



JOHN CABOT UNIVERSITY

COURSE CODE: PL 101

COURSE NAME: Introduction to Political Science

SEMESTER & YEAR: Spring 2018

INSTRUCTOR: Bridget Welsh

EMAIL: bwelsh@johncabot.edu

HOURS: MW 10:00-11:15am

TOTAL NO. OF CONTACT HOURS: 45

CREDITS: 3

PREREQUISITES: None

ROOM: T1.2

OFFICE HOURS: Mondays, 1:00-4:00pm or by appointment, Tiber Campus, PS Office B 4th Flr.

COURSE AIMS:

Students will develop the tools to understand diversity and contemporary global problems, as well as learn analytical skills and problem-solving. This course is ideal for students interested in honing their ability to interpret complex issues, understand the diverse perspectives of stakeholders and develop tools to address real world challenges.

SUMMARY OF COURSE CONTENT:

This course is designed to introduce students to political science. From the onset students will learn how power is studied and practiced and learn tools to better understand the challenges in the modern globalized world. The course will include the basic concepts and theoretical approaches in the study of power and its practice. Among the many important questions, the survey course will examine are the nature of political regimes, human rights, political culture and ideologies, public policy, political participation and institutions, violence and international relations. The level of analyses examined will extend from individual political behavior to governments and states and organizations in the international system. Students will enrich their knowledge and skills that will help them in any career and in becoming more empowered and informed citizens.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

After this course, students should expect to begin thinking, reading, writing and acting as a political scientist!

Specific Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- *Understand a Range of Concepts, Theories and Approaches in Political Science*
- *Appreciate the Diversity of Political Perspectives and Outlooks*
- *Frame Problems from Multiple Perspectives*
- *Construct and Present their Own Interpretations of Political Events*
- *Recognize the Range and Variation in Forms of Political Power*
- *Evaluate Government Approaches to Rights and Justice*
- *Formulate their Own Opinions on Political Issues*

- *Work More Effectively in a Group Dynamic*
- *Research Contemporary Political Issues*

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Class Participation	10%
Field Assignments/In-Class Assignments/Quizzes	20%
(Two) Opinion Pieces	30%
Book Report	10%
Final examination	30%
Total	100%

Protocol for Handing in Written Assignments: *Students must turn in all major written assignments three ways. This assignment must be 1) emailed to the professor, 2) with a hard copy delivered to the political science assignment metal folder outside of the Chair's office on the 2nd floor of the Tiber building by 5pm on the due date and 3) an electronic copy delivered on through MOODLE to TURNITIN. This will require that you set up your own MOODLE account.*

*a) **Class Attendance & Participation** (12.5% of total grade) Students are expected to read all the required reading before class to participate in discussion. Please note that more than **THREE** absences of any class session will significantly lower a student's final participation grade. Regular patterns of tardiness will also negatively affect a student's performance. Class participation will be assessed based on the quality of participation in the class, with higher marks given to students who relate inputs to the course readings and express individual ideas articulately and succinctly. Students are not evaluated on the volume that they say, but the degree to which their participation adds value to the discussion. Students are asked to turn their smart phones and other devices on silent mode and not use them during class time. Laptops are to be used for note-taking, not chatting and emailing during class time. Student distractions that take away from the overall class learning environment are strongly discouraged and will be assessed in class participation performance.*

*b) **Field Assignments/In-Class Learning Assignments/Quizzes** (20% of total grade), As part of the learning process, students will be asked to participate in a series of in-class simulations, outside class interviews/analysis, field trips and problem-solving tasks. These will draw on the assigned course reading. Students will be assessed on their class preparation and the quality of participation in these short assignments. There will be a minimum of three quizzes in the course of the term and they will be unannounced. These will be held in the beginning of class and students who miss these quizzes (even with an excused absence) will not be allowed to take another quiz. The class-related assignments are associated with specific classes/topics and students that miss these classes cannot make up these assignments. The quiz/assignment grade will be the average score of quizzes/assignments taken/completed. These class assignments should be emailed directly to the professor and do not require uploading on Moodle.*

*c) **Opinion Pieces-** (30% of total grade) Students are asked to submit **TWO** opinion pieces that make clear arguments and harness evidence to buttress their positions. The opinion pieces should be succinct and accessible, no more than 800 words (strictly enforced). Students can choose their own topics and should relate their papers to contemporary global political issues. A list of possible topics will be available on Moodle. At least one of these assignments must address issues outside of your country of origin. Assignments will be assessed on individuality, writing, evidence, clarity and effective use of sources. The first paper must be submitted on March 8th and the second on March 27th and follow the protocol for turning in assignments noted above. Students will have the option of a third paper, with the highest two grades used for the final grade. This optional third paper is due April 19th. No late assignments will be accepted. In the beginning of term, there will be a workshop*

to introduce students to how to conduct research in political science with Library staff.

*d) **Book Report** (7.5% of total grade): Students are asked to review the assigned book for the course in 3-5 double-spaced pages (1,500-2000 words). These book reviews must address the political issues in the text and connect these issues to the course material. The review must develop an argument. Reviews will be assessed based on their individuality, clarity, presentation, argument and knowledge of the issues in the book. The book will be discussed at the class dinner on January 31st. This assignment is due by February 5th and should follow the assignment protocol noted above.*

*e) **Final Examination** (30% of the final grade): Students will be required to sit for a final two-hour examination at the end of term. This examination will include identifications, multiple choice questions and short answer questions that assess the comprehension of the course reading and class discussions. The test will include both objective and subjective questions that test knowledge and the ability to formulate analytical responses. The final examination will be held in late April/early May. There will be a special scheduled (optional) class for the exam review.*

Assessment Guidelines for assigning main letter grades: A, B, C, D, and F.

A: *Work of this quality directly addresses the question or problem raised and provides a coherent argument displaying an extensive knowledge of relevant information or content. This type of work demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate concepts and theory and has an element of novelty and originality. There is clear evidence of a significant amount of reading beyond that required for the course.*

B: *This is highly competent level of performance and directly addresses the question or problem raised. There is a demonstration of some ability to critically evaluate theory and concepts and relate them to practice. Discussions reflect the student's own arguments and are not simply a repetition of standard lecture and reference material. The work does not suffer from any major errors or omissions and provides evidence of reading beyond the required assignments.*

C: *This is an acceptable level of performance and provides answers that are clear but limited, reflecting the information offered in the lectures and reference readings.*

D: *This level of performances demonstrates that the student lacks a coherent grasp of the material. Important information is omitted and irrelevant points included. In effect, the student has barely done enough to persuade the instructor that s/he should not fail.*

F: *This work fails to show any knowledge or understanding of the issues raised in the question. Most of the material in the answer is irrelevant.*

Final Grading:

- A: 95-100
- A-: 91-94.99
- B+: 87-90.99
- B: 83-86.99
- B-: 79-82.99
- C+: 75-78.99
- C: 71-74.99
- C-: 67-70.99
- D+: 63-66.99
- D: 59-62.99
- D-: 55-58.99
- F: 0-54.99

In short assignments, grades between two letter grades are often given, indicating a score on the margins of these two letter grades.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are expected to uphold high standards of academic integrity. Plagiarism, cheating and disrespect for diversity of views in the classroom are not acceptable. In the beginning of term, the professor will review different guidelines for research and help familiarize students with the techniques needed for report preparation. Throughout the course, a classroom environment of acceptance, respect and tolerance will be reinforced. Specific task-oriented assignments have been selected to reduce the temptation for students to rely on the ideas of others and tap directly into an individual student's abilities. All written assignments must be turned in to TURNITIN through MOODLE.

INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND EXPECTATIONS

The assignments in this course develop knowledge and skills, with the aim of making students more confident and better prepared to address real world problems they will face. Simultaneously, they introduce students to contemporary problems in the world and teach core material associated with political science. Texts and course material for this course are purposely selected for accessibility. Teaching materials include novels, the course website, in-class simulations and core disciplinary reading material.

CONSULTATIONS

Students are encouraged to meet one-on-one with the professor to discuss course material and their assignments. The professor holds regular office hours where students can meet her. Students are also welcome to schedule an appointment, but should provide at least two different alternatives to be accommodated for a meeting outside of office hours. Students are encouraged to book their time early. During term, students should expect a response to their emails within three business days.

STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES

John Cabot University does not discriminate on the basis of disability or handicap. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the university website for the complete policy.

CLASS SESSIONS

Class sessions will be held for two and a half hours per week, with each session one hour and fifteen minutes. Each session will combine lectures, discussions, and group activities focused on the assigned topics.

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

*Students will be expected to read all the assigned reading before class. Students should concentrate on the reading with the * as this will be prioritized in exams and discussions. All the course reading will be available in the Library or available via MYJCU or Moodle. Additional optional reading material will also be made available during the course of term. Students are expected to keep informed of political events by reading the New York Times, and other similar news reports. The required book is available for purchase at the Almost Corner bookstore in Trastevere.*

Required for Purchase:

*Imbolo Mbue, *Behold the Dreamers*. (New York: Random House, 2017)*

WEEKLY LESSONS AND READINGS

Please note that due to the scheduling of Malaysia's General Elections, classes this term may have to be rescheduled.

WEEK 1 (January 14-20) Introducing Political Science

Thematic Questions: What is politics? How do you study politics?

Session 1 (January 15) Course Introduction

Students are asked to read the *NY Times* before each class, including this one.

Session 2 (January 17) Comparative Method

*Richard Rose. "Comparing Forms of Comparative Analysis" *Political Studies* 39 (3) (1991): 446-62.

WEEK 2 (January 21-27) State Formation and States

Thematic Question: How were modern states formed? How does state formation affect politics?

Session 3 (January 22) Understanding the 'State'

*Max Weber. "What is a State?" in Roy C. Macridis and Bernard E. Brown, *Comparative Politics: Notes and Readings, Eighth Edition*. (Belmont, MA: Wadsworth Publishing Co, 1996), pp. 84-87.

Clifford Geertz. *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth Century Bali*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), pp. 11-25.

Session 4 (January 24) States Formation and its Diversity

*Francis Fukuyama, *The Origins of Political Order: From Pre-human Times to the French Revolution*, (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2012), pp. 245-289.

Jeffrey Herbst. *States and Power in Africa*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000), pp. 11-31.

WEEK 3 (January 28-February 3) Political Regimes & Political Development

Thematic Questions: How do dictatorships differ from democracies? How do regimes change?

Session 5 (January 29) No Class Make-up with Course Fieldtrip

Session 6: (January 31) Regimes and Regime Change

Amartya Sen. "Democracy as a Universal Value." *Journal of Democracy* (1999) 10 (3):3-17

*James Hyland, *Democratic Theory: The Philosophical Foundations* (Manchester, 1995), Chapter 2, pp. 36-50.

*Larry Diamond. *The Spirit of Democracy*, (New York: Times Book, 2008) Chapter 4, pp. 88-105.

Fareed Zakaria. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy," *Foreign Affairs* 76(6) (1997): 22-43.

****Course Dinner Discussion of Behold the Dreamers, Wednesday, January 31st, 7:30pm****

WEEK 4 (February 4-10) Political Ideology

Thematic Question: How and why do political ideas differ? How do different political approaches shape public policy?

Session 7 (February 5): What is Ideology

*Leon P. Baradat, In *Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact*. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2000), pp. 4-12, 162-182.

*****Book Review Due, Monday, February 5th by 5pm*****

Session 8 (February 7) Learning how to Do Research Session

In-class Library Presentation on How to Conduct Research

WEEK 5 (February 11-17) Political Institutions and Representation

Thematic Question: How do formal political institutions work and differ? How do citizens vote and why?

Session 9 (February 12) Checks and Balances and Political Institutions

*Alexander Hamilton, James Madison and John Jay. *The Federalist Papers* (London/New York: Penguin, 1987), Federalist 10 and 51

*Alfred Stepan and Cindy Skach. "Constitutional Frameworks and Democratic Consolidation: Presidentialism versus Parliamentarianism," *World Politics*, 46 (October, 1993): 1-22.

Session 10 (February 14) Voting and Political Representation

Justin Fisher et. al. *The Routledge Handbook of Elections, Voting Behavior and Public Opinion*. (London: Routledge 2018), Chapter 2 (Hutchings and Jefferson), pp. 21-29 and Chapter 10 (Evans and Ball), pp. 123-136.

Session 11 (February 16) Class Field Trip 8:30-10:30am

WEEK 6 (February 18-24) Political Identities and Political Participation

Thematic Question: Why and how do people participate in politics?

Session 12 (February 19): Political Identities

*Ta-Nehisi Coates. *Between the World and Me*. (NY: Spiegel & Grau, 2015), pp. 1-39

Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie *We Should All be Feminists*, (NY: Anchor, 2015), pp. 7-25.

Session 13 (February 21) Repertoires of Political Participation

*Sylvia Bashevin. "Interest Groups and Social Movements," in Lawrence Le Duc, Richard G. Niemi and Pippa Norris (eds.) *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in Global Perspective*. (London: Sage Publications, 1996), pp. 134-159.

Field Assignment 1: Students are asked to interview three Italians from different backgrounds regarding the Italian elections.

WEEK 7 (February 25-March 3) Religion and Nationalism

Thematic Questions: How does political identity evolve and impact politics?

Session 14 (February 26) Populism, Nationalism and Political Identity

*Benedict Anderson. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. (London: Verso, 1991), pp. 1-7

Adam Hochschild. *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Horror, Terrorism and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1999), pp. 1-33.

Benjamin Moftitt & Simon Tormey (2014). "Rethinking Populism: Politics, Mediatisation and Political Style," *Political Studies* 62, 2 (2014): 381-97.

Session 15 (February 28) Religion and Politics

*Samuel Huntington. *Clash of Civilizations*. (New York: Touchstone (Simon Schuster), 1996), pp. 19-39.

WEEK 8 (March 4-10) Political Economy & Development

Thematic Questions: How does politics affect the economy and visa versa? Why are some countries more economically developed than others?

Session 16 (March 5) The Politics of the Economy

*Thomas Oatley, *International Political Economy*, 5th Edition. (New York: Longman, 2011), pp. 1-20.

Session 17 (March 7) Development

*Alan Thomas. "Meaning and Views of Development," in Tim Allen and Alan Thomas. (eds.) *Poverty and Development into the 21st Century*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 23-48.

*****First Think Piece Due, Thursday, March 8th, 5pm *****

WEEK 9 (March 11-17) Human Rights and Political Conflict

Thematic Question: What are human rights and human rights problems?

Session 18 (March 12) Introducing Human Rights

*Jack Donnelly. *Universal Human Rights in Theory and Practice*. 2nd Edition. (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), pp. 7-21.

Micheline R. Ishay. *The Human Rights Reader*. (New York: Routledge, 1997), pp. 1-5, 42-55, 56-59, 199-200, 424-40, 461-68

***Session 19 (March 14) Political Violence Repertoires and Causes**

*Earl Conteh-Morgan, *Collective Political Violence: An Introduction to the Theories and Cases of Violent Conflicts* (New York: Routledge, 2003), Chapter 1.

Paul Collier and Ian Bannon. *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy* (Washington, DC: World Bank Publication, 2003), Chapter 1

WEEK 10 (March 18-) Contemporary Conflict and Violence

Thematic Questions: Is conflict bad? Why does violence occur?

****Session 20 (March 19) Case Study Syria**

Samer Abboud, "How Syria Fell to Pieces," *Current History*, (December 2015), pp. 337-342.

(March 21) No Class. Make up Earlier in Semester with Field Trip

WEEK 11 (March 25-31) International Cooperation and War

Thematic Question: Why do states cooperate and how?

Session 21 (March 26) War

Robert Jervis, "Theories of War in an Era of Leading-Power Peace." *American Political Science Review* (2002) 96 (1):1-14.

*Hans Morgenthau. "Chapter 1: A Realist Theory of International Politics," *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*. (Boston: McGraw Hill, 1992 (1948)), pp. 3-16.

Session 22 (March 28) Cooperation – or Lack Thereof

David Wallace-Wells, “The Uninhabitable Earth,” *New York Magazine*, July 9, 2017

<http://nymag.com/daily/intelligencer/2017/07/climate-change-earth-too-hot-for-humans.html>

Robinson Meyer, “Is the Earth Really That Doomed,” *The Atlantic*, July 10, 2017,

<https://www.theatlantic.com/science/archive/2017/07/is-the-earth-really-that-doomed/533112/>

Helen Fountain and Nadja Popovich, 9 Takeaways from the National Climate Report, *New York Times*, August 8, 2017.

<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/08/08/climate/nine-takeaways-climate-report.html?action=click&contentCollection=climate®ion=rank&module=package&version=highlights&contentPlacement=2&pgtype=sectionfront>

*****2nd Think Piece Due, Tuesday, March 27th, 5pm*****

WEEK 12 (April 1-7) Spring Break. No Class.

WEEK 13 (April 8-14) Foreign Policy in Practice (Course Simulation Exercise)

Session 25 (April 9) International Crisis Simulation I

Session 26 (April 11) International Crisis Simulation II

WEEK 14 (April 15-21) Globalization and Terrorism

Session 27 (April 16) Globalization, Internet and Social Media

*Philip Howard and Muzammil M. Hussain. *Democracy’s Fourth Wave: Digital Media and the Arab Spring*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), Chapter 1

Andrew Chadwick, *The Hybrid Media System: Politics and Power* (Second Edition) (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017), Chapter 10 on Trump Campaign.

“Do social media threaten democracy?” *The Economist*, Nov 4, 2017.

<https://www.economist.com/news/leaders/21730871-facebook-google-and-twitter-were-supposed-save-politics-good-information-drove-out>

Session 28 (April 18) Terrorism and Non-State Actors

Jessica Stern. *Terror in the Name of God: Why Religious Militants Kill*. (New York: Harper Perennial, 2004), pp. 9-31

*****Optional Third Think Piece Due Thursday, April 19th by 5pm *****

WEEK 15 (April 22-28) Reflections and Review

Session 29 (April 23) Course Review

WEEK 16 (April 29-May 5) Final Examination TBD