

# POLS& 101: Intro to Political Science

## Bellevue College, Spring 2019 (Item 5342)

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### COURSE DETAILS

<b>Class Sessions:</b>	DAILY   11:30AM – 12:20PM   L221	
<b>Instructor:</b>	David Spataro, PhD	
<b>E-mail:</b>	david.spataro@bellevuecollege.edu	
<b>Phone:</b>	(425) 564-3161	
<b>Office:</b>	D200E	
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Mondays	9:00 – 10:00AM
	Wednesdays	9:00 – 11:00AM & 1:00 – 2:00PM
	Thursdays	2:00 – 3:00PM

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introductory course that is designed for students who are new to the study of politics. This course will provide you with a broad introduction to the field of political science and help you to develop informed knowledge about a variety of political topics. The course is divided into four sections under the following themes: (1) political knowledge, belief and ideology; (2) states, citizenship and liberal democracy; (3) policing, authority and protest; and (4) political economy and international affairs.

### 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.

### REQUIRED READING MATERIALS

The required readings and audio/visual materials will be available on our Canvas website. You may print the readings out or read them on your computer. I encourage you to find the most appropriate reading method that works for you. However, please keep in mind that new research suggests that reading comprehension is higher when reading in print compared with an electronic device. BC students have a printing quota each quarter based upon technology fees. I also suggest that you patronize the King County library system, which provides library users with 75 'units' of free printing per week.

## GRADED WORK

Assessment		Percentage	
Leading Current Events Small Group Discussion		10%	
Annotated Bibliography (for essay)		10%	
Political Essay		25%	
Quizzes		10%	
Midterm		20%	
Final Exam		25%	
		Total	100%

  

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

**Facilitating Current Events Discussion:** Students will be assigned to small groups of approximately 6-8 students at the beginning of the quarter and then rearranged into new small groups after the midterm. Beginning in week two each student will be required to lead one current events discussion during the quarter. Leading the discussion requires: (1) selecting three strong news articles, (2) writing the discussion's guiding questions, and (3) facilitating the discussion in class. Think of this like a small reading group with your peers. The leader selects the readings, brings questions to start the discussion, organizes the group and then helps to guide the discussion. The group leader will post the materials for the week on Monday before 5pm. The discussions are on Wednesdays.

**Political Essay & Annotated Bibliography:** The political essay assignment is an 1800-word essay on a political topic using a combination of personal reflection and political analysis. The political essay is a significant assignment that will be broken up into two one-month parts. The first part is an annotated bibliography, which requires that you explore your topic broadly and prepare your sources. The second part is writing the essay. The two parts are graded separately, but the essay builds upon the work done on the annotated bibliography.

**Quizzes:** There will be four low-stakes quizzes during the quarter to assess your knowledge and prepare for the exams. The quizzes will be short and made up of multiple-choice and short answer questions. They will come at or near the end of each of the four sections of the class. Students who complete their notes on time are able to use their notes on the quiz. See "Class Policies" for more details about notes.

**Midterm and Final Exam:** There will be two exams during the quarter, which are designed to assess your conceptual knowledge and reading comprehension. The exams will be similar to the quizzes in format, but longer and more comprehensive. Students who complete their notes on time are able to use their notes on the exams. See "Class Policies" for more details about notes.

## LATE WORK AND CLASSROOM POLICIES

\*These policies may apply differently to students with DRC 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. However, 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 the principles of cooperation and collaboration. Students who develop strong community bonds in college tend to succeed. Additionally, 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.
- **Attendance:** I will be taking attendance in this class, but students are not graded on attendance or participation. It is important that students attend class everyday and arrive on time. It is especially important that students are present on Wednesdays for the student-led small group discussions. As a result, although students will not be graded on attendance, there is a grade penalty for missing class on Wednesdays. The Wednesday attendance policy is the following:
  - All students have one freebie. Students can miss one Wednesday without affecting your grade.
  - The second Wednesday missed will lead to a drop of one step in the letter grade system.
- **Reading notes:** I do not believe that memorization is as important as developing the skillset needed to be strong readers and note-takers. As a result, I am incentivizing reading and note-taking practices. I allow on-time notes to be used on tests. Students who do all of the following are allowed to use their “stamped” reading notes on the quizzes and exams.
  - Notes will only be stamped if they are turned in at the beginning of the class period on the day the reading is due.
  - For each day’s reading(s), one 8 ½ x 11 piece of paper only (double-sided is okay).
  - For the quizzes, midterm and final exam, all stamped notes must be organized into a three-ring binder.
- **Late work:** Annotated bibliography and essay can be turned in any time after the due date, but before the quarter ends, for 80% of the grade. Late assignments will not receive feedback, but all students are free to solicit feedback from me in office hours at any time.

Quizzes must be taken on the assigned day, and there are no make-up quizzes. If you have a documented emergency, I will eliminate the missed quiz from your quiz grade. In the case of

an emergency, document everything so that it is clear what occurred. If you have an illness that does not require a doctor's visit (a common cold for example), then you likely have no documentation. In this scenario you will have to decide if it is best to take the quiz while sick or forgo the 2.5% of the overall grade.

The midterm and final must be taken on the assigned day. If you have a documented emergency that prevents you from taking a test, please contact me immediately (with documentation) to discuss a retake. In the case of an emergency, document everything so that it is clear what occurred. If you have an illness that does not require a doctor's visit (a common cold for example), then you likely have no documentation. In this scenario you will have 72 hours to schedule a retake at BC's testing center, and I will score the retake at 90%.

Leading the small group discussion and the reading notes do not have a late policy because late work is not accepted. Students who are leading the small group discussion must complete the work on time because other students are relying on the leader to be timely to complete their work. Being late by an hour or two with the articles is acceptable because the other students in the group will still be able to complete their work.

***If you are falling behind due to emergency/unforeseen circumstances, you can work with me to create an individualized plan.***

- **Electronics Policy:** At the beginning of class please turn off your phone and put it away. Laptops and phones are not allowed in class because of research that shows phone/laptop use in class diminishes the performance of those around you. 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.

## **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 class, examinations, or any other assignments as a consequence of their religious observance will 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.

### **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.

## **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](#). Please visit the website at [Disability Resource Center](#) for application information and other helpful links.

### **Multicultural Services – 2<sup>nd</sup> 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/](http://bellevuecollege.edu/mcs/)

### **Counseling Center – 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor of B building (above the bookstore)**

The Counseling Center provides personal, career, and academic counseling for all registered BC students. Please familiarize yourself with the services offered by the counseling center by stopping by or visiting: [bellevuecollege.edu/counseling/](http://bellevuecollege.edu/counseling/)

## **WEEK AT A GLANCE (EXCEPT WEEK 1!)**

### **Mondays**

- No readings due (but you should be reading!)
- Student leaders provide the current events readings to their groups

### **Tuesdays**

- Readings and notes due (notes are not required)

### **Wednesdays**

- Current events readings due
- In class small group discussions

### **Thursdays**

- Readings and notes due (notes are not required)

### **Fridays**

- No readings due (but you should be reading!)

## **READINGS SCHEDULE FOR WEEKS 1-2**

### **April 3 – 5: Week 1 (Introduction: What is Political Science)**

Wednesday, April 3

- Opening day (no readings due)

Thursday, April 4

- No readings due

Friday, April 5

- Ferdinand, Garner & Lawson: The Nature of Politics and Political Analysis (p. 1 – 24)
- hooks: Homeplaces – Sites of Resistance (p. 1 – 8)

### **April 8 - 12: Week 2 (Political Knowledge, Beliefs, Ideology and Partisanship)**

Monday, April 8

- No readings due

Tuesday, April 9

- Delli Carpini & Keeter: In Search of the Informed Citizen (p. 133 – 143)
- Delli Carpini & Keeter: Gender Gap in Political Knowledge (p. 23 – 26)
- Kenski & Jamieson: Gender Gap in Political Knowledge (p. 83 – 89)
- Pollak (from The Guardian): Women Know Less About Politics Than Men Worldwide

Wednesday, April 10

- Current events readings due

Thursday, April 11

- Danziger: Influences on Beliefs and Actions (p. 85 – 97)
- You Are Not So Smart Podcast: “The Backfire Effect”
- Nyhan: Fact Checking Can Change Views? We Rate That as Mostly True

Friday, April 12

- No readings due

## WRITE:

TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SYLLABUS

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ONE THING YOU ARE GENUINELY INTERESTED IN LEARNING ABOUT POLITICS

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ONE THING THAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THIS CLASS

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ONE THING THAT MAKES YOU NERVOUS ABOUT THIS CLASS

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NOTES

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