

# **POLS 101: INTRO TO POLITICAL SCIENCE**



**POLS 101: INTRO to POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
**BELLEVUE COLLEGE, SPRING 2015**  
**T/TH 9:30-11:20AM, RM L221**  
**OFFICE HOURS: M 12-1pm**  
**(or by appointment)**

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**A200F**

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This is an introductory course that is designed for students who are new to the study of politics. The purpose of this course is to provide you with a broad introduction to the field of political science and to help you to sort through and develop informed opinions about a variety of political topics. Some of the specific topics of study include: civic ignorance, the purpose of government, the functions of government, citizenship, democracy, the relationship between the government and the economy, civil disobedience, the media, and comparative politics.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. To develop a basic understanding of the academic field of political science. This includes developing an understanding: of the central concepts of the discipline; of the scientific methods used in the study of political science; and of the major sub-fields in the discipline.
2. To understand the role, power, and functions of government. This includes developing an ability to: identify the functions of the U.S. government; identify how governments exert influence over the economy and their citizens; and compare these attributes of the U.S. with that of other countries.
3. To understand the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship, and to begin to critically examine the political structures that distribute such

rights and to whom. This objective involves developing an understanding: of civil rights (and struggles over such rights); and of the role citizens play in political structures and institutions.

4. To become more informed and discriminating consumers of political information in order to constructively engage in the political process. This involves developing the skill to critically analyze current political issues.

### **RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR CLASS DISCUSSIONS**

This course involves the discussion of controversial political issues. People often disagree and there will be disagreements in this class. Your challenge and responsibility is to maintain civil discourse. We will achieve this by being respectful of each other and avoiding inflammatory, derogatory and insulting words, phrases and labels. Please use your common sense to avoid any other conduct that might distract or offend your classmates or me.

### **DISABILITY RESOURCES**

The Disability Resource Center (DRC) serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or a learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact the DRC staff as soon as possible. The DRC office is located in B132 and the reception desk phone number is 425-564-2498. For application information and other helpful links the DRC website is <http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>. Deaf students can reach the DRC by videophone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Finally, if you have either an apparent or non-apparent disability and require assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc., please let me know early in the quarter so that we can develop an appropriate safety plan for you. Thank you.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Cheating and plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Such behavior will result in a zero grade for the assignment/exam in question. Please familiarize yourself with BC's Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-2050p/>.

### **COURSE MATERIALS**

The primary texts for the course are Danziger's *Understanding the Political World: An Introduction to Comparative Politics* (10th Edition) and Alexander's *The New Jim Crow*. Supplemental materials will be made available on our Canvas website or in-class. **Each assigned reading is to be completed before the class session for which it is scheduled.** Any material covered by an assigned reading may be included in examination questions, regardless of whether it is specifically discussed in the classroom. A complete course schedule is attached to this syllabus. If and when adjustments are made to the course schedule, you will be informed via an announcement on our class website.

### **GRADING:**

Attendance and Participation (In Class)	10%
Participation in Hybrid Assignment	10%
Readings Quizzes (5 quizzes)	20%
Media Assignment	15%
Political Essay	15%
Midterm	15%
Final	15%
Total	100%

### **ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION (10% of Grade):**

This class will involve lectures, facilitated discussions, group work, and in-class activities. You are required to come to class prepared, take notes, and participate in discussions. If you are tardy to class, please enter quietly and begin to listen or participate where appropriate. You are not required to inform me or ask my permission for absences, and I encourage you to not excessively worry about being absent or tardy a couple times during the semester. Habitual absences or tardiness will lead to a lower participation grade, not the occasional sickness or emergency. However please let me know if you are going to be missing extended periods of time, or if you have an emergency situation that prevents you from coming to class regularly.

### **HYBRID CLASS (10% of Grade):**

This is a hybrid class, which means that a portion of our course happens online. For the hybrid portion of the class, you will be engaging in political dialogue in online settings. One of the objectives of the class is that you become more informed consumers of political information, and develop your skills of engaging in political communication. I will give you a list of prominent political blogs that cross the ideological spectrum. You are required to read one post a week from one of these blogs, and then comment on the post through our discussion function in Canvas. I will provide a detailed explanation of what I expect from your commentary. We will begin the hybrid portion of the class in week two and continue it on a weekly basis (except for the Friday before the midterm and final). Late hybrid assignments may be turned in for two weeks following the deadline, and you will be able to receive 80%. After two weeks, I will not accept late hybrid assignments.

### **READINGS QUIZZES (20% of Grade):**

In this class you have assigned readings, which are to be read before coming to class. Because this is a 100-level class, my goal is to prepare you for upper level coursework that tends to be more independently driven and less structured. Throughout the quarter, we will have 5 quizzes that are designed to keep you on task with your readings. The quizzes will be 5 questions and scored in the following manner. If you score 3 out of 5 you will get 100%. If you score 2 out of 5 you will get 75%. If you score 1 out of 5 you will get 50%. If you get 4 or 5 answers correct, then you will get 1 extra credit answer that can be applied to a future quiz. The quizzes will be every two weeks and will be available on Canvas for 24 hours from 5pm on Thursday until 5pm on Friday. You will have 20 minutes to complete the quiz. No late quizzes accepted.

### **ASSIGNMENTS (30% of Grade):**

Your final assignment in this class will be to write an essay on a topic covered in the course. The essay will be about 1500 words and require that you combine personal reflection and political analysis, while properly citing source material from our class. You will be turning your essays into small political pamphlets known as zines, and sharing your work with your peers. I will only be grading the content of the essay, not the pamphlet that you make. In addition, we will have one assignment in the beginning of the semester that is designed to get us to reflect upon where we get our information about the world. This assignment requires that you follow three different news programs during the course of a week, and then write a short analysis of the 'Agenda Setting' and 'Framing'

functions of the news media. I will provide detailed instructions on these assignments well before they are due. Late media assignments may be turned in for two weeks following the deadline, and you will be able to receive 80%.

### **TESTS (30% of Grade):**

Your midterm will be held in class. This exam will cover assigned readings, movies, lectures, guest presentations, and major current events discussed in class. The exam will consist of a mix of question types, including: true-false, multiple-choice, identifications, short answer, and essay. Make up exams will only be available for individuals with legitimate and documented reasons for missing the midterm. The final exam will be in our classroom on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2015. The final will also consist of a mixture of questions, and it will cover the second half of course content. Make-up final exams will only be available for extreme cases. In such cases, you need to contact me as soon as possible.

### **Week 1**

#### **Introduction: What is Politics?**

Tuesday, April 7<sup>th</sup>

- Syllabus and Class Policies

Thursday, April 9<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Danziger, "Politics and Knowledge" (p. 2-23)

### **Week 2**

#### **Political Ignorance and Political Socialization**

Tuesday, April 14<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Shenkman, "Gross Ignorance" (p. 13-36)
- **Read:** Romano, "How Dumb Are We?" (p. 1-4)

Thursday, April 16<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Danziger, "Influences on Beliefs and Actions" (p. 85-108)
- **Read:** Danziger, "Political Theory and Political Beliefs" (p. 27-56)

Friday, April 17<sup>th</sup>

- **FIRST QUIZ DUE 5pm**
- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**

### **Week 3**

#### **The Media**

Tuesday, April 21<sup>st</sup>

- **Read:** Jackson and Jamieson, "Tricks of the Deception Trade" (p. 43-62)
- **Read:** Postman, "Foreword" and "The Age of Show Business" (p. xix-xx; 83-98)

Thursday, April 23<sup>rd</sup>

- **Read:** Farah, “Debate Cartel” (p. 1-22)
- **Read:** Farah, “Candidate Exclusion” (p. 39-74)

Friday, April 24<sup>th</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**

#### **Week 4**

##### **The Role & Function of Government (1): States**

Tuesday, April 28<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Danziger, “Political Systems, States, and Nations” (p. 112-132)
- **Read:** Hardin, “The Tragedy of the Commons” (selections)
- **Read:** Hobbes, “Leviathan” (selections)

Thursday, April 30<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Milstein, “Anarchism” (p. 3-15)
- **Read:** No Panaceas! Elinor Ostrom Talks with Fran Korten  
<http://www.shareable.net/blog/no-panaceas-a-qa-with-elinor-ostrom>
- **Watch:** Elinor Ostrom “Sustainable Development and the Tragedy of the Commons”  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ByXM47Ri1Kc>

Friday, May 1<sup>st</sup>

- **SECOND QUIZ DUE 5pm**
- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**

#### **Week 5**

##### **The Role & Function of Government (2): Political Economy**

Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Danziger, “Political Economy” (p. 198-227)
- **Read:** Parenti, “Politics: Who Gets What?” (p. 60-73)
- **Watch:** Last Week Tonight with John Oliver: Wealth Gap  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfgSEwjAeno>
- **Watch:** Wealth Inequality in America  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnijnsM>

Thursday, May 7<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Cassidy, “Piketty’s Inequality Story in Six Charts”  
<http://www.newyorker.com/news/john-cassidy/pikettys-inequality-story-in-six-charts>
- **Read:** Costanza, “The Real Economy” (p. 1-5)
- **Watch:** Richard Wolfe: How Class Works  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euH3pAuLuko>

Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>

- **MEDIA ASSIGNMENT DUE 5pm**
- **NO BLOG COMMENTARY DUE – PREPARE FOR MIDTERM**

## Week 6

### The Role & Function of Government (3): Executive, Legislative, Judicial, Administrative

Tuesday, May 12<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Danziger, "Political Institutions I: Institutional Structures" (p. 136-160)
- **Read:** Danziger, "Political Institutions II: Institutional Arrangements" (p. 164-194)
- **MIDTERM IN CLASS**

Thursday, May 14<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Katznelson et al., "The Presidency" (p. 190-218)
- **Read:** Dallek, "Power and the Presidency"

Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup>

- **THIRD QUIZ DUE 5pm**
- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**

## Week 7

### The Politics of Democracy (1): Comparative Democracy

Tuesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Parenti, "Voters, Parties, and Stolen Elections" (p. 177-196)

Thursday, May 21<sup>st</sup>

- **Read:** Democracy Index 2013: Democracy in Limbo
- **Watch:** DemocracyNow on Almedalen Week  
[http://www.democracynow.org/2014/7/2/dn\\_at\\_almedalen\\_week\\_at\\_swedens](http://www.democracynow.org/2014/7/2/dn_at_almedalen_week_at_swedens)

Friday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**

## Week 8

### The Politics of Democracy (2): Social Movements & Participatory Democracy

Tuesday, May 26<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Hayden, "Participatory Democracy"
- **Read:** Port Huron Statement (selections)  
<http://history.hanover.edu/courses/excerpts/111huron.html>
- **Watch:** DemocracyNow, Tom Hayden on Participatory Democracy  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJeAF3E2yI0>
- **Watch:** Consensus (Direct Democracy @ Occupy Wall Street)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dtD8RnGaRQ>

Thursday, May 28<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Menser and Robinson, "Participatory Budgeting" (p. 291-303)
- **Read:** Jones, "Vallejo is participatory budgeting pioneer"  
<http://www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Vallejo-is-participatory-budgeting-pioneer-4592639.php>
- **Watch:** PB Vallejo

<http://vimeo.com/channels/594649>

- **Watch:** Real Money, Real Power: Participatory Budgeting  
<http://vimeo.com/71924254>

Friday, May 29<sup>th</sup>

- **FOURTH QUIZ DUE 5pm**
- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**

### **Week 9**

#### **The Politics of Democracy (3): Direct Action and Disability Rights**

Tuesday, June 2<sup>nd</sup>

- **Read:** Danziger, "Political Actions" (p. 58-80)
- **Read:** King, Jr., selections from "Letter from a Birmingham Jail"
- **Read:** Tactic: Direct Action  
<http://beautifultrouble.org/tactic/direct-action/>

Thursday, June 4<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Nielsen, "Chapter 8 – *I guess I'm an activist. I think it's just caring*"

Friday, June 5<sup>th</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**

### **Week 10**

#### **Political Violence and Mass Incarceration (1)**

Tuesday, June 9<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Alexander, "Introduction" & "The Rebirth of Caste" (p. 1-58)
- **Read:** Olson, "White Supremacy"

Thursday, June 11<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Alexander, "The Lockdown" (p. 59-96)
- **Read:** Fanon, selections from "The Wretched of the Earth" (pg. 35-43)

Friday, June 12<sup>th</sup>

- **FIFTH QUIZ DUE 5pm**

### **Week 11**

#### **Political Violence and Mass Incarceration (2)**

Tuesday, June 16<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Alexander, "The Color of Justice" (p. 97-139)
- **Read:** The Real Cost of Prisons Comics (selections)

Wednesday, June 17<sup>th</sup>

- **Final Exam Review (on Canvas)**

Thursday, June 18<sup>th</sup>

- **Final Exam: 9:30-11:20am (RM L221)**

Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup>

- **Final Essay Due 5pm**