slu.edu>, click the "Tools" tab, and select the "SLU Appointment" icon.

Some excellent writing advice from two of my own former professors:

<http://jacobtlevy.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/guidelines-2016.pdf>

<http://liberalarts.utexas.edu/government/files/lpangleweb/AdviceOnPaperWriting.pdf>

Do not be shy about coming to office hours to discuss the writing process with me.

## **Learning objectives**

Students will be able to distinguish among the diversity of traditions in the political science discipline. Students will be able to use their knowledge of political systems to engage effectively in political and social life. More generally, students will acquire conceptual tools and methodologies to analyze and understand their social world. With these tools, they will become more effective agents for positive and intelligent change. Students will be able to think and write critically about human behavior and community. They will become aware of the various methodological approaches used by social scientists. Most importantly, students will learn to think reflectively upon what they already think they know and believe about politics.

## **Student Success Center**

The Student Success Center is a one-stop shop which assists students with academic and career related services, is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite 114).

## **Disability Services Academic Accommodations**

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Please contact Disability Services, located within the Student Success Center, at [disability\\_services@slu.edu](mailto:disability_services@slu.edu) or 314-977-3484 to schedule an appointment.

Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services and viewed within Banner via the instructor's course roster.

It is the responsibility of the student to initiate a conversation with the instructor concerning how those accommodations are to be implemented.

## **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service through which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern. The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed here:

<https://www.slu.edu/the-office-of-the-provost/academic-affairs-policies>. All SLU students are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions, and appeals.

## **Title IX (of the United States Education Amendments of 1972)**

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; [akratky@slu.edu](mailto:akratky@slu.edu); 314.977.3886) and share the basic facts of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus. If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314.977.TALK. View SLU's sexual misconduct policy:

<http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy>

## **Provisional Course Plan**

This schedule is subject to change; I will announce any amendments to this plan in class or via e-mail. "AP" refers to the course textbook, *Analyzing Politics*.

### **I. Introduction: Politics & Political Science**

Week 1 (17 Jan): Syllabus / Jesuit Education / Political Literacy Quiz

Week 2 (22 Jan): What is Politics?

AP, Ch. 1

Preamble of US Constitution

(<http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch1s9.html>)

Week 3 (29 Jan): What is Political Science?

AP, Ch. 2

No class on Friday, 2 February

### **II. Political Theory & US Politics**

Week 4 (5 Feb): Political Theory: Key Concepts

AP, Ch. 3

Week 5 (12 Feb): Political Theory & Philosophy

AP, Ch. 4

Week 6 (19 Feb): Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism

AP, Ch. 5

Fri, 23 Feb: Attend SLU Global Social Justice Conference

Week 7 (26 Feb): Liberalism, Conservatism and Socialism - Part II

Levin, "Conservatism in an Age of Alienation"

(<https://eppc.org/publications/conservatism-in-an-age-of-alienation/>)

### ***Exam 1: Monday, 5 March***

Week 8 (5 March): The US Founding & Political Theory

Declaration of Independence

(<http://press-pubs.uchicago.edu/founders/documents/v1ch1s5.html>)

Week 9 (19 March): The Federalists

Federalist Papers 10 and 51

(<https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10>)

(<https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-51>)

### **III. Comparative Politics**

Week 10 (26 March): Democracy

*AP*, Ch. 8

Week 11 (4 April): Interests & Electoral Institutions

*AP*, Ch. 9

Week 12 (9 April): Governing Institutions (**ATLAS WEEK**)

*AP*, Ch. 10

Fri, 13 April: Attend ATLAS Week event (extra credit for presenting)

Week 13 (16 April): Governing Institutions - II

Linz, "The Perils of Presidentialism"

<https://scholar.harvard.edu/levitsky/files/1.1linz.pdf>

### **IV. International Relations**

Week 14 (23 April): Models of IR analysis & Issues in IR

*AP*, Chs. 11 & 12

Week 15 (30 April): IR & the U.S.

Kagan, "The Myth of American Decline"

(<https://newrepublic.com/article/99521/america-world-power-declinism>)

***Exam 2: Friday, 4 May***