

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



**POLS 101: INTRO to POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
**BELLEVUE COLLEGE, WINTER 2015**  
**MW 9:30-11:20AM, RM L221**  
**OFFICE HOURS: W 3-4PM**  
**(or by appointment)**

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## **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.

## KEEPING UP WITH THE NEWS

Please keep up with current events related to politics. Our discussions will sometimes touch on current events and it is important that you keep up-to-date on the major political goings-on. Please find a few news sources that work for you (representing different mediums and viewpoints) and make a habit of reading, listening, and/or watching them throughout the quarter. I suggest that at least one of your sources be a national newspaper such as: the *New York Times* ([www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com)), the *Washington Post* ([www.washingtonpost.com](http://www.washingtonpost.com)), or the *Wall Street Journal* ([www.wsj.com](http://www.wsj.com)). I also encourage international sources such as the *BBC* ([www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk)) and *Al Jazeera* (<http://english.aljazeera.net>). If you speak another language I encourage you to follow the news in that language and bring that perspective to class.

## GRADING:

Attendance and Participation (In Class)	10%
Participation in Hybrid Assignment	10%
Media Assignment	10%
4 Response Papers	20%
Political Essay Based Upon Response Papers	15%
Midterm	15%
Final	20%
	100%

**ATTENDANCE and PARTICIPATION:**

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. I will have an attendance sheet in the classroom, which you need to initial upon entering class. If you are tardy, you can initial the sheet at the end of the class period. 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.

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

In this class you will write short response papers 4 times during the course of the semester, each due on the date outlined in the syllabus. In these short papers you will reflect critically upon the course material (readings, discussions, lectures) and develop your skills of communicating effectively about political subjects. Each of these responses is worth 5% of the grade, totaling 1/5 of the course grade. These responses are meant to be more like a journal, helping you to prepare for the final essay. I will provide detailed feedback on the first two response papers, but not on the final two. I will grade these on a 10-point scale, where everyone begins with 10/10 for earnestly completing the assignment. Lack of effort or extreme lack of clarity will receive a 9/10 or 8/10. The purpose of this rubric is not to grade the content of the response but the execution and effort. Late responses will begin with an 8/10 and graded similarly. You will select 1-2 of these responses and use them 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. Unlike the response papers, I will be grading these essays as a typical writing assignment. 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. I will provide detailed instructions on these assignments well before they are due.

**HYBRID CLASS:**

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, comment on the post, share the link with your peers through social media, and then turn in a screenshot of your comment on 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 three and continue it on a weekly basis.

**TESTS:**

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 class on March 23<sup>rd</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?**

Monday, January 5<sup>th</sup>

- Syllabus and Class Policies

Wednesday, January 7<sup>th</sup>

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

**Week 2**  
**Political Ignorance Vs. Political Socialization**

Monday, January 12<sup>th</sup>

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

Wednesday, January 14<sup>th</sup>

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

Friday, January 16<sup>th</sup>

- **FIRST RESPONSE PAPER DUE 5pm**

**Week 3**  
**The Media**

Monday, January 19<sup>th</sup>

- **No Class:** Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- **Read:** Jackson and Jamieson, "Tricks of the Deception Trade" (p. 43-62)
- **Read:** Postman, "The Age of Show Business" (p. 83-98)

Wednesday, January 21<sup>st</sup>

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

Friday, January 23<sup>rd</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**
- **SECOND RESPONSE PAPER DUE 5pm**

**Week 4**  
**The Role & Function of Government (1): States**

Monday, January 26<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)

Wednesday, January 28<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, January 30<sup>th</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**
- **MEDIA ASSIGNMENT DUE**
- **NO RESPONSE PAPER THIS WEEK**

**Week 5**  
**The Role & Function of Government (2): Political Economy**

Monday, February 2<sup>nd</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>

Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Clarke, "The Neoliberal Theory of Society" (p. 50-59)
- **Read:** MacGregor, "The Welfare State and Neoliberalism" (p. 142-148)
- **Read:** Costanza, "The Real Economy" (p. 1-5)
- **Watch:** Richard Wolfe: How Class Works  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=euH3pAuLuko>

Friday, February 6<sup>th</sup>

- **NO ASSIGNMENTS DUE – PREPARE FOR MIDTERM**

### Week 6

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

Monday, February 9<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**

Wednesday, February 11<sup>th</sup>

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

Friday, February 13<sup>th</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**
- **NO RESPONSE PAPER THIS WEEK**

### Week 7

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

Monday, February 16<sup>th</sup>

- **No Class:** Classified Staff Professional Development Day
- **Read:** Parenti, "Voters, Parties, and Stolen Elections" (p. 177-196)

Wednesday, February 18<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Readings on the Nordic Model of Democracy (tbd)
- **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, February 20<sup>th</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**
- **THIRD RESPONSE PAPER DUE 5pm**

### Week 8

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

Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>

- **Read:** Hayden, "Participatory Democracy"
- **Read:** Port Huron Statement (selections)
- **Watch:** DemocracyNow, Tom Hayden on Participatory Democracy  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AJeAF3E2yl0>
- **Watch:** Consensus (Direct Democracy @ Occupy Wall Street)  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6dtD8RnGaRQ>
- **Film (in class):** Rebels With a Cause

Wednesday, February 25<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Menser and Robinson, "Participatory Budgeting" (p. 291-303)
- **Read:** Jones, "Vallejo is participatory budgeting pioneer"
- **Watch:** PB Vallejo  
<http://vimeo.com/channels/594649>

- **Watch:** Real Money, Real Power: Participatory Budgeting  
<http://vimeo.com/71924254>
- **Film (in class):** Beyond Elections

Friday, February 27<sup>th</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**
- **NO RESPONSE PAPER DUE**

### Week 9

#### The Politics of Democracy (3): Political Action Beyond the Ballot Box

Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup>

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

Wednesday, March 4<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Martin and Fruhwirth, "Welcome to Blockadia!"
- **Read:** Klein, "Blockadia: The New Climate Warriors" (selections)

Friday, March 6<sup>th</sup>

- **HYA: BLOG COMMENTARY DUE 5pm**
- **FOURTH RESPONSE PAPER DUE 5pm**

### Week 10

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

Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Danziger, "Political Violence" (p. 316-346)
- **Read:** Weber, selections from "Politics as a Vocation" (pg. 77-79)
- **Read:** Fanon, selections from "The Wretched of the Earth" (pg. 35-43)

Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>

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

Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>

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

### Week 11

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

Monday, March 16<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Alexander, "The Lockdown" (p. 59-96)
- **Read:** The Real Cost of Prisons Comics (selections)
- **Film (in class):** The House I Live In (2012)

Wednesday, March 18<sup>th</sup>

- **Read:** Alexander, "The Color of Justice" (p. 97-139)
- **Read:** The Real Cost of Prisons Comics (selections)
- **Film (in class):** The House I Live In (2012)

Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>

- **NO ASSIGNMENTS DUE – PREPARE FOR FINAL**

### Week 12

Monday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>

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

Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup>

- **ESSAY DUE 5pm**