

Introduction to Politics
POLS 1000 - 02
Beracha Hall 211
MWF 11:00 - 11:50am
Spring 2017

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“Politics is harder than physics.” -- Albert Einstein

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary educational goal of this course is to introduce students to the academic study of Political Science. Today, more than ever, it is critical for students to have a solid understanding of political processes and government institutions to make sense of the increasingly complex and integrated world around them. After completion of the course, students will acquire the knowledge and tools necessary to make sense of this complicated and sometimes messy political world. A secondary goal is to provide students with the knowledge and tools necessary to major or minor in Political Science (if a student desires to do so). To accomplish both, we will: (1) examine the origins and development of political ideas and values; (2) analyze comparative differences in political processes and government institutions; and (3) investigate contemporary political problems and issues on the domestic and international stage. This course fulfills the social science requirement.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Given the diversity of students, this course has a number of interrelated objectives:

1. Provide an introduction to basic themes and concepts found in the study of Political Science;
2. Provide an introduction to the various subfields of Political Science, including Political Analysis, American Government, Political Theory, Comparative Politics, and International Relations;
3. Enable students to evaluate and understand differences in political processes and government institutions;
4. Introduce students to contemporary political problems that affect them in their everyday lives; and
5. Enable students to demonstrate active learning through critical thinking exercises, synthesis and evaluation of course readings, oral discussions and presentations, and analytical writing.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following textbook is required:

Magstadt, Thomas M. (2017). *Understanding Politics: Ideas, Institutions, and Issues*, 12th Edition. Stamford, CT: Cengage.

Assigned readings drawn from the Magstadt text are indicated by a (M) in the course schedule. Additional readings will be assigned and posted in Blackboard under the Course Materials tab for each respective unit in the course. Since we will discuss current events on a weekly basis, please keep up with local, national, and world news on daily basis. Here are some news sources you can use:

www.nytimes.com
www.washingtonpost.com
www.npr.org
www.csmonitor.com
www.pbs.com
www.realclearpolitics.com
www.realworldpolitics.com
www.theatlantic.com
www.foreignaffairs.com
www.stltoday.com/news/local/govt-and-politics
www.stlbeacon.org

There are links to these news sources, additional readings, and optional readings on Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading will be based on the following: Class participation (5%); Policy Memo (15%); Exam 1 (20%); Exam 2 (20%); Exam 3 (20%); Labs (10) (20%).

Participation (25 points)

Students are expected to attend class regularly, to keep up with the assigned readings, and to participate actively in class discussions. If you do not come to class, you cannot participate, and thus frequent absences will be factored into your final course grade. An excellent way to participate is to incorporate current events or key themes from the readings into our discussions or labs each week.

Policy Memo (75 points):

You are responsible for writing an objective policy memo on a domestic or international issue of your choice. You are tasked with analyzing: (1) why the issue is important; (2) how the issue has developed over time; (3) three policy options that are available; (4) empirical data on who supports and opposes each policy option; and (5) what your recommended policy choice is. Each of these should be clearly identifiable sections in your memo.

Examples of topics you might choose include, but are not limited to:

- Should assault weapons be banned in the United States?
- Should abortion be banned in the United States?
- Should genetically modified foods be banned in the United States?
- Should the Affordable Care Act (“Obamacare”) be repealed? What should it be replaced with?
- Should Social Security be reformed?
- Should recreational marijuana be legalized?
- Should U.S. armed forces continue to fight in Afghanistan?
- Is the United States a declining power on the world stage?

- What should the international community do about ISIS?
- Should the Chinese government allow greater press freedom?
- Should the United Kingdom continue to work closely with the European Union on trade, citizenship, and security matters?
- Should governments around the world do more to tackle climate change?
- Should the international community do more to stop North Korea's nuclear weapons program?
- Should the international community do more to establish a Palestinian state?
- Does using drones to attack terrorists violate international law?
- Should the United States government promote free trade policies, such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership?

These are just examples -- other topics are welcomed and encouraged! The goal of this assignment is to allow you to think critically about contemporary political issues and problems. Please see me after class or during my office hours and/or send me an email so I can determine whether your topic is feasible before the topic paragraph is due.

The policy memo must be five pages in length (excluding the title page and bibliography). You should use no less than six scholarly sources (do NOT use Wikipedia or other online encyclopedias). Sources must also be listed in the body of your memo (e.g., (Magstadt 2017: 56)) and then fully listed in a bibliography at the end. Finally, your memo must be typed, double-spaced with one-inch margins, include page numbers, and use Times New Roman with 12 font size. Failure to abide by these requirements will result in point reductions. More information and instructions will be provided in class.

A topic paragraph about your memo is due **Friday, February 17**. This paragraph is worth five points (out of the 75 points total for the memo assignment). In it, you need to clearly identify your topic, why it is important, and at least three policy options you plan on examining in your memo. You also need to include the six scholarly sources you plan on using, and identify where you plan on obtaining data for the assignment. Keep in mind that your policy options must be politically relevant. I will return your topic paragraph to you with comments and indicate to you whether your topic is approved or needs to be revised.

The memo itself is due **May 5** and is worth 70 points. Each day a memo is late (every day ending in a "y") will result in a one point deduction. To prevent plagiarism, you are required to turn in a digital copy of your memo on Blackboard as well as a hard copy in class. Failure to do so will cause the assignment to be considered late. I will not grade your assignment until I receive both a hard copy and an electronic copy of your memo. If *any* portion of the assignment is plagiarized, you will receive an "F" (numerical score of 0). If you do not understand what plagiarism is or what constitutes plagiarism, please ask questions sooner rather than later.

Labs (100 points):

There are a variety of labs in this course. Most of these are held on Fridays (see the Course Schedule) and a majority of these labs are group-oriented. These labs are a vital aspect of the course since they are meant for you to think critically about key terms, concepts, and topics discussed in lecture in a more personal and informal manner. Some labs also have a presentation component. By having these labs, I hope you are able to draw connections between theory and practice -- a feat most students find difficult. Further instructions and details will be provided in class. **You cannot make up a lab if you are absent the day it is administered in class unless you make alternative arrangements with me in advance.**

Examinations (300 points):

There are three exams in the course, each worth 100 points. Each exam consists of three parts: 30 true/false questions worth one point each, 25 multiple choice questions worth two points each, and one essay question worth 20 points. Each exam will test your knowledge of the material we have discussed for the respective topics leading up to that exam. The third exam will act as the final exam in the course and 90 percent of the questions are not cumulative. The other 10 percent of the third exam consists of questions drawn from the previous two exams (word-for-word).

Here is an example of how the true/false questions will be structured in the first part of each exam:

According to our discussion on political theory, which of the following are true? Mark “A” if the answer is “True” and B if the answer is “False.”

- 1. John Locke thought a strong government was needed to provide security and protection.*
 - 2. Plato thought that democracy was the best form of government since ordinary citizens are granted political power.*
 - 3. Hobbes argued that we voluntarily enter into a social contract with a weak government to secure our property rights and nothing else.*
- (You would answer “B” for “false” for all three on your answer sheet.)*

Here is an example of how the multiple choice questions will be structured in the second part of each exam:

- 31. According to Magstadt, which of the following best describes the term “sovereign state”?*
- a. A group of senior military officials that have seized control of the existing government.*
 - b. A nation ruled by the tenets of democracy.*
 - c. A country that has broken away from an authoritarian government to form an independent, self-governing entity.*
 - d. A well-defined territory overseen by a single government that makes and enforces laws and is recognized by other governments.*
- (You would answer “d” on your answer sheet.)*

Here is an example of how an essay question will be structured in the third part of each exam:

- 1. In class we discussed the “science” in Political Science. What is political analysis? What are key components of political analysis? How do political scientists try to “mimic” scientists in the hard sciences (e.g., Chemistry, Physics)? What are limitations to social science research? Be specific and include examples.*
- (On your answer sheet, you would write a two- to three-paragraph essay response to this question.)*

Study guides will be provided at least one week in advance of each exam. Please make sure you are on time on exam days. Those who arrive late will be required to take an exam that is 80 percent essay and 20 percent multiple choice. Make-up exams are only allowed if you contact me in advance and present proper documentation excusing your absence (vacations are not excused absences). Furthermore, make-up exams must be scheduled within one week of an exam being administered.

GRADING

Your overall grade for the course is comprised of the following:

Exam One	100 points
Exam Two	100 points
Exam Three	100 points
Labs	100 points
Policy Memo	75 points
<u>Attendance</u>	<u>25 points</u>
Total Points	500 points

Grades will be assigned according to the following grading scale:

465 – 500	=	A (93-100)
450 – 464	=	A- (90-92)
435 – 449	=	B+ (87-89)
415 – 434	=	B (83-86)
400 – 414	=	B- (80-82)
385 – 399	=	C+ (77-79)
365 – 384	=	C (73-76)
350 – 364	=	C- (70-72)
300 – 349	=	D (60-70)
0 – 299	=	F (below 60)

Students are advised to keep graded assignments and copies of submitted work until they receive their final grades in the course. I will entertain any questions or concerns regarding grades within one week of the return of an assignment -- I do not engage in end-of-semester grade bargaining.

COURSE POLICIES & REQUIRED STATEMENTS

Attendance

Regular attendance is expected. Do not expect to do well in the course if you are absent on a regular basis. Please also refrain from coming to class late or leaving early.

Course Website on Blackboard

Students are required to access the course website on a regular basis. Lecture outlines, study guides, grades, web links, and other supplemental materials are only made available through this forum. Please let me know if you are having problems accessing or navigating Blackboard as soon as possible.

Late Policy

Late assignments will not be accepted. All assignments must be handed in on time unless you provide a University accepted excuse.

Lectures

This course utilizes a mixture of lectures, in-class discussions, and in-class labs. Typically, I will lecture on a topic first and then use an in-class lab or discussion to allow you to think about important concepts or topics in a more informal and personal manner. Often the best way to learn about a complex topic is to actually discuss the information with your peers or your professor. Simply memorizing information for an exam does not constitute active learning.

I expect you to listen attentively, take notes, and ask questions if you do not understand the course material during lecture. I also expect everyone to contribute to class discussions on a regular basis. Keep in mind that you can contribute in a variety of ways.

Lecture outlines for each class period are available on the course website. I encourage you to print these outlines out in advance for each class. Doing so will enable you to take notes effectively. There are also review questions on each outline, which should prove to be very helpful when studying for the exams.

Course Reading Material:

In order for the class to function smoothly, students are expected to be familiar with all assigned readings *before the class meeting* for which they are assigned. With this being said, there is no expectation on my part that you will understand the reading material completely. All I expect is that you make an effort to keep up with the assigned readings since the lectures substantially expand on the course reading material. It is important to note that the lectures and the assigned readings complement each other; they are not substitutes. Further, most lectures do not cover the readings. Students are responsible for all assigned readings, even if the material is not explicitly discussed in the classroom.

Rules of Behavior:

1.) In order to foster an open learning environment, please behave in a respectful manner toward others. The lectures, course material, and discussions on current events are intentionally structured to encourage debate and I am sure many of you do not share the same opinions or beliefs. Since it is important that everyone feels comfortable participating in class, please do not insult others or their point of view. I reserve the right to remove students from the class who do not abide by this rule.

2.) Please refrain from using laptops, tablets, and/or smart phone devices for non-educational purposes (e.g., games, web-browsing, Facebook, texting, etc.) during class (it's pretty easy to tell if you're doing so). Also, please turn your cell phone either off or on silent before class starts. Failure to abide by this rule may be grounds for removal from class -- as is failing to laugh at my jokes. If cell phones or laptops become a distraction, I reserve the right to prohibit students from bringing them to class. Please send me an email with the subject heading "I accept your electronic policy" to royereb@slu.edu after reading this statement.

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authorized by or revised by another person as the student's own work,

copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in an *automatic grade of 0 for that assignment* and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a large sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty:
<http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>.

Title IX

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; 314.977.3886) and share the basic fact 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. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy>
www.slu.edu/here4you

Student Learning & Student Success Center

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center, 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). Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, department resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning) by visiting the Student Success Center or by going to www.slu.edu/success

Disability Services Academic Accommodations

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at 314.977.8885 or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

Writing Services

Please take advantage of the University Writing Services; getting feedback benefits all writers! Trained writing consultants can help with any assignment, multimedia project, or oral presentation. During one-on-one consultations, you can work on everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. These services do fill up, so please make an appointment! Also, bring your assignment description, and a few goals, to the consultation. For more information, or to make an appointment, call 314.977.3484 or visit www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml.

Course Evaluations

You are required to complete a course evaluation at the end of the semester. This evaluation is your opportunity to provide feedback regarding the course content, the professor, and your overall impression of how the material was presented. These evaluations are anonymous, yet extremely valuable.

COURSE SCHEDULE

***Tentative and subject to change. All required readings are italicized. Key dates, topics, and assignments are bolded.

Topic 1: The Basics of Political Science

Introduction & Political Science as an Academic Discipline

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|-------------|--|
| 1/18 | Introduction to course, syllabus, course website |
| 1/20 | What is the study of Political Science? What do Political Scientists study? What are the subfields of Political Science?
<i>M, pp. 1-22</i> |
| 1/23 | Lab: "Fields" Carousel (10 pts.)
<i>Explore: (http://www.apsanet.org/)</i> |

The "Science" in Political Science

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1/25 & 1/27 | What is political analysis? How can the study of politics be scientific? <i>King, Keohane, and Verba, "The Science in Social Science," pp. 3-33</i> |
| 1/30 & 2/1 | Lab: Designing a Research Study (10 pts.) |

Political Theory: Classical & Modern Western Political Thought

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|-----------|--|
| 2/3 & 2/6 | What is political theory? What is the best form of government? Is political theory still relevant today? |
|-----------|--|

M, pp. 50-69, Machiavelli, “*The Prince*” 58-62, Hobbes, “*Leviathan*” 76-79, Locke, “*Two Treatises of Government*” 106-112, Marx and Engels, “*Manifesto of the Communist Part*” 2-12

2/8 Lab: Designing a Social Contract (10 pts.)

Ideologies & “Isms” in Political Science

2/10 – 2/13 What is a political ideology? What do ideologies allow us to do? Are ideologies dangerous? *M*, pp. 24-49

2/15 Lab: Where Do You Stand Politically? (10 pts.)

(Complete before class: <https://www.politicalcompass.org/>)

2/17 Review Session for Exam 1

Bring study guide to class.

Policy Memo Topic Paragraph Due (5 pts)

2/20 Exam 1 (100 pts.)

Topic 2: Comparative Differences in Political Processes & Government Institutions

The Modern State

2/22 What is the “modern state”? What are ways in which states differ? Why is the state the primary form of political organization today? What are non-state actors? Wither the modern state?

Spruyt, “The Origins, Development, and Possible Decline of the Modern State” 127-149

2/24 Lab: How to Approach a Journal Article (10 pts.)

Bring Spruyt article to class

Democracy

2/27 What is a “democracy”? What are the key components of a democracy? Why does democracy mean different things to different people?

M, pp. 70-97, Dahl, “*On Democracy*,” 35-43, Zakaria, “*The Rise of Illiberal Democracy*,” pp. 22-41, Diamond, “*The Democratic Rollback: The Resurgence of the Predatory State*”

3/1 What is a presidential democracy? How does the American political system work?

Linz, “The Perils of Presidentialism,” pp. 51-69, M, pp. 204-205

3/3 What is a parliamentary democracy? How does the British political system work? What is a semi-presidential system? *M*, pp. 160-168, 176-183, 188-200, Shugart, “*Semi-Presidential Systems: Dual Executive and Mixed Authority Patterns*,” pp. 323-351.

3/6, 3/8, 3/10 Lab: Presidential or Parliamentary Case Studies: What Would You Recommend? (20 pts)

Spring Break -- March 13 - March 17 -- No Classes

Totalitarianism & Authoritarianism

3/20 What is totalitarianism? How does it work? Should we be worried today about totalitarianism?

3/22 & 3/24 *M*, pp. 131-155, review any “overview” on George Orwell’s 1984 through Google
 What is authoritarianism? What are different types of authoritarian regimes? What’s the common denominator?
M, 100-129

Constitutions & Constitutionalism

3/27 What is a constitution? How do constitutions vary around the world? What is constitutionalism?
Hammons, “Was James Madison Wrong? Rethinking the American Preference for Short, Framework-Oriented Constitutions,” pp. 837-849, refer to links on Blackboard
 3/29 **Lab: Constitutions Carousel (10 pts.)**

Legal Systems & Electoral Systems

3/31 What is a legal system? What does common law refer to? What is code law? What is Sharia?
“The Common Law and Civil Law Traditions,” pp. 1-11
 4/3 What is an electoral system? How do electoral systems differ? Why do these differences matter?
Norris, “Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian, and Mixed Systems,” pp. 297-312.
 4/5 Review session for Exam 2
Bring study guide to class.
 4/7 **Exam 2 (100 pts.)**

Topic 3: Contemporary Political Issues & Global Problems

Political Polarization in the United States

4/10 & 4/12 Is polarization real? What does political polarization look like? What is causing polarization? What can be done about polarization?
Fiorina, Abrams, and Pope, “Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America,” pp. 1-18, Katz, “Duck Dynasty vs Modern Family: 50 Maps of the US Cultural Divide”

Income Inequality & Entitlement Reform in the United States

4/14 & 4/17 Is income inequality a problem? How are entitlement programs in danger?
Mettler, “The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policies Undermine American Democracy,” pp. 1-36.

Development & Globalization

4/19 Challenges of development (or lack of) in the developing world
M, 220-254
 4/21 Development in Africa: challenges & opportunities
Readings to be determined.
 4/24 Globalization: What is it? Is it new? What are the different dimensions of globalization? How are you affected by this process?
Friedman, “The World is Flat” 3-50

4/26	Lab: Made in China? (10 pts.)
War on Terror & Radical Islam 4/28, 5/1, & 5/3	What is Terrorism? What is the War on Terror? Is terrorism only a “Muslim thing” as some suggest? Was Huntington right or dangerously wrong? <i>M, 444-473, 530-538, Huntington, “Clash of Civilizations?” pp. 1-29.</i>
Transnational Issues & Course Synthesis	
5/5	Lab: Editing & Proofreading Policy Memo (70 pts).
5/8	Climate Change: What’s the evidence? What’s the response? <i>Readings to be determined.</i>
5/10	National security in the 21 st century: Low politics vs. high politics <i>Readings to be determined.</i>
5/12	Course Summary/Exam Review
Final Exam (Exam 3)	Monday, May 15 - 8:00am - 9:40am