

# INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

(POLS& 101, Item 5352B343 OAS)

Winter Quarter, 2014

**Professor:** Carolyn Lee

**Note:** The instructor can be expected to be online intermittently each weekday but not on official non-instructional days and college closure or emergencies. You may send e-mail correspondence overnight or on weekends--however, you may not receive a response until the next business day. **Use the Canvas e-mail for ALL regular communication.**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course provides a basic, yet broad, introduction to political science. Given the complex and interdependent character of twenty-first century politics, it is fitting that an introductory political science course take a comparative approach, drawing upon evidence and examples from across our world to illustrate meaning and to craft generalizations. We begin with an overview of how political scientists study the political and explore the core concepts that form the language of analysis within the discipline. We then apply this knowledge to politics at the individual and group levels. Next, we look at how political institutions are organized and the dynamics of key political processes, such as public policymaking and the exercise of power, political development, and political violence. Political Science seeks to describe and explain what is known about the political world. This course poses some of the critical questions and provides the analytical tools to enable you to give informed responses.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES

*At the conclusion of this course, you should be able to:*

- Understand what is the political and the sources of political knowledge
- Understand the basic language and concepts of politics, among them power, authority, legitimacy, beliefs, interests, and political culture
- Make informed, accurate judgments about the value disagreements that occur within politics
- Understand and appreciate the modes of operation of governmental institutions, structures, and processes within in different social and cultural contexts
- Understand how to undertake basic political analysis using the concepts, methods, and approaches pertinent to the discipline of political science
- Demonstrate improved research, writing, and critical-thinking skills

## RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR CLASS DISCUSSIONS

This course involves the discussion of controversial political issues. Remember that reasonable people often disagree. 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 me or your classmates. Thank you!

## A NOTE ABOUT IDEOLOGY

I have no intention of trying to convert you to my belief system. The issues we will be exploring are often contentious and sometimes there will be no right or wrong answers. That being said, I believe there are good and bad arguments. Good arguments will be entertained in class (i.e. those that are logically sound and supported by the available evidence); bad arguments will be discouraged.

## LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND MISSED EXAMS

All major due dates are indicated on the calendar on our course website. Because I believe that one of the major lessons that students learn in college is the importance of meeting deadlines, I will not accept any late work unless it has been approved by me BEFORE the date it is due or you can document some sort of emergency. **All**

*assignments turned in late will receive a grade of 0.0.* Likewise, *missed quizzes and exams will receive a grade of 0.0.* Make-up exams will not be administered unless you receive prior permission from me or you can document some sort of catastrophe (such as being medically unable to take the exam).

**REQUIRED TEXT:** Danziger, James. *Understanding the Political World: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science*. New York: Pearson Longman, ISBN: 9780205854240 – Value-Pack Eleventh Edition—available from the BC Bookstore. **Supplemental texts** will be made available on our course website. To access the supplemental readings click on the week you are interested in and they will be filed there. Please note that you are responsible for downloading (and reading and/or watching) all supplemental readings as they are assigned. For those of you who do not have a printer at home you can print for free in the student computer lab in the N-Building or you can just read the materials on-line. Any material covered by an assigned reading may be included in examination questions, regardless of whether it is specifically discussed on the discussion board or addressed in a power point lecture. If adjustments are made to the reading schedule, you will be informed via the announcement board on our class website. The assigned readings are an important part of this class—if you don't do the reading you are going to find it hard to succeed.

### **KEEPING UP WITH THE NEWS**

Please keep up with current events related to American government and politics. Our discussions on the discussion board 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. If you have questions about the appropriateness of a particular news source for this class, please ask me sooner rather than later. 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.

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION**

Weekly Journal 20%  
Weekly Online Assignment 20%  
Discussion Board Participation 20%  
Midterm Exam 20%  
Final Exam 20%

### **GRADE POINTS**

94-100 A (4.0)  
90-94 A- (3.7)  
87-90 B+ (3.3)  
84-87 B (3.0)  
80-84 B- (2.7)  
77-80 C+ (2.3)  
74-77 C (2.0)  
70-74 C- (1.7)  
67-70 D+ (1.3)  
64-67 D (1.0)  
<64 F (0.0) 3

### **WEEKLY PARTICIPATION**

Each week I will post one or more discussion questions to the discussion board, which can be accessed through the "Discussions" link (on the left hand side of the course website). It is your responsibility, as a member of our

class, to respond thoughtfully, not only to my questions, but also to your classmates' comments. You are required to participate thoroughly in each week's discussion—your grade will be based on the quality of your contributions and the level of your involvement. In order to receive full credit for each week's discussion, I expect you to post your comments early in the week (i.e., don't wait until Thursday night to post—if you do, your classmates will not benefit from your insights). I also expect you to read almost all of your classmates' posts and to make at least 3-5 intellectually meaningful posts throughout the week. I recommend that you check the discussion board at least once a day between Monday and Friday. By checking the discussion board frequently, you will be able to identify more opportunities where you can add something to the conversation (thus improving your grade). Please note the following guidelines when making posts.

- Your posts should be in sentence/paragraph format, and you should avoid “text message” grammar (that means no “u” instead of “you”).
- Please write complete sentences/paragraphs and fully explain and elaborate your points, using examples, evidence, and logic.
- Be precise about what you are saying; don't be vague or general.
- Respond to the topic, not the author. This does not mean that you should ignore the person who wrote the original post, but it means you need to focus on the ideas in the post and how to further the conversation on the topic, not tell the author what you think of his or her post.
- Minimize prejudices, biases, unfounded beliefs, and emotional reactions.
- Feel free to be personal and interpersonal as this will help us bond as an online community, but be careful not to go too far off onto personal tangents. Please stay focused on the topics that I post for you. If you want to carry on other discussions, please use the “other” forum on the discussion site. The course content forums are reserved for addressing the course content of the week.
- Examples of good discussion posts include: clarifying or expanding the discussion if important points are unclear or missing; looking at the issue from another angle or perspective; adding pertinent information; and asking a question that forces your classmates to think more in depth about the topic.

## **DISABILITY RESOURCES**

If you are a student who has a disability or a learning challenge and you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as soon as possible. The DRC office is located in B132. The phone number is 425-564-2498, and the website is:

<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>. If DRC provides you with documentation indicating that you have a disability that requires academic accommodation, please present that documentation to me at the beginning of the quarter so that we can begin working together as soon as possible to accommodate your needs in this class. The longer you wait to seek accommodation, the more difficult it will be for me to provide that accommodation.

## **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

([http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050P\\_Student\\_Code\\_%28Procedures%29.asp](http://bellevuecollege.edu/policies/2/2050P_Student_Code_%28Procedures%29.asp)). Such behavior will result in a grade of 0.0 for the assignment/exam in question. Please note that these are serious offences, which can result in possible probation or suspension from Bellevue College and go on your permanent record. If you have questions about academic integrity, please familiarize yourself with BC's Student Code of Conduct and/or come talk to me during my office hours.

## **CAMPUS SUPPORT SERVICES**

(See "Top-Ten" list of student resources elsewhere in the Getting-Started folder.)

If feasible, sign up for a Library Media Center (LMC) tour to discover its valuable collection of books, journals, abstracts, A-V materials, and other rich resources. The LMC is also a handy gateway to other Washington libraries and resources. You may also be interested in BC's Academic Success Center. Further information

about the academic calendar, enrollment, examination schedules, etc. may be found in the Credit Class Schedule for Winter 2014, available on the BC Web Portal.

*LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITHOUT A "W" POSTED TO YOUR TRANSCRIPT IS JAN. 17 BY 4:00 PM IN PERSON OR BY MIDNIGHT ON-LINE. FOR NON-INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS AND HOLIDAY, SEE COLLEGE CALENDAR. EXAM PERIOD IS 3/24-26. CHECK CANVAS CALENDAR AND ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS FOR THIS COURSE.*

## **SEQUENCE & READING GUIDE (Jan. 6-March 26, 2014)**

### **PART I: ON KNOWING THE POLITICAL WORLD**

#### **Module1: Ch. 1. Political Knowledge**

Learning Objectives:

- Define politics within a public context.
- Analyze three types of political knowledge.
- Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different sources of political knowledge.
- Identify techniques and approaches used to gain political knowledge and assess whether they constitute a science.
- Describe the purpose and the outline of the text.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 1, plus Appendix

### **PART II: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR**

#### **Module2: Ch. 2. Political Theory and Political Beliefs**

Learning Objectives:

- Compare conservatism, classical liberalism and socialism.
- Distinguish cognitive, affective, and evaluative beliefs.
- Compare belief systems of the mass and the elite.
- Determine the extent to which political culture explains political behavior.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 2

#### **Module3: Ch. 3. Political Knowledge**

Learning Objectives:

- Classify the modes of conventional and less conventional individual political action.
- Distinguish between interest groups and political parties.
- Summarize interest group strategies.
- Identify the types of interest groups and the constraints under which they operate.
- Analyze the roles of political parties.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 3

#### Module4: Ch.4. Influences on Beliefs and Actions

##### Learning Objectives:

- Assess how the context in which individuals live impacts their political beliefs and actions.
- Characterize the different agents of political socialization.
- Illustrate how personal characteristics are linked to political beliefs and actions.
- Distinguish normative from empirical approaches to understanding political personality.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 4

### **PART III: POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

#### Module5: Ch. 6. Political Institutions I-Institutional Structures

##### Learning Objectives:

- Analyze the structure and roles of political executives.
- Summarize the roles of the legislature.
- Compare the functions and powers of political administrative systems.
- Outline the major elements within judicial systems.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 6

#### Module6: Ch. 7. Political Institutions II-Institutional Arrangements

##### Learning Objectives:

- Assess the impact of written constitutions on regimes.
- Distinguish between democratic and nondemocratic political systems.
- Compare and contrast unitary, federal, and confederal systems.
- Differentiate between parliamentary, presidential, and other types of executive-legislative systems.
- Characterize the different types of political party systems.

Reading: Danziger, Chapters 7

#### Module7: Ch. 8. Political Economy

##### Learning Objectives:

- Explain the role of the state in a nation's economy.
- Determine the relationship among the separate elements that make up the political economy.
- Assess the different measures of economic prosperity.
- Compare the ideal-type political economies.
- Identify the challenges faced by market, command, and mixed economies.
- Contrast real world examples and ideal-type political economies.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 8

### **PART IV: POLITICAL PROCESS**

#### Module8: Ch. 9. Public Policy, Power, and Decision

##### Learning Objectives:

- Differentiate among the types of public policy and outline the stages of public policy.
- Identify the common elements among the three major approaches to public-policy making.
- Characterize the elite approach.

- Characterize the class approach.
- Characterize the pluralist approach.
- Evaluate the similarities, differences, and usefulness of the three major approaches to public policy-making.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 9

#### Module9: Ch. 10. Change and Development

Learning Objectives:

- Compare alternative perspectives on social, political, and economic change.
- Identify the attributes of development and summarize economic development strategies.
- Outline the characteristics and stages of political development.
- Analyze how political systems respond to environmental challenges through political institutionalization and system transformation.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 10

#### Module10: Ch. 11. Politics Across Borders

Learning Objectives

- Compare realist and idealist perspectives of the state.
- Classify the main actors in the global system and characterize the mechanisms of cooperation between states.
- Analyze the types of interactions between states and evaluate the impact of globalization.

Reading: Danziger, Ch.11

#### Module11: Ch. 12. Political Violence/Review and Conclusion

Learning Objectives:

- Define political violence and outline its major forms.
- Assess the relationship between political violence and the social contract.
- Explain and evaluate the major causes for war and theories about the propensity for major war in the contemporary international system.

Reading: Danziger, Ch. 12