

# POLS 101 – Introduction to Political Science Syllabus

## (Winter 2020 Item # 5342)

Instructor: Christina Sciabarra, PhD

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Office location: A-200F

Office Hours: **Mondays 1-3 PM, Thursdays 8:30-10 AM** or by appointment. I will also be available online during these times – please email me if you are planning on meeting online during office hours so we can determine a communications method. I will post updates on the location of office hours if they change on Canvas and via email.

Meeting Times: M-Th from 11:30-12:20 in D-102

## Course Information

### Course Description

This is an introductory course designed for students who are new to the study of politics. The course focuses on the three levels of politics in the world: system, state, and individual. We will look at different cases and concepts with specific focus on democratic and non-democratic forms of government. We will also cover the major sub-fields of political science including International Relations, American Politics, and Comparative Politics.

### Course Outcomes

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Critically analyze current political issues
- Articulate the rights and responsibilities of democratic citizenship

- Constructively engage in the political process
- Apply core political science concepts to the real world
- Differentiate the major sub-fields of political science
- Explain the significance of the scientific method in political science research

## How Outcomes Will be Met

This course is largely in-person, but there is an online component in the form of discussions. You are expected to complete the readings, participate in discussions in and class assignments, and complete writing projects. This course not only covers important content regarding political science, but also gives you the opportunity to start building a skillset that you can use in future education and career opportunities. Engaging fully with the course will result in an increase in knowledge and real-world skills.

## Grading

The College Grading Policy is explained in the current Course Catalog and can also be found at this link: [Grading Policy](#)

### Grade Breakdown:

<b>A 93-100%</b>	<b>A- 90-92%</b>	
<b>B+ 87-89%</b>	<b>B 83-86%</b>	<b>B- 80-82%</b>
<b>C+ 77-79%</b>	<b>C 73-76%</b>	<b>C- 70-72%</b>
<b>D+ 67-69%</b>	<b>D 63-66%</b>	<b>D- 60-62%</b>
<b>F 0-59%</b>		

The course is broken down in the following ways:

*Attendance/Participation-* Students are expected to attend class every day. I will take attendance every day through the use of journal reflections. If you are going to miss class, please email me and let me know so we can coordinate. I use class time to work on projects and for a great deal of learning through practice so attending class should be a first priority.

**\*\*\*Failure to regularly attend class without prior notice will result in being dropped from the course or receiving a failing grade. Missing more than two weeks of classes (8 meetings) without prior approval will result in a failing grade for the course.**

*Group Research Project* – students will work in small groups to conduct original research on a topic of their choosing, which is related to the course. Students will turn in various pieces of the assignment throughout the quarter and will present their final work as a poster during the last week of classes.

*Discussion and Readings* - Weekly with readings and initial discussion posts due on Sundays and final responses due on Mondays. Students are expected to complete the required textbook chapter and additional readings as assigned in the syllabus and on Canvas. Students will participate in WEEKLY discussion posts in which they review additional information (text, videos, links) and respond to a prompt based on the weekly question and referencing the readings and materials. Students are also expected to respond to their student posts and conversations at least 3 times (these can be responses to responses). Please note – discussion responses will receive full or no credit, meaning you must respond 3 times to receive credit for the responses. There are extensive rubrics for each discussion post and response.

*Action Plan Paper* - Students will take political action based on a list of appropriate activities and share their experience and reflection on that experience. I will give students a list of possible action activities and they can take place anytime throughout the quarter. Students may submit their reflection paper any time as well.

*Tyranny Project* - Students will read “On Tyranny” by Timothy Snyder and create a short document in which they select one of the lessons to review. Students will provide a cover image, summarize the lesson and why it is important, give a real world example of it being upheld and an example of it being violated in the world, and give an action plan regarding what can be done to challenge tyranny.

*Short reflection papers* – instead of a final exam, I will ask you to write 3 short (1 page, single space) papers after each main section of the course (about every 3 weeks) and one longer (2 page, single space) reflection paper at the end of the course. There are clear rubrics for each paper, but please note that they are meant to show understanding of the course materials and your own understanding of the larger topics covered in the course.

**A weekly calendar of all assignments is posted on Canvas**

## Books and Materials Required

This course requires the following books. They are both available on Amazon for under \$15 each and are currently available in the library. There will be additional readings, but they will be included on weekly modules in Canvas.

Danziger, James N. 2013. *Understanding the Political World: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science*, 11th ed. New York, NY: Pearson Education, Inc.

Snyder, Timothy. 2017. *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century*. New York, NY: Tim Duggan Books.

Small notebook that will be used for reflection and collected by instructor at end of each class – should be separate from whatever notebook you use for your notes.

## Help with Canvas

Students can find help with Canvas by following the link here: [Student Canvas Help](#)

We will be using Canvas extensively so please make sure you know how to access the course and submit assignments. If you need help – please let me know!

## Classroom Learning Atmosphere

### Instructor's Expectations

We will set up class discussion rules as a group during the first week of class, but it is important to note that inappropriate language will not be permitted. Failure to adhere to the agreed upon discussion rules will result in being asked to leave class and possibly dropped from the course. All viewpoints are welcome, but must be accompanied by evidence and logical reasoning.

**Email policy** – I check email at 8:30 PM each night - I will respond to your email within 24 hours. Weekends are an important time with my family and I will check email once so expect 24-48 hours for a response on Saturdays and Sundays.

**Late work** – I generally do not accept late work, but I understand that life happens and will discuss any extension requests on a case by case basis. It is important you let me know BEFORE

an assignment is due that you might need some extra time. The course moves quickly so staying up on your assignments is crucial.

\*\*\*Please note – while I can allow some flexibility in completing assignments, you CANNOT submit everything at the end of the course. You must get caught up and submit all assignments by the following dates:

Weeks 1-4, must be submitted by February 7

Weeks 5-8, must be submitted by March 6

Weeks 9-10 + final assignments by March 13 (I will not grade anything submitted later)

Final reflection paper is due – by 8 AM on March 18 (no exceptions)

I have designed this course to ensure that you come away with knowledge of political systems, the ability to assess and analyze events and outcomes, and the ability to advocate for yourself. If you do not fully participate in the course, you will not be able to meet these outcomes.

**Class Engagement** – You will need to be engaged to do well in this class. This means that you attend all classes, participate in group work during class, sign in at least twice a week to discuss with your group, complete the readings on time, and submit the assignments on time.

I have designed this course to ensure that you come away with knowledge of political systems, the ability to assess and analyze events and outcomes, and the ability to advocate for yourself. If you do not fully participate in the course, you will not be able to meet these outcomes.

**Questions/Concerns** – if you have a question regarding grading or the course, the Social Science department asks you to contact me first. You are welcome to copy the chair of the department, David Spataro ([david.spataro@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:david.spataro@bellevuecollege.edu)) on any emails regarding concerns or you can contact him directly. AFTER contacting David, you can contact the Dean, Chris Bell ([chris.bell@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:chris.bell@bellevuecollege.edu)), but he is likely to refer you back to David. Please do not contact the president or provost's office as they will forward your emails back to Dean Bell. I am always willing to discuss grades and student concerns/needs so please contact me first so we can find a resolution and keep moving through the course. I want everyone to be successful and if you do not feel you are getting that opportunity because of the course structure, I would like to know and address it.

## Accessibility

The online elements of this course are designed to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if

you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to, or usable by students who take this course in the future.

## **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.

[Affirmation of Inclusion](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/>)

## **Reasons of Faith and Conscience**

Reasonable Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience: Students who will be absent from course activities due to reasons of faith or conscience may seek reasonable accommodations so that grades are not impacted. Such requests must be made within the first two weeks of the course to the office of the Associate Vice President of Student Affairs (see Bellevue College [Policy 2950](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id2950/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id2950/>)). In the event you feel you are being discriminated against based on faith or conscience, you may refer to the procedures outlined in the college's [Discrimination, Harassment and Retaliation Policy 1440P](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-1440p/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-1440p/>).

## **Annual Notice Non-Discrimination**

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; creed; color; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates. Bellevue College is prohibited from discriminating in such a manner by college policy and by state and federal law. All college personnel and persons, vendors, and organizations with whom the college does business are required to comply with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations designed to promote affirmative action and equal opportunity.

Reports of gender and sex-based discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation by a student should be raised with the Title IX office (see 1440P2 for contact information). In cases where the impacted party is a student and the responding party is a college employee, the Title IX coordinator will direct the matter to the Office of Human Resources (HR). All other reports, including all reports where the impacted party is an employee, should be raised with the HR. If a report is against personnel in the Title IX office or HR, it should be submitted to the president's office for referral to an alternate designee.

[Equal Opportunity](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/>)

## Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share with the Title IX Coordinator any and all information regarding sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct (e.g. relationship violence, stalking) that may have occurred on campus or that impacts someone on campus. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the BC Counseling Center at (425) 564-2212. The Title IX Office can be contacted at 425-564-2641 and more information can be found at [Title IX](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/>).

If you have any concerns, you may report to: [Report Concerns](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/reportconcerns/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/reportconcerns/>).

## Student Conduct Code and Academic Integrity

Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source), and fabrication, and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Conduct Code of Bellevue College. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, repeatedly talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Conduct Code to the Manager of Student Conduct for investigation. Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Conduct Code at: [Student Code](#)

# Important Links

See ["Important Links" page online](#) for more information about the E-mail and MyBC, Public Safety, the Academic Calendar, the Academic Success Center, and more.

## Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center serves students with disabilities. Common disabilities include physical, neurological (e.g. Autism, ADD/ADHD), and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety). If you are a student who has a disability or if you think you may need accommodations in order to have equal access in your classes, programs, activities, and any other services, please contact the DRC.

If you require assistance in an emergency, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan for while in class and contact the DRC to develop a safety plan for while you are elsewhere on campus.

The DRC office is located in building B Room 132. You can contact the DRC by stopping by the office at B132, calling our front desk phone number (425) 564-2498, emailing [drc@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:drc@bellevuecollege.edu). Deaf students can reach us by calling TTY: (425) 564-6189, or by Skype (account name **DRCatBC**). For more information about the services we offer, including our Initial Access Application, visit our website at [Disability Resource Center](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>).

Service Animals are allowed in this classroom. Emotional Support Animals need to be approved through the DRC. All other animals will be asked to leave. If you believe you need your animal with you, please connect with the DRC and refrain from bringing your animal until a decision has been made.

## Course Calendar

Can be found as a separate document on Canvas.

## Additional Information

A note about accessing Canvas from the People's Republic of China: some users have reported that they do not have full access to all Canvas functionality from within the People's Republic of



China. This appears to be due to Canvas' parent company, Instructure, not fully committing to Chinese government requirements regarding internet operations within the country. The Chinese government does not inform foreign entities of their policy updates; therefore, Bellevue College cannot anticipate access to Canvas.

If you will be in China during the quarter, you should prepare for intermittent and uncertain access to Canvas.

Source: [Access to Canvas in China](https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/article/1157-access-to-canvas-in-china/) (https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/article/1157-access-to-canvas-in-china/)