



POLS& 101: Introduction to Political Science

Bellevue College, Winter 2020 (Item 5340)

COURSE DETAILS

Class Sessions: MW: 9:30 - 11:20AM in L214
E-mail: david.spataro@bellevuecollege.edu
Phone: (425) 564-3161
Office: D200E

Instructor: David Spataro, PhD
Office Hours: Tu: 9:30 – 11:30AM
W: 12:30 – 1:30PM
Th: 9:30 – 11:30AM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an introductory course that is designed for students who are new to the study of politics. The 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 weekly sections dealing with significant themes in the field such as democracy, states, nations, nationalism, multiculturalism, race, class, gender, globalization, international affairs, and environmental justice, among others.

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.

BOOKS AND REQUIRED MATERIALS

There is no textbook for this class. Instead, the readings will be available in our Canvas site as PDF documents. Students are required to bring their own 4" x 6" notecards to class on days that the readings are due.

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 in print than on an electric device. BC students have a printing quota each quarter based upon technology fees. I suggest that students also patronize the King County library system, which provides library users with 75 pages of free black and white printing per week.

GRADED WORK

Assessment		Percentage	
Leading Small Group Political Discussion (essay prep & hybrid)		12.5%	
Annotated Bibliography (essay prep)		12.5%	
Political Essay		25%	
Entry Task Reading Quizzes		25%	
Final Exam		25%	
		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%

Leading Small Group Political Discussion (hybrid): Students will be assigned to small groups of approximately 5 students at the beginning of the quarter. Every student will lead one online political discussion with their peers in the small group. Leading the discussion requires: (1) selecting three strong news articles, (2) writing the discussion's guiding questions, and (3) facilitating the discussion in Canvas during the week. 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 replies (from members of the group) are due on Wednesdays and Fridays. Students are encouraged to select the same topic for the discussion and the political essay, and to use the articles for the discussion to "seed" their annotated bibliography.

Political Essay & Annotated Bibliography: The political essay assignment is a 2000-word essay on a current political topic using a combination of personal reflection and political analysis. The essay is a significant assignment that will be broken up into two parts. The first part is an annotated bibliography, which requires that you explore your topic broadly, organize your sources and hone your question. 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. Students are encouraged to use their small group discussion to locate sources for their essay and discuss the topic with their peers. All students must meet with me during the first two/three weeks of class to discuss their paper topic.

Entry Task Questions/Reading Quizzes: The readings for this class are due on Mondays and Wednesdays at the beginning of class. Class will begin with an entry task question on the board/projector, which students answer on a 4" x 6" notecard. The entry task question will assess students' comprehension and analysis of the reading material. There will be 18 entry tasks (18 class sessions total when we exclude the first day of class) throughout the quarter. I will grade 9 entry task questions using a 5-point scale. I will drop the two lowest grades.

Final Exam: There will be a comprehensive multiple-choice final exam at the end of the quarter.

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.

- **Canvas:** Students are required to use Canvas this quarter. We will be using it in very specific ways. Important documents such as the syllabus and readings will be posted on Canvas. The small group political discussions will be on Canvas. Additionally, I will communicate to the class using Canvas's "Announcements" function. It is necessary that students edit Canvas notifications to ensure that my announcements in Canvas end up in their preferred location (email or text). I will use Canvas announcements for unexpected issues such as being out sick or school closures.
- **Collaboration and no shaming/judging:** This classroom is a no shaming, no judgment zone. We will not be shaming or looking negatively upon others for mistakes, for their political beliefs, or for any other reason. This class is based upon the principles of cooperation and collaboration. Students who develop strong community bonds in college tend to succeed. All areas of life—including the workplace, family, community, and politics—involve working together. 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 there is no attendance or participation grade. Rather than grade students on their attendance, I will use my attendance record to see who is missing class so that I can check in on individuals who are habitually absent or tardy. Students who miss 4 class sessions (~25% of the sessions) must meet with me to put a plan of action in place.
- **Participation in Canvas discussions (hybrid):** It is especially important that students participate in the Canvas discussions, because these will be led by other students. As a result, there is a penalty for not participating (or not meeting the discussion requirements). The Canvas discussion policy is the following:
 - All students have one freebie. Students can miss one online discussion without a penalty.
 - The second missed discussion will lead to a drop of one step in the letter grade system.
- **Late work:** The annotated bibliography and political essay can be turned in any time after the due date, but before the quarter ends, for 80% of the grade. Late work will not receive

feedback, but all students are free to solicit feedback from me in office hours at any time, or by appointment. Entry tasks (reading quizzes) must be taken on the assigned day at the beginning of class, and there are no make-up quizzes. The two lowest entry task quizzes will be dropped, and only half of the entry tasks will be graded. This allows for a buffer if students miss an entry task due to an emergency or unforeseen circumstances. The final must be taken on the assigned day. If you have a documented emergency that prevents you from taking the final exam, 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. There is no formal late work policy for the online political discussion. 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.

- **If English is not your first language:** Please check in with me about the quizzes and exams to discuss how I can best support you.
- **Electronic devices:** I prohibit the use of laptops and phones in the classroom during lectures and most activities. During certain group activities, I will make an announcement that students can use their laptops or phones. I also do not allow students to record audio or video during the class. I do not consent to being recorded in any way during class, office hours or appointments. We will occasionally use smart phones for in-class polling apps such as Kahoot! or to access Canvas. Otherwise, I require that cell phones be put away.
- **Plagiarism/Cheating:** Plagiarism and cheating are serious offenses that violate BC's student code of conduct. Students who violate the school's policies are required to meet with me for a one-on-one meeting. I will report violations to BC's CARE Team. Please be in touch with me if you are unsure of what constitutes this type of violation.
- **Appointments, Email and Canvas Inbox:** The best way to communicate with me is in-person during office hours and in appointments. I will also allot some class time for individual questions. Students can also contact me through my BC phone, my BC email, or the Canvas mail function (inbox). I may check these at odd hours, such as at night or over the weekend. But I will not reply outside of regular business hours. On my end I will be answering your messages swiftly during business hours. However, if I do not answer your inquiry in about a day, you should feel comfortable to follow up. Don't be shy if I haven't followed up. It is likely due to other tasks taking priority.

Please use Outlook to schedule appointments with me outside of office hours. This is a simple technique that will eliminate back and forth emails. I have created a tutorial video on the Canvas homepage to show you how to do this.

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. ([Affirmation of 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](#). 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](#).

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. 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](#))

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](#). If you have any concerns, you may report to: [Report Concerns](#).

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/

TYPICAL WEEK AT A GLANCE

Mondays

- Readings due & entry task at the beginning of class
- Student discussion leaders provide the political discussion readings to their groups by 5pm

Tuesdays

- **No class** – work on Wednesday's readings and the online discussion

Wednesdays

- Readings due & entry task at the beginning of class
- Discussion post on the small group discussion due by midnight

Thursdays

- **No class** – work on Monday's readings and the online discussion

Fridays

- **No class** – Discussion post on the small group discussion due by midnight

CALENDAR AT A GLANCE (SEE CANVAS FOR UP-TO-DATE SCHEDULE)

Jan 6 – 10: Week 1 (Introduction: What is Political Science? What is Politics?)

Monday, Jan 6

- Opening day (no readings due)

Wednesday, Jan 8

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

Friday, Jan 10

- No online discussion this week

Jan 13 – 17: Week 2 (What is Democracy? More Democracy or Less?)

Monday, Jan 13

- Dahl: Where and How did Democracy Develop – A Brief History (p. 7 – 25)
- Dahl: What is Democracy? & Why Democracy? (p. 35 – 61)
- Watch video on Athenian democracy

Wednesday, Jan 15

- Brennan: Ignorant, Irrational, Misinformed Nationalists (p. 23 – 53)

Friday, Jan 17

- No online discussion this week

WRITE:

TWO QUESTIONS ABOUT THE SYLLABUS

ONE THING THAT EXCITES YOU ABOUT THIS CLASS

ONE THING THAT MAKES YOU NERVOUS ABOUT THIS CLASS
