

Introduction to Political Science

Political Science 101

Bellevue College

Spring 2016

Tuesday & Thursday 9:30am-11:20am in L221

INSTRUCTOR

Instructor: Dr. Larry Cushnie
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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-12:30 & by appointment
Office: A200F

DESCRIPTION

Power is the central component to any discussion of politics. Political science is the study of power in human communities including issues of legitimacy, law, violence, justice, revolution, and exploitation. This course explores political science as an academic discipline. We will consider the major fields including: political theory, international relations, comparative politics, and American politics. However, we will also look at the relationship of political science to history, law, social movements, race, violence, inequality, and economics. Besides learning the basics of the field, we also take a critical view to evaluate its shortcomings and how it might help to perpetuate and/or solve societal ills.

MODE OF INSTRUCTION

Substantial parts of lecture will be dedicated to large-group discussion. Participation is strongly encouraged. Students are expected to complete the assigned reading prior to the lecture for which it is assigned. They are also expected to bring the readings to lecture.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. To obtain general knowledge of political science as an academic discipline. This includes delving into the various ways research is conducted in the discipline as well as what types of questions political scientists ask.
2. To enlarge our political vocabularies, so that we may engage each other in political argument with greater force, flexibility, intelligence, and exactitude.
3. To conduct political dialogue with sympathy, critical attention, passion, and respect.
4. To strengthen our command of English prose through careful writing.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Attendance & Participation –	15%
Discussion Questions –	5%
Weekly Politics Essays –	20%
Group Project –	5%
One-On-One Meeting –	5%
Paper Proposal –	15%
Class Presentation –	10%
Analytical Research Paper –	25%

Attendance & Participation – Involves doing more than keeping a seat warm. Will be graded through involvement during in-class discussions, attention paid, and participation in post-lecture activities.

Discussion Questions – You will be responsible for providing discussion questions for one of our sessions. We will sign up for DQ assignments on the first day of class. Questions should aim to elicit interesting considerations, comparisons, and/or opinions from the class as a whole.

Weekly Politics Essays – Each week, students are asked to address questions about the readings. As a supplement to in-class discussion (and to fulfill the online requirement), the essays are meant to stimulate your thinking about the material covered in lecture and the readings related to current political events. You are responsible for writing one outside-of-class essay per week for a total of 10 entries. Each essay should be at least 500-750 words in length. Each week's essay prompts will be posted on our course website by 11:59 pm every Thursday. You must upload your response to Canvas by 8:00 am every Tuesday.

Group Project – An opportunity for students to work together, utilizing class material and discussions, to channel newly found political knowledge in a creative direction. Project details and requirements will be presented during the quarter.

One-On-One Meeting – Students must meet with their instructor during office hours to discuss potential paper topics for their independent, analytical research papers.

Paper Proposal – Each project will be outlined in a proposal of 2-4 pages. This requires preliminary inquiry and establishing a clear research agenda for vetting and feedback from your instructor.

Class Presentation – Gives each student an opportunity (10-12 minutes) to share their research and initial arguments related to their project.

Analytical Research Paper – Culmination of the quarter long research project. Includes a bibliography and is 8-10 pages in length.

TEXTS

All of the readings are available through Canvas. Come to class prepared to discuss the readings assigned for that day on the syllabus. Readings are not optional assignments, they are key to your success on assignments and participation in class discussions.

COURSE POLICIES

Expectations

This is a college-level course, which means you are responsible for your own learning. Expectations include: completing assignments by the date/time listed in the syllabus; coming to class prepared to discuss the day's readings; bringing reading materials to class; participating in classroom discussions; fulfilling course requirements missed during absences; and taking initiative to answer questions about content and assignments.

Rules of Engagement

This course involves discussion of controversial political issues. We will be respectful of each other and avoiding inflammatory, derogatory and insulting words, phrases, and labels. I encourage robust discussion of contentious issues, however be prepared to support provocative claims with evidence.

Please note that all electronic devices are prohibited in the classroom during class time unless necessary to note taking. If an overwhelming need to check the interwebs persists, please leave the classroom to do so. Students engaging in extracurricular electronic usage will lose participation points for the day's class. You may or may not be informed of this deduction at the time, due to the distraction it causes to the class.

Missed Exams and Assignments

All major due dates are indicated in the attached course schedule. Late work will be penalized 5 points a day. Please note that all missed exams will receive a grade of 0 and make-up exams will not be administered unless you receive prior permission from me or you can document a true catastrophe.

Grade Dispute Policy

- 1) Wait 24 hours to contact me about disputing a grade
- 2) Submit your reason for contention in writing (at least 500 words) within 5 days
- 3) I reserve the right to change grades (higher or lower) after considering your comments

Disability Resources

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. Please visit the DRC if you have any questions about classroom accommodations. 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 or you can call the reception desk at 425-564-2498. Deaf students can reach the DRC by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Please visit the DRC website for application information into the program and other helpful links at www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc. If you are someone who has either an apparent or non-apparent disability and requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc, please meet with me to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

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).

Such behavior will result in a grade of 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. 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.

Cases of suspected cheating and plagiarism will be referred to the dean and an Academic Honesty Violation Report will be filed. University policies and guidelines regarding cheating and plagiarism will be followed strictly. Please see the Academic Honesty Policy for specific information about what constitutes plagiarism.

The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus over the course of the quarter.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- 1) Tuesday, April 5 – Introduction and Syllabus Review
No Readings
- 2) Thursday, April 7 – What is Political Science and Why Should We Care?
Self-Directed Reading and Research
- 3) Tuesday, April 12 – Human Nature, Legitimate Power, & Political Theory
Thomas Hobbes – *Leviathan* (Hobbes' Introduction; Chapters 6 & 13-15)
- 4) Thursday, April 14 – Liberalism, Property, & Power
John Locke – *Second Treatise of Government* (Chapters 2, 3, 5, & 9)
- 5) Tuesday, April 19 – A New Social Contract
Jean-Jacques Rousseau – *The Social Contract* (Books I & II)
- 6) Thursday, April 21 – Critical Theory & Human Agency
GWF Hegel – Selection from *Philosophy of History*
Karl Marx – “Alienated Labor” in *Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*
- 7) Tuesday, April 26 – Justifying Revolution
John Locke – Selections from Chapter 19 in *Second Treatise of Government*
Thomas Jefferson – *Declaration of Independence*
Malcolm X – *The Ballot or the Bullet*
- 8) Thursday, April 28 – Creating a Nation (Group Project)
No Readings
- 9) Tuesday, May 3 – International Politics
Thucydides – “The Melian Dialogue” from *History of the Peloponnesian War*
Kenneth N. Waltz – “The Anarchic Structure of World Politics” in *International Politics*
- 10) Thursday, May 5 – International Politics
Kenneth N. Waltz – “The Anarchic Structure of World Politics” in *International Politics* (cont.)
Basel Peace Office – “The Prisoners’ Dilemma and the Problem of Cooperation”
- 11) Tuesday, May 10 – Comparing Nations
Charles Tilly – “War Making & State Making as Organized Crime” in *Bringing the State Back In*
- 12) Thursday, May 12 – Comparing Nations
Mancur Olson – “Dictatorship, Democracy, & Development”
- 13) Tuesday, May 17 – Law & Justice
Franz Kafka – “Before the Law” in *The Trial*
Abraham Lincoln – “Address to the Young Men’s Lyceum”
- 14) Thursday, May 19 – Law & Justice
Martin Luther King Jr. – “Letter from Birmingham Jail”

- 15) Tuesday, May 24 – Labor & Work (**Paper Proposal Due**)
Eugene V. Debs – “Industrial Unionism”
Martin Luther King Jr. – “All Labor Has Dignity”
- 16) Thursday, May 26 – War & Militarism
Dwight D. Eisenhower – “Military Industrial Complex Speech”
John Kerry – “Congressional Testimony as Representative of Vietnam Vets Against the War”
George W. Bush: “The National Security Strategy”
- 17) Tuesday, May 31 – Elections
Michael Parenti – “Voters, Parties, and Stolen Elections”
Nicholas Carr – “How Social Media is Ruining Politics”
- 18) Thursday, June 2 – Race & Injustice
Stokely Carmichael – *Toward Black Liberation*
Ta-Nehisi Coates: “Barack Obama, Ferguson, and the Evidence of Things Unsaid” & “Nonviolence as Compliance”
- 19) Tuesday, June 7 – Class Presentations
- 20) Thursday, June 9 – Class Presentations
- 21) Tuesday, June 14 – Class Presentations
- 22) Thursday, June 16 – Class Presentations (**Final Paper Due**)