

POLS 101: INTRODUCTION

TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

Bellevue College

Spring 2014

Professor: Dr. Leena Shah

Office Hours: By appointment only

Credits 5

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Course Description: This is an introductory overview of political science. It will cover the basic theories, concepts, approaches and enduring questions of political science. It will provide students with a foundation of knowledge and the analytical skills necessary to understand modern politics in historical context.

The course is designed for prospective majors as well as those seeking a better understanding of the political world. There are no prerequisites.

Course Objectives

Substantive knowledge: Students will be able to identify the basic concepts and systems.

Critical thinking, writing and research skills; Students will develop the ability to think critically about political concepts and systems.

Engagement in Politics: Prepare the students for active citizenship and begin to develop an ongoing interest in national and global politics.

Required Textbook

James N. Danziger, Understanding the Political World (11th edition)

Expectations

I love these expectations set forth by a professor at Loyola Marymount University, so I am going to use them here.

1. You have made an informed decision to be here. You have read the syllabus and know the workload required. On average, you will spend an hour and half on your own (reading, studying making notes working on assignments etc) for every hour you are in class.
2. You will do the required reading. This means that you will often have to read something more than once in order to fully understand it.
3. You will share your personality, knowledge, skills and special expertise with the rest of us throughout this quarter.

Assumptions you can make about me

I will give you the respect that I ask you to give me and other members of this class.

1. I will do my best to help you but I cannot learn the material for you.
2. I will encourage and be receptive to constructive comments about my teaching.

Class Presentation

You will do a presentation only once in the quarter. Students will work in a group of three or more. You can choose any topic of your choice related to Politics. You should research the topic and present the pros and cons. For example you can look at death penalty in the U.S. versus other countries and examine its pros and cons. The presentation will be done as a group with each student discussing what they found. Each student will spend at least seven minutes discussing what they came up with. The group together will spend about 15 to 20 minutes presenting this to the class. It will be open to questions by the rest of the class. The presentation will be worth 5 points. The students will be graded on

1. substance, (how much material they have covered, should be a power point presentation)
2. creativity (add a youtube video to make it interesting)
- 3 clarity (how well its organized)
4. Interactive (whether its interactive with the other students)
5. and how well they answered the questions.

These presentations will begin on Monday the 21st of April. We will discuss the sequence of the presentations in class. They will be presented every Monday. The presentation is worth 5 points.

Attendance

As college students I expect you to attend classes on a regular basis. I will not be taking a roll call but hope that you will make it a point to attend classes. In case of an emergency please email me. At the end of the quarter if you have not missed any classes, I will give you an extra credit of 2 points.

Class Discussions

On every Wednesday, we will discuss current events. Students are asked to bring a relevant political article either from a valid website or a hard copy from a newspaper with them to class. **They are required to read and select an article before coming to class.** It should be related to politics. NO SPORTS ARTICLES PLEASE. We will discuss these in class. Current events will be an integral part of our course. You will be divided into groups and each student will discuss their article with the group. Then each group will choose 1 to 2 articles to discuss with the rest of the class. I will give 5 points for current events. Before we start the discussion, each student will be asked to write a summary of the article they have brought (without looking at their phones or at the hard copy) and submit it to me. Please choose articles that are worth discussing with the class. In addition the article that evokes the most discussion will be given 1 extra credit.

Extra Credit

There are extra credit opportunities worth 10 points. I will give extra credit of 1 point every week for the current events that evoke the most discussion. Also you will be tested on the presentations. Throughout the quarter you will also be asked to research topics for EC.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (5 Points)

All written assignments will be submitted on the due date in class as hard copies.

1. Critique of Article

The article that you will critique is "Let's Not Kid Ourselves About Marijuana"

<http://online.wsj.com/news/articles/SB10001424052702304617404579305090110567998>

Summarize the article, cite other authors who have written on this subject, evaluate the article and give your perspective. It will be worth 5 points. MLA style should be adopted to write this paper. Make sure you cite your references. Regular font of 12pt should be used for papers.

The critique should be minimum 2 pages long, double spaced and is due on the 7th of May . **No Late Papers will be accepted. This is worth 5pts. There are detailed guidelines at the end of the syllabus. Sample paper is attached at the end of the syllabus.**

Class Participation

I strongly recommend class participation and have valued it at 5 points. This will include discussion and class participation.

Changes

If you are absent, please make sure you check with me or a classmate about any change. I may change certain dates and readings as we go along.

Make-up exams

Make-up exams will be given only if there is an emergency or if the student has informed me in advance of their inability to take it.

How to get in touch with me

The best way to contact me is through email. I will check it a couple of times a day. However, I will not be checking it on weekends.

Exams

There will be 3 exams in the quarter. The first and second exam will be worth 25 points and the last and final exam will be worth 30 points. The exams will consist of multiple-choice and 1 essay question. Scantrons and blue books required. They are available in the bookstore. The last exam will be comprehensive. The first half of the questions will be taken from the old tests and the other half will be from the new section.

General Information

- Students should always make and retain copies of their assignments and exams until the end of the semester as an insurance against loss by you or me.
- Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students failing to comport themselves will be asked to leave class. Please make sure you are respectful of everyone's opinion and do not make any personal attacks on the other students.
- All papers even extra credit ones must be typed and meet the minimum criterion for college level work.
- All papers (except blue books) must meet the basic style guidelines (MLA)
- Your most important assignment is to keep up with the readings and come prepared to class to be involved in an active discussion.
- Make sure your papers are not plagiarized. Most cases of plagiarism can be avoided by citing the sources. Simply acknowledging that the material is borrowed and providing the source is usually enough to prevent plagiarism. For more information see http://www.plaigiarism.org/plag_article_what_is_citation.html)

Grades

The grades will be broken up as follows:	
1 st exam	25 points
2 nd exam:	25 points
3 rd exam:	30 points
Class Presentation	5 points

Class participation:	5 points
Critique	5 points
Current Event discussion	5 points
Total	100 points

Grades will be assigned on a percentage basis

A 95 and above (4.0)

A- 90-94(3.7)

B+ 87-89 (3.3)

B 84-86 (3.0)

B- 80-83 (2.7)

C+ 77-79 (2.3)

C 74-76 (2.0)

C- 71-73 (1.7)

D+ 67-70 1.3)

D 64-66 (1.0)

F Below 64 (0.0)

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Readings and lectures

The dates and chapters for the reading can change at any time

From April 7th to April 29th

Chapter 1 Politics and Knowledge

Chapter 2 Political Behavior

Chapter 3 Political Actions

Chapter 4 Influences on Beliefs and Actions

Exam 1: April 29th

Readings from April 29th to May 22nd

Chapter 5 Political Systems, States and Nations

Chapter 6: Political Institutions I

Chapter 7 : Political Institutions II

Chapter 8: Political Economy

Chapter 9: Public Policy, Power and Decision

Chapter 10: Change and Political Development

Exam 2: 27th May to June 12th

Readings from February 24th to March

Chapter 11 : Politics Across Borders

Chapter 12: Political Violence

Chapter 13 : The Developed Countries of the Global North

Chapter 14 :The The Developing Countries of the Global South

Exam 3 June 12th

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Guidelines for Writing Papers

The FIRST part of the assignment is to summarize the author's basic ideas. This should be about one page. Do not quote from the article, do not simply paraphrase the article, INSTEAD take the main arguments and ideas and explain what they are writing and attempting to communicate. Identify and summarize three or four main points and explain them in your own words.

The SECOND part of the assignment is to evaluate the arguments you identified in your first section and this too should be one page. Examine the article's logic and explain if you think the author is making a solid case. Is the article logical and easy to understand? Do you think the explanations support the main ideas. Can you identify arguments and conclusions you think are right? Wrong? In addition look at other authors and what are they saying about the topic. Make sure you cite them in your references. You are more likely to get full points if you follow these steps. Also use the MLA style of writing the papers. Minimum is 2 pages but you can go over that as sometimes its hard to analyse in 2 pages.

PROCEDURES AND GUIDELINES OF THE SOCIAL SCIENCE DIVISION

Fall 2014

Cheating, Stealing and Plagiarizing*

Cheating, stealing and plagiarizing (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source) and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at BellevueCollege. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to: talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Services for possible probation or suspension from BellevueCollege. Specific student rights, responsibilities and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct, available in the office of the Dean of Student Services.

Incomplete

If a student fails to complete all the required work for a course, an instructor may assign the grade of Incomplete ("I"). The student must complete the coursework by the end of the next quarter, or receive the assigned letter grade (usually an "F").

F Grade

Students who fail a course will receive a letter grade of "F."

Final Examination Schedule

The Social Science Division will adhere to the final examination schedule as stated in the BC Schedule. Final examinations will be held at the end of each quarter at fixed times. Instructors will not give examinations in advance of the regular schedule. A student who is absent from any examination held at any time during the quarter may forfeit the right to make up the examination. If, for illness or some other circumstance beyond the student's control, the student is unable to be present at any scheduled examination and has contacted the instructor on a timely basis, the student may be permitted to take such examination at a time designated by the instructor.

Withdrawal From Class

College policy states that students must formally withdraw from a class by the end of the seventh week of the quarter (Registration Office, B125). If a student has not withdrawn by that date, an appropriate letter grade will be assigned for the course.

Hardship Withdrawal

Instructors may assign the grade of "HW" (hardship withdrawal) at their discretion in the event that a student cannot complete the coursework due to extreme and exceptional circumstances. Students may also contact the Enrollment Services office BEFORE grades are assigned in cases of hardship.

Students Who Require Disability Accommodations:

Students with disabilities who have accommodation needs are encouraged to meet with the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) office located in B132 (telephone 425.564.2498 or TTY 425.564.4110), to establish their eligibility for accommodation. The DRC office will provide each eligible student with an accommodation letter. Students who require accommodation in class should review the DRC accommodation letter with each instructor during the first week of the quarter.

Students with mobility challenges who may need assistance in case of an emergency situation or evacuation should register with Disability Resource Centre, and review those needs with the instructor as well.

Distribution of Grades

Grades will not be posted in the Social Science Division or in faculty offices, and secretaries will not give out grades. Students should access their grades through the BC Web site.

Return of Papers and Tests

Paper and/or Scantron score sheet returns will be arranged in the following ways ONLY: by mail, if student supplies the instructor with stamped, self-addressed envelope (with appropriate postage); or by the instructor designating a time and place whereby the student may retrieve his/her papers. Unclaimed papers and/or Scantron score sheets must be kept by the instructor for a minimum of sixty (60) instructional days following the end of the quarter.

**If you are accused of cheating, stealing exams and/or plagiarism, there is a Bellevue College Student Discipline and Appeals Procedure (the right to due process) which you may pursue. Contact the office of Division Chair (D110), the Dean of Student Services (B231A) or the Associated Student Body (C212) for information regarding the appeals process.*

