
POL S 101: INTRO TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

Fall 2010: Mondays and Wednesdays 9:30 to 11:20 pm, C168

Professor: Tim Jones (Please call me “Tim”)

Office: A200B

Office Hours: ???, or by appointment

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Course website: <http://vista.bellevuecollege.edu>

(All students need to register on Blackboard to gain access to the course website)

***“If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it
expects what never was and what never will be”***

~Thomas Jefferson

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. The course itself is divided into ten thematic units: (1) political knowledge, (2) political spin, (3) political theory, (4) political socialization, (5) political sovereignty, (6) political institutions, (7) political economy, (8) political conflict, (9) political violence, (10) and political engagement.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To develop a basic understanding of and an appreciation for the academic field of political science.
2. To develop the ability to recognize and avoid political spin.
3. To foster the ability to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of different political arguments.
4. To develop the ability to distinguish between fact and opinion and draw informed conclusions based on reliable and valid evidence.
5. To foster self-reflection about your role as a citizen in a democracy.

COURSE POLICIES

This is a college-level course, which means that I expect you to take responsibility for your own learning. I will do my best to teach the class in a fun and interesting way, and to assess your learning fairly. I expect you to do your best to complete assignments in a timely and appropriate fashion, to come to class prepared for the day's work, and to actively participate in classroom discussions and activities. You are responsible for any material missed due to absence or lateness so I encourage you to get acquainted with those around you, trade e-mail addresses and/or phone numbers, and make one or more study buddies. If you do not understand something please take the initiative to find out

the answer by raising your hand, talking to me before or after class, coming to my office, etc.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND MISSED EXAMS

Assignments handed in late will be penalized unless they are the result of a college-sponsored official absence or a documented emergency. Likewise, make-up exams will not be administered and incompletes will not be given unless you receive prior permission from me or you can document some sort of catastrophe (such as being medically unable to take the exam or complete the course).

GRADE COMPLAINTS

If you wish to formally request a grade change, you must wait at least 24 hours, and then turn in a written statement explaining why you feel your assigned grade did not reflect your work based on the grading criteria used. We will then make an appointment to discuss your grade in my office. I will only discuss your grade in my office, and not in class. The statute of limitations for a grade complaint is one week.

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

Please familiarize yourself with BC's Campus Code of Conduct. Cheating or plagiarism of any kind will not be tolerated and will result in a grade of 0.0 for the assignment/exam in question.

RULES OF ENGAGEMENT FOR CLASS DISCUSSIONS

You are expected to contribute to a classroom atmosphere that is productive and cordial. Because this course involves the discussion of controversial issues, 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. Remember reasonable people often disagree. Please turn off your cell phones, take out your earphones, and do not hold private conversations. If you have one, you may use your laptop in class to take notes, but please refrain from playing games, checking email and surfing the Internet so as to not distract your classmates. Use your common sense to avoid any other conduct that might distract or offend other students in class. Thank you!

COURSE MATERIALS

The primary text for the course is Danziger's *Understanding the Political World: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science* (10th edition). This text is available at the bookstore; it may also be purchased on-line. Supplemental reading will be made available on our course website. Please note that each reading should be completed before the class session for which it is scheduled, so that you can participate in any discussion or other classroom activity we do that day. Any material covered by an assigned reading may be included in examination questions, regardless of whether it is specifically discussed in the classroom. If adjustments are made to the reading schedule, you will be informed in class. The assigned reading is 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 in class will frequently touch on current events and it is important that you keep up-to-date on the major 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) or the *Wall Street Journal* (www.wsj.com). For an international perspective, I suggest the *BBC* (www.bbc.co.uk).

GRADED WORK	PTS	%
Letter to the Editor Assignment	(10 pts)	3%
Film Review Assignment	(20 pts)	6%
Discussion Questions	(20 pts)	6%
Participation	(50 pts)	14%
Reflective Journal	(50 pts)	14%
Midterm Exam	(100 pts)	29%
Final Exam	(100 pts)	29%
Total	(350 pts)	100%

GRADEPOINT CONVERSION CHART

A	B	C	D	F
4.0=341-350	3.4=312-314	2.4=276-279	1.4=241-244	0.6-0.0=0-209
3.9=334-340	3.3=309-311	2.3=273-275	1.3=236-240	
3.8=328-333	3.2=304-308	2.2=270-272	1.2=231-235	
3.7=322-327	3.1=299-303	2.1=267-269	1.1=227-230	
3.6=318-321	3.0=296-298	2.0=264-266	1.0=222-226	
3.5=315-317	2.9=293-295	1.9=260-263	0.9=218-221	
	2.8=289-292	1.8=256-259	0.8=214-217	
	2.7=286-288	1.7=252-255	0.7=210-213	
	2.6=283-285	1.6=249-251		
	2.5=280-282	1.5=245-248		

LETTER TO THE EDITOR ASSIGNMENT (10 pts ~ 3%)

The purpose of this assignment is to get you to engage with current events as they are

covered in the news. This assignment is worth 10 points. You need to write and submit a letter to the editor in response to a political issue that is covered in a newspaper or magazine of your choice (e.g., the *Jibsheet* for a campus issue, the *Seattle Times* for a local or regional issue, or the *New York Times* for a national or international issue). You must format your letter to fit with the specifications required of the publication to which you are submitting. If your letter is in response to a specific news story—and most letters to the editor are—please include a copy of the story in your submission to me. The final submission deadline for this assignment is Monday, November 1st, but I encourage you to turn in your letter before this date.

***Success Tip:** Do not wait until the last minute to write your letter. Come talk to me if you have any questions or need guidance, and be sure to proofread for spelling and grammatical errors well in advance of turning in your letter.

FILM REVIEW ASSIGNMENT (20 pts ~ 6%)

You will be expected to write one film review for this class. In your review, you must fulfill the following requirements: (1) summarize the premise of the video (the issue or issues examined, the evidence provided, etc.); and (2) explain how this video fits in with the concepts and ideas discussed in class. Your film review needs to be at minimum one-page, single-spaced, and it will be due on the day we discuss the topic examined in the film. The film you review needs to be a documentary and it needs to be at least 60 minutes long. The film review topics and due dates are: (a) political sovereignty on Wednesday, October 20th; (b) political economy on Wednesday, November 10th; (c) political conflict on Wednesday, November 17th; (d) political violence on Wednesday, November 24th; and (e) political engagement on December 1st. Suggested documentaries will be posted on Blackboard; you may choose to review a different documentary, but please clear it with me first.

***Success Tip:** Plan ahead and pick a documentary on a topic that you are interested in. Make sure your write-up addresses how the film relates to the topics being discussed in class.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (20 pts ~ 6%)

At least once a week, you will be asked to write a question that shows your engagement with the course material. The question should identify a central point or idea covered in class that you would like clarification with or that you think would make for a good discussion in the next class. There will be 12 questions in all, and the call for questions will be made randomly throughout the quarter. You must turn in at least 10 questions in order to receive full credit. Each question is worth 2 points and they are due in class on the day they are requested—in other words, make up questions will not be accepted. If you turn in 10 questions you will get 100% for this portion of your grade, 9 questions turned in gets you 90%, 8 questions gets you 80%, etc. PLEASE PURCHASE A SMALL PACKAGE OF 3 X 5 CARDS AND BRING YOUR FIRST CARD TO CLASS BY WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22nd. These questions will be used to see where you are with the material and to feed back into lecture and discussion. Make sure that you include your name and the date on each card.

***Success Tip:** Come to class every day and jot down questions as they come to you.

REFLECTIVE JOURNAL (50 pts ~ 14%)

As a supplement to in-class discussion and as a way of processing the materials we cover, I would like you to keep a journal, recording your thoughts and reactions to the course material. The primary purpose of this journal is to stimulate your thinking about the material and to serve as a starting point for our in-class discussions. I have set up the journaling tool on the Blackboard site for you to use, or if you prefer, you may buy a separate spiral notebook or journal to use for this purpose. I will periodically read and respond to the journals as a way of entering into a more individualized intellectual dialogue with you. You need to write approximately one outside-of-class journal entry per week for a total of 10 entries. Each journal entry should be at least 250 words in length. Each entry is worth 5 points. The topics of your journal entries will be posted on Blackboard Vista by Wednesday of each week and they need to be completed by the following Monday.

***Success Tip:** Take the prompts seriously and sincerely reflect on the course content.

PARTICIPATION (50 pts ~ 14%)

This class would be extremely dull if I did all the talking so please do your part to participate. It is impossible for you to participate if you are not in class. I will be taking attendance: three unexcused absences will be allowed during the quarter; absences beyond this number will adversely affect your grade. I intend to start class on time every day and I expect you to be there when I do. Occasionally, you may find it necessary to be late, in which case I would certainly prefer that you come rather than miss the entire class. However, you should enter quietly through the back door and tardiness should never develop into a pattern—consistent tardiness will be treated in the same manner as consistent absences.

***Success Tip:** Attend and participate every day! Ask questions in class, after class, in my office, or via email.

MIDTERM EXAM (100 pts ~ 29%)

Your midterm will be held in class on Monday, October 25th. 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. My policy on exams is as follows: 1) everyone must take them on the day they are scheduled; 2) make-up exams will be allowed only if you present documentation excusing the absence on or before the day of the exam; 3) the make-up exam must be scheduled within one week of the original exam date; 4) grade disputes must be raised within one week of the return of the examination.

FINAL EXAM (100 pts ~ 29%)

Your final will be held in class on Monday, December 6th. This exam will not be cumulative; rather, it will cover the assigned readings, movies, lectures, guest

presentations, and major current events discussed in class since the midterm exam. Like the midterm, the final exam will consist of a mix of question types, including: true-false, multiple-choice, identifications, short answer, and essay.

***Success Tip:** Keep up with the assigned material and do not leave your exam preparation until the night before the exam. Take advantage of the review sheet. Form a study group with your classmates. Come to my office hours if you have questions.

POL S 101

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1: POLITICAL KNOWLEDGE

This week we will focus on the topic of political knowledge. *Where does your political knowledge come from? What are the limitations of this knowledge? Finally, what are your political biases, and what are the main sources of these biases?*

Monday, September 20th—Introduction to the Course

- Syllabus

Wednesday, September 22nd—Political Knowledge (46 pg s)

- “Ch. 1: Politics and Knowledge” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 3-24 (22 pgs)
- “Gross Ignorance” by Rick Shenkman (2008), pp. 13-36 (24 pgs)

WEEK 2: POLITICAL SPIN

This week will focus on the topic of political spin. *What is political spin? What are the tricks that spinsters use? What are the heuristics that make us susceptible to these tricks? Finally, how can we recognize and avoid political spin?*

Monday, September 27th—Recognizing Political Spin (44 pgs)

- “Introduction” by Jackson and Jamieson (2007), pp. vii-xii (6 pgs)
- “Tricks of the Deception Trade” by Jackson & Jamieson (2007), pp. 43-62 (20 pgs)
- “Why We Get Spun” by Jackson & Jamieson (2007), pp. 64-81 (18 pgs)
- In-class Film: *Toxic Sludge Is Good for You* (2002) (45 mins)

Wednesday, September 29th—Avoiding Political Spin (47 pgs)

- “The Internet Solution” by Jackson and Jamieson (2007), pp. 127-151 (15 pgs)
- “How to Be Sure” by Jackson and Jamieson (2007), pp. 153-177 (25 pgs)
- “Staying Unspun” by Jackson and Jamieson (2007), pp. 179-185 (7 pgs)

WEEK 3: POLITICAL BELIEFS

This week we will spend one day discussing political spin and one day discussing political beliefs. *What are your most salient political beliefs? Where do they come from? How consistent are they? How would you classify them?*

Monday, October 4th—Why We Fight/War Made Easy

- In lieu of reading, please come to class having watched and ready to discuss the film *Why We Fight* (2004) (99 mins)
- Today in class we will be watching the film *War Made Easy* (2007) (73 mins)

Wednesday, October 6th—Political Belief Systems (45 pgs)

- “Ch. 2: Political Theory and Political Beliefs” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 27-55 (19 pgs)

- “The Worldview Problem for American Politics” and “Pathologies, Stereotypes, and Distortions” by George Lakoff (2002), pp. 24-37, 310-321 (26 pgs)

WEEK 4: POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

This week we will focus on the factors that influence our individual political beliefs and actions. *What is an agent of political socialization? What are the most powerful agents of socialization in society today? Which agents of political socialization have the most influence on you? Why?*

Monday, October 11th—Agents of Political Socialization (27 pgs)

- “Ch. 4: Influences on Beliefs and Actions” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 87-111 (25 pgs)
- “Electronic Isolation Gives Cold Comfort” by David Waters (2006), pp. 1-2 (2 pgs)

Wednesday, October 13th—The Power of Advertising

- In lieu of reading, please come to class having watched and ready to discuss the film *The Persuaders* (2004) (90 mins)
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/persuaders/view/>

WEEK 5: POLITICAL SOVEREIGNTY

This week we will explore the concept of political sovereignty. *What is it? Why is it controversial? Under what conditions, if any, should it be violated?*

Monday, October 18th—States and Nations (24 pgs)

- “Ch. 5: States and Nations” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 115-138 (24 pgs)
- In class movie: *The Devil Came on Horseback* (2007) (85 mins)

Wednesday, October 20th—The Ethics of Drone Warfare (22 pgs)

- “Drone Warfare” by Thomas J. Billitteri (2010), pp. 653-671 (19 pgs)
- “Study Cites Drone Crew in Attack on Afghans” by Christopher Drew (2010), pp. 1-2 (2 pgs)

WEEK 6: MIDTERM

Monday, October 25th

- No reading—MIDTERM EXAM

Wednesday, October 27th

- College Issues Day—NO CLASS!

WEEK 7: POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

This week we will explore the topic of political institutions. *What does it mean to say that the United States has a federal, presidential, bicameral, two-party system with plurality elections? What are the pros and cons of such a political system?*

Monday, November 1st—Political Institutions I: Structures (25 pgs)

- “Ch. 6: Political Institutions I” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 141-165 (25 pgs)
- ASSIGNMENT: Letter to the editor due on Blackboard today!

Wednesday, November 3rd—Political Institutions II: Institutional Arrangements (35 pgs)

- “Ch. 7: Political Institutions II” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 169-203 (35 pgs)

WEEK 8: POLITICAL ECONOMY

This week we will explore the economy and how it relates to politics. *What is conventional economic thinking? What are some of the limitations of this way of thinking? How might we begin to think about the economy differently? What’s the economy for, anyway?*

Monday, November 8th—The Tension between Capitalism and Democracy (45 pgs)

- “Ch. 8: Political Economy” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 207-235 (29 pgs)
- “Introduction: The Paradox” by Robert Reich (2007), pp. 3-14 (12 pgs)
- “The Real Economy” by Robert Costanza (2010), pp. 1-4 (4 pgs)

Wednesday, November 10th—Moving Beyond the Growth Consensus (45 pgs)

- “Introduction” by Bill McKibben (2007), pp. 1-4 (4 pgs)
- “After Growth” by Bill McKibben (2007), pp. 5-45 (41 pgs)
- Possible Guest Speaker: John D. Graaf
- Possible In-Class Movie: *What’s the Economy for, Anyway?*

WEEK 9: POLITICAL CONFLICT

This week we will explore the topic of political conflict across borders. *What does it mean to say that the international system is anarchic? What impact does anarchy have on the behavior of states in the international system? Is there any way to overcome anarchy?*

Monday, November 15th—Politics Across Borders (29 pgs)

- “Ch. 11: Politics Across Borders” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 297-325 (29 pgs)

Wednesday, November 17th—Water Politics

- Assigned reading to be announced!
- Possible In-Class Movie: *Blue Gold: World Water Wars* (2009) (90 mins)

WEEK 10: POLITICAL VIOLENCE

Monday, November 22nd—Political Violence (30 pgs)

- “Ch. 12: Political Violence” by James Danziger (2011), pp. 329-358 (30 pgs)

Wednesday, November 24th—Domestic Terrorism

- In lieu of reading, please come to class having watched and ready to discuss the following film:

- *The Weather Underground* (2002) (92 mins)
<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-6078589535743610981#>

WEEK 11: POLITICAL ENGAGEMENT

Monday, November 29th—Patriotism (22 pgs)

- Bennett: “The American Patriot” (pp. vii-xii) (6 pgs)
- Goldman: “Patriotism: A Menace to Liberty” (pp. 270-272) (3 pgs)
- Zinn: “Patriotism” (pp. 111-120) (10 pgs)
- Beinart: “The War Over Patriotism” (pp. 1-7) (7 pgs)

Wednesday, December 1st—Citizenship (37 pgs)

- Loeb: “Introduction” from *Soul of a Citizen* (pp. 1-13) (13 pgs)
- Loeb: “We Don’t Have to Be Saints” from *Soul of a Citizen* (34-57) (24 pgs)

WEEK 12: FINAL EXAM

Monday, December 6th—Final Exam

- In-class final exam!