



# POLS& 101: Introduction to Political Science

## Bellevue College, Spring 2020 (Item 5344)

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### COURSE DETAILS

**Class Sessions:** online and asynchronous  
**E-mail:** david.spataro@bellevuecollege.edu  
**Phone:** (773) 789-8144  
**Office:** working from home

**Instructor:** David Spataro, PhD  
**Office Hours:** M: 01:00P – 03:00P  
W: 11:00A – 12:00P  
Th: 09:00A – 11:00A

### 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. The readings will be available in our Canvas site as PDF documents or as links to websites.

## GRADED WORK

Assessment	Percentage
Reading Quizzes	25%
Normative Discussions	25%
Sharing is Caring Discussions	10%
Effort/Participation	15%
Final Exam	25%
Total	100%

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

**Reading Quizzes:** Every reading in this class has a 10-question open-book, untimed reading quiz. The quizzes are all multiple-choice questions, and most questions are reading comprehension questions.

**Normative Discussion:** Each week we will have an online discussion that explores normative claims, which are claims about what *should* or *ought* to be. The assignment requires one 300 to 350-word post by the end of the week (Sunday), followed by a 100 to 150-word reply by the middle of the subsequent week (Wednesday). Regular participation on this discussion board will be graded in the Effort/Participation grade (see below), while four of the discussions will be formally assessed on a ten-point scale. I will select two of a student's submissions at random. Students will choose their other two discussions that are to be graded.

**Sharing is Caring Discussion:** Beginning in the third week of class, we will have a weekly discussion board for showcasing something from your daily life that connects with the course material. Students will share something three times during the quarter, and we will rotate who shares. Regular participation on this discussion board will be graded in the Effort/Participation grade (see below), and I will formally assess one post out three, chosen by the student.

**Effort/Participation:** This class is asynchronous, but it has a consistent weekly pattern of things due on Wednesday nights and Sunday nights. There are three types of discussion boards: reading questions, normative discussions and sharing is caring discussions. Each required post on these boards is worth 1 point. Students who participate with the minimum requirements will receive a 1.

**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 for this course. 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.

- **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.
- **Canvas discussion policy:** It is very important that students follow basic principles of engagement on Canvas discussions:
  - Firstly, this classroom is not an environment where you are competing with other students. The goal on the normative discussion board is not to win a debate or to “destroy” an opponent with logic. We are all here to succeed and to learn. Please make your point and express your ideas without attempting to bring others down.
  - Secondly, please recognize that we are in the middle of a crisis that is making people more vulnerable than usual, but not everyone will be feeling equally vulnerable. Some students are going to be doing their work, but worried about the health of a family member who is an essential worker. Some students will be grieving after the death of a loved one. Some students will be sick for a significant period of time. Extend kindness and generosity.
  - Thirdly, you are responsible for your behavior on Canvas discussions, and this means that you are responsible for repairing any harm caused by your actions regardless of intention. Although I don’t expect this to be an issue, I have occasionally seen discussions get out of hand. The first step is to avoid this in the first place. However, if something occurs the priority is to take responsibility and repair.
  - Fourthly, if you recognize something going awry in the communication on a discussion board, or sense that it might be going awry, intervene! How should you intervene? Write a post or comment that de-escalates the discussion and moves it in a productive direction. Check in with the individual or individuals directly to see how they are doing. Contact me to give me a head’s up. I don’t always see everything develop in real time on the discussion boards, so please also follow up with me.
  - Fifthly, if you are having trouble with the Canvas discussions, please reach out to me directly.
- **Late work:** All work can be turned in late by the end of the quarter for 80% of the grade. Students do not need to ask or contact me to utilize this policy.

**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.

- **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 have 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:** Students can contact me through my BC phone (which goes to my email inbox), my BC email, or the Canvas mail function (inbox). I have also created a Google voice number that connects directly to my cell (see beginning of the syllabus). 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.

## **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 conscious, 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 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 – 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. 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/](http://bellevuecollege.edu/counseling/)

## **TYPICAL MODULE AT A GLANCE (ONE MODULE PER WEEK)**

Complete these tasks by Wednesday at midnight:

- Watch the brief concepts video (this can be completed any time during the week)
- Complete the reading (~20-25 pages)
- Complete the open book, untimed reading quiz
- Post a question and "like" 2-3 other questions on the reading comprehension discussion
- Watch the video of me answering questions (This is optional and at your discretion)
- Complete a reply to the previous week's normative discussion

Complete these tasks by Sunday at midnight:

- Complete the reading (~20-25 pages)
- Complete the open book, untimed reading quiz
- Post a question and "like" 2-3 other questions on the reading comprehension discussion
- Watch the video of me answering questions (This is optional and at your discretion)
- Complete your post in the normative discussion for this week
- Contribute to the sharing is caring discussion

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

**Week 1:** April 8 – 12 - (Introduction: What is Political Science? What is Politics?)

**Week 2:** April 13 – 19 - (Theories of Democracy)

**Week 3:** April 20 – 26 - (State Sovereignty and Governments)

**Week 4:** April 27 – May 3 - (Institutions and Liberal Democracy)

**Week 5:** May 4 – 10 - (Nations, Nationalism, Ethnicity and Multiculturalism)

**Week 6:** May 11 – 17 - (Race and Gender)

**Week 7:** May 18 – 24 - (Labor, Political Economy and Welfare States)

**Week 8:** May 25 – 31 - (Policing and the Carceral State)

**Week 9:** June 1 – 7 - (International Cooperation and the Environment)

**Week 10:** June 8 – 14 - (Politics of Grief and Affect)

**Week 11:** June 15 – 19 - (Final Exam Week)