

POLS& 101: Intro to Political Science

Bellevue College, Fall 2016 (Item 5342)

COURSE DETAILS

Class Sessions:	M-Th/Hybrid 11:30AM – 12:20PM L220
Instructor:	David Spataro, PhD
E-mail:	david.spataro@bellevuecollege.edu
Phone:	(425) 564-3161
Office:	D200E
Office Hours:	M 1 – 3PM T 8 – 9AM & 1 – 2PM W 1 – 2PM By Appointment

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 topics of study include: Power, Sovereignty, Authority, Liberal Democracy, *the* State, Carceral State, Citizenship, Settler Colonialism, Immigration, Exclusion, Resistance, Political Economy, Capitalism, Neoliberalism, and Socialism (just to name a few!).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this class, students should be able to:

1. Critically analyze current political issues;
2. Articulate the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship;
3. Constructively engage in the political process;
4. Apply core political science concepts to the real world;
5. Differentiate the major sub-fields of political science;
6. Explain the significance of the scientific method in political science.

COURSE GOALS (BROADER, LONG-RANGE OBJECTIVES)

Cognitive objectives:

- Develop a basic understanding of the scientific study of politics as the study of social conflicts and resolutions;
- Understand the role, power, and functions of government. This includes developing an ability to identify the role of the state in defining territory and membership in a political community and to identify how governments exert influence over the economy and their citizens;
- Understand the role and power of citizens (individually and in collective action) in the political environment.

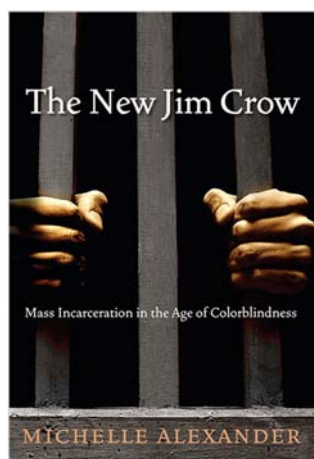
Affective Objectives:

- Understand the problem of political ignorance and care deeply about political knowledge;
- Think about and care deeply about power and “social forces” in the political process;
- Care about systems of domination and understand the nature of resistance in political systems.

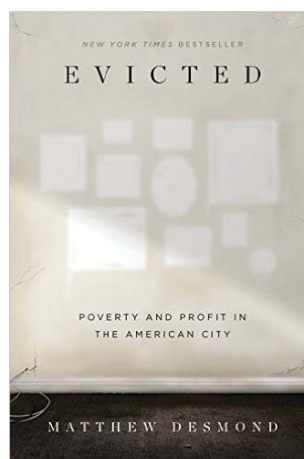
Behavioral Objectives:

- Be able to identify political deception (political ‘theater’) and respond with informed knowledge and critical analysis;
- Be able to reflect upon political socialization in order to communicate and act based upon informed knowledge and critical analysis;
- Be able to efficiently find strong sources of information in an oversaturated information environment;
- Be able to act effectively in the world based upon political knowledge.

BOOKS AND REQUIRED MATERIALS



Michelle Alexander's *The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration in the Age of Colorblindness* (The New Press, 2012)



Matthew Desmond's *Evicted: Poverty and Profit in the American City* (Crown Publishers, 2016)

Students can purchase the required books at the campus bookstore or online. There are also copies of these books at BC's Library Media Center in the course reserves system. Other required readings and audio/visual materials will be available on our Canvas website. I encourage all students to find the most appropriate reading method that works for you. BC students have a printing quota each quarter, but this quota is not likely to be sufficient for all the materials and assignments for every class. I suggest that residents of King County patronize the King County library system, which provides library users with 75 'units' of free printing per week.

GRADED WORK (SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

Midterm (short essay)	20%
Final Exam (multiple choice)	25%
Hybrid Assignment	25%
Political Essay/Political Pamphlet	30%
Total	100%

Grading Scale:		A	92 - 100%	A-	90 - <92%
B+	88 - <90%	B	82 - <88%	B-	80 - <82%
C+	78 - <80%	C	72 - <78%	C-	70 - <72%
D+	68 - <70%	D	60 - <68%	F	<60%

Midterm and Final Exam:

There will be two content tests during the quarter, which are designed to assess your conceptual knowledge and reading comprehension. The midterm consists of

short essay questions. The final consists of multiple-choice and true-false questions.

Hybrid Assignment:

This is a hybrid course, which means that a portion of our course happens online. The hybrid part of the course requires that students assess good arguments on political topics, with an emphasis on identifying *positionality* and *strong evidence*. First, students will begin by finding and reading political essays on prominent blogs. Next, students will practice techniques of critical thinking by completing an assessment of the strengths and weaknesses of a particular essay. Finally, students will use the same assessment technique on the rough drafts of their peers.

Essay/Political Pamphlet:

In this class you will write an essay on a political topic using a combination of personal reflection and political analysis. The essay will be about 1500 words and require that you quote and cite source material from our class.

UNGRADED WORK (FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT)

Ungraded Work, Attendance and Student Accountability:

In this class you will only be graded on the content in the course material, but you will be assessed using a variety of ungraded techniques. These assessments will provide you an opportunity to understand your level of comprehension and identify areas where you need to improve. These assessments will also identify if you are being accountable to the class and to your peers. Reading the assigned material, regular attendance, and active participation (in terms of listening and talking) are all necessary in order to be accountable.

CLASSROOM POLICIES

*These policies may apply differently to students that are registered with the DRC and have accommodations. I will be working with all students individually to meet their accommodations.

- **No shaming, no judging:** This classroom is a “no shaming, no judgment zone.” It is important that everyone contributes and that everyone is accountable to class policies. But we will not be shaming or looking negatively upon others for mistakes, for their political beliefs, or for any other reason.

- **Collective Structure:** This class is based upon a model of cooperation and collaboration. There are two primary reasons for this class structure. Firstly, students who develop strong community bonds in college tend to succeed. Secondly, social scientists find that participation in cooperative groups builds “social capital”—a term for hard-to-measure human capacities involving trust and one’s ability to collaborate. All areas of life—including employment, family, community, and politics—involve working together. The development of human capital greatly influences the efficacy of social groups. Thus we will model this behavior in an authentic manner in the classroom. Everyone in class wishes to succeed, and everyone can participate in making that goal a reality.
- **Late work:** Assignments are due on the date listed in the course schedule. You may turn in late work for 85% of the grade. You do not need to ask me to turn in work during this period; just turn it in. Late work may lead to delays in grading and delays in instructor feedback. Tests do not qualify for this policy. If you are falling behind due to emergency/unforeseen circumstances, you can work with me to create an individualized plan. If this is the case, please schedule a time to meet with me or come to my office hours.
- **English Second (or more) Language Students:** If English is your second language, you can use a translation dictionary during tests. The dictionary must be a book not an electronic dictionary and it must be approved prior to the test. If English is a second (or third or fourth) language, I encourage you to talk with me directly so that we can make sure the learning environment works for you.
- **Electronics Policy:** At the beginning of class please turn off your phone and put it away. Unless I state otherwise, phones are not allowed in class. Laptops are allowed for note-taking only. Students who use their laptops for notes must submit their notes to me electronically following each and every class period. This is so that I know that you are using your laptop for note-taking only. If at any point you feel that you need to use your device(s) for communications, please quietly get up and do so outside. I do not allow recording of any audio or video in the classroom. If any of these policies prohibit you from being able to learn in the fullest possible way, please meet with me to work out an individualized solution.
- **Communicating with me:** I encourage you to communicate with me a lot and in a way that works best for you. Examples include: in person during office

hours (or by appointment); through my BC email; or the Canvas 'inbox'. I may check these locations at odd hours, such as at night or over the weekend. But please do not expect me to reply outside of regular business hours. This has nothing to do with you as a person or as a student and is simply because my classes are my workplace. I have to set appropriate boundaries between work and the rest of my life, which I am sure you all can appreciate. I will be answering your messages swiftly. However, if I do not answer your inquiry in about a day, you should feel comfortable to follow up. Please do not worry about offending or annoying me.

CLASSROOM LEARNING ATMOSPHERE

Affirmation of Inclusion

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination. We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

Religious Holidays

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or any other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance should be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent, preferably at the beginning of the term. Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments should be offered an opportunity to make up the work without penalty (if they have previously arranged to be absent), unless it can be demonstrated that a makeup opportunity would constitute an unreasonable burden on a member of the faculty. Should disagreement arise over what constitutes an unreasonable burden or any element of this policy, parties involved should consult the department chair, or Dean.

College Anti-Discrimination Statement (Title IX)

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; color; creed; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; gender identity or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates.

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/>.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES/SERVICES

Disability Resource Center – B132

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 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 as soon as possible. If you are a student with a documented autism spectrum disorder, there is an additional access program available to you. Contact [Autism Spectrum Navigators](#). Email and phone number is on the web page. ASN is located in the Library Media Center in D125. 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 Skype: the address is **DRCatBC** (NOTE: There is no @ sign...it is actually **DRCatBC**). Please visit the website at [Disability Resource Center](#) for application information and other helpful links.

Multicultural Services – 2nd Floor of B building (above the bookstore)

Multicultural Services (MCS) is a student-centered service program on campus that is designed to support all students in general, and diverse student populations in particular. MCS is a broad program that can assist students with tutoring in Math and English as well as help students locate community resources such as food and housing assistance. Please familiarize yourself with MCS by stopping by or visiting: bellevuecollege.edu/mcs/

Counseling Center – 2nd Floor of B building (above the bookstore)

The Counseling Center provides personal, career, and academic counseling for all registered BC students. The Counseling Center can be a helpful place for locating community resources (referrals) as well as free counseling appointments with the center's staff of licensed mental health counselors. Please familiarize yourself with the services offered by the counseling center by stopping by or visiting: bellevuecollege.edu/counseling/