Course description

The aim of this course is to get excited about political science! This means introducing students to the research questions that political scientists ask and the ways they go about answering those questions. This process gives us something informative to say about politics. Students will familiarize themselves with the discipline and the research process 1) by learning about the different, but overlapping subfields within the political science discipline, and 2) by comprehending and practicing the research designs and methods used in the discipline.

Course objectives

Students will:

- Develop a working knowledge of the questions studied by political scientists
- Formulate research questions with their peers and individually
- Learn about the analytical tools and data used by political scientists
- Learn the course material by working independently and with a group
- Improve critical thinking and communication skills by considering the breadth of scholarship produced by political scientists and the research approaches they use

Course texts

You are required to gain access to the two books listed below. They are available at the campus bookstore.


Other assigned readings can be located via ELearning Commons or with links provided in the syllabus.

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1 Instructor reserves the right to modify the syllabus as needed.
Assignments and grading

Exams 1 & 2 (40% total, 20% each)
Anything from the assigned readings and discussed during class is considered fair game to show up on the exam.

Research design assignments (30% total, 10% each)
You will work in groups of two or three students on three research assignments. I will assign students to groups during the first few weeks of the semester. You’ll receive feedback from peers and the professor at each stage. These assignments will require a substantial amount of brainstorming and a relatively small amount of concise, clear writing.

Assignment 1: Research question and concepts
Assignment 2: Annotated bibliography and hypothesis
Assignment 3: Research design

Each group will submit one paper, per assignment. Additional details will be available via eLearning Commons and provided by the professor throughout the short semester.

Political scientist group presentation (10%)
We will spend time learning about the discipline of political science by learning about the research of contemporary political scientists and how it relates to our studies and our lives. During the second week of class, groups will sign up for presentation slots. Each group will give a presentation (about 15 minutes) on a political scientist (chosen from a list provided by the professor) and their research. Additional assignment details will be provided and available on eLearning Commons.

Literature review (20%)
Students will complete a literature review of a topic in political science. This assignment allows students to explore a research question in some depth, discovering past and current work and remaining puzzles. Students may write their literature review based on questions developed through their group work, but each student must complete their own literature review independently at the end of the semester. Additional details will be available via eLearning Commons and provided by the professor throughout the short semester.

Administrative Items

ELearning
You will submit writing assignments and locate additional reading assignments for our class via the ELearning Commons (https://uga.view.usg.edu/). You should sign into the ELearning Commons using your UGA MyId and password. If you are registered for the class, the course link should show up on your ELearning Commons homepage. I may post additional documents useful for your class, so you will want to check in throughout the semester.
**Missed deadlines**
If you have a conflict with a due date or will miss class repeatedly, please come talk to me about it as soon as you know about it. This way we can work something out and your grade may not suffer. If you have an emergency conflict (i.e. personal, family or medical emergencies), you should e-mail me within the week of the missed due date to discuss the timely completion of the assignment. Documentation is required for make-up exams. If you miss a deadline for a non-emergency, most assignments (NOT exams) can still be completed and will be accepted for up to a week—but they will be penalized a letter grade for every additional day late.

**Classroom safety**
If the fire alarm sounds, we will exit the building and reassemble across the street (Jackson) to make sure everyone exited the building. If there is a tornado warning, we will move downstairs to shelter and account for everyone. If you have concerns about other emergencies or if you have special circumstances that I need to know about in case of an emergency, please speak to me after class. If you have questions about evacuation locations or shelter locations, contact OEP (Office of Emergency Preparedness).

**Disability resource center**
If you anticipate needing classroom or exam accommodations due to the impact of a disability or medical condition, you must register for services with the Disability Resource Center. Additional information can be found here: [http://drc.uga.edu/](http://drc.uga.edu/)

**Withdrawal policy**
Undergraduate students can only withdraw from four courses and receive a withdrawal-passing (WP) grade while enrolled at the University. Students can drop any class without penalty during the drop/add period at the beginning of every semester. Dropped courses during the drop/add period do not qualify as withdrawals. Instructors have the ability to withdraw a student from the class due to excessive absences. Please carefully review the policy in its entirety here: [http://www.reg.uga.edu/policies/withdrawals](http://www.reg.uga.edu/policies/withdrawals)

**UGA culture of honesty policy**
The policy is in place to encourage academic honesty among students, faculty and other members of the university community. You and I are responsible for knowing and complying with the policy and procedures. Academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, cheating and much more. It’s in your best interest to understand what constitutes dishonest work, as defined by the University. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an F for the course, and their names will be forwarded to the University. Please carefully review the policy in its entirety here: [https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy](https://ovpi.uga.edu/academic-honesty/academic-honesty-policy)
Tentative Course Outline

Week 1.

Tuesday, August 15
- Course syllabus

Thursday, August 17
- “How Political Scientists Conquered Washington”
  (http://www.vox.com/2014/9/2/6088485/how-political-science-conquered-washington)
- “Why political science is not an election casualty”
- Van Belle Introduction

Week 2.

Tuesday, August 22
- Van Belle Chapters 1 and 15
- Baglione Chapter 1

Thursday, August 24
- Van Belle Chapter 2
- Van Belle Chapter 3
- “The Psychology Behind Why Some Kids Go Unvaccinated”
  (http://www.npr.org/2015/02/04/383724467/the-psychology-behind-why-some-kids-go-unvaccinated)
- Baglione Chapter 1

Week 3.

Tuesday, August 29
- Van Belle Chapter 4
- Baglione Chapter 2

Thursday, August 31
- Baglione Chapter 2
- Political scientist presentation 1

Week 4.

Tuesday, September 5
- Van Belle Chapter 5

Thursday, September 7
- Baglione Chapter 3
- Political scientist presentation 2
Week 5.

Tuesday, September 12
- Baglione Chapter 3
- “As A Major Retraction Shows, We’re All Vulnerable To Faked Data” (http://fivethirtyeight.com/datalab/as-a-major-retraction-shows-were-all-vulnerable-to-faked-data/)
- “Study Using Gay Canvassers Erred in Methods, Not Results, Author Says” (http://www.nytimes.com/2015/05/30/science/michael-lacour-gay-marriage-science-study-retraction.html?_r=0)
- Research assignment 1 due

Thursday, September 14
- Van Belle Chapter 6
- Baglione Chapter 3
- Political scientist presentation 3

Week 6.

Tuesday, September 19
- Van Belle Chapter 6

Thursday, September 21
- Van Bell Chapter 7
- Political scientist presentation 4

Week 7.

Tuesday, September 26 – Exam 1

Thursday, September 28
- Baglione Chapters 4
- Political scientist presentation 5
Week 8.

Tuesday, October 3
- Van Belle Chapter 8

Thursday, October 5
- Baglione Chapter 5
- Political scientist presentation 6

Week 9.

Tuesday, October 10
- Van Belle Chapter 9
- Baglione Chapter 5

Thursday, October 12
- Baglione Chapter 6
- Political scientist presentation 7

Week 10.

Tuesday, October 17
- Van Belle Chapter 10
- Baglione Chapter 6
- Research assignment 2 due

Thursday, October 19
- Political scientist presentation 8

Week 11.

Tuesday, October 24
- Baglinone Chapter 7

Thursday, October 26
- Baglinone Chapter 7
Week 12.

Tuesday, October 31
- Van Belle Chapter 11
- “Political Polarization in the American Public” (http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/)

Thursday, November 2
- “No, we’re not arguing from the same facts. How can democracies make good decisions if citizens are misinformed?” (http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/wp/2015/07/21/no-were-not-arguing-from-the-same-facts-how-can-democracies-make-good-decisions-if-citizens-are-misinformed/)

Week 13.

Tuesday, November 7
- http://libguides.libraries.wsu.edu/c.php?g=616286&p=4287809
- https://www.allides.com/
- Van Belle Chapter 12

Thursday, November 9
- Van Belle Chapter 12

Week 14.

Tuesday, November 14
- Baglione Chapter 8

Thursday, November 16
- Baglione Chapter 8
- Qualitative research selection
- Van Belle Chapter 14
- Research assignment 3 due
Week 15.

Tuesday, November 21 – NO CLASS/THANKSGIVING BREAK

Thursday, November 23 – NO CLASS/THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 16.

Tuesday, November 28
- Baglione Chapter 9
- Van Belle Chapter 15
- Baglione Chapter 4

Thursday, November 30 – Exam 2

Week 17/18.

Finals period, Thursday, December 7 – Wednesday, December 13

Final exam date/time, Tuesday, December 12, 12:00PM – 3:00PM

List of Due Dates

Exam 1 – Tuesday, September 26
Exam 2 – Thursday, November 30
Literature review – Tuesday, December 12, 12:00PM – 3:00PM

Research assignment 1 – Tuesday, September 12
Research assignment 2 – Tuesday, October 17
Research assignment 3 – Thursday, November 16

Political scientist presentations – Thursday, August 31
Thursday, September 7
Thursday, September 14
Thursday, September 21
Thursday, September 28
Thursday, October 5
Thursday, October 12
Thursday, October 19

Pop quizzes – 😊