THE DISCIPLINE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
POLITICAL SCIENCE 514
FALL 2014, HS 012
M 2:45-4:35PM
CLASS NUMBER 5780

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Office Hours: Monday 5-6 in Milne 221; Wednesday 9:00-11:00 in uptown Contact Office HU 016 and also by appointment.

Class is graded on the A-E scale

Congratulations. You have been accepted to the graduate program in political science at SUNY/Albany, and here you are. You are looking forward to your classes and your course of study because after all, it is your subject matter interest that led you to graduate school in the first place. At the same time, you’re a little unsure—perhaps even somewhat anxious—about what is expected of you, how you will manage the new workload and how you will fit in with other graduate students and the faculty.

This course has three purposes. As you are going through your first graduate semester, the first aim of the course is to broaden your perspective on the field of political science. What has been the history of the field, and in what ways are political scientists of today impacted by the ways the discipline developed? What are the various subfields within political science, and what are some of the core questions and methodologies of each? How do we compare and contrast the approaches most prominent in each subfield?

A second aim of the course is to help you to start thinking about yourself as a professional political scientist. What do working political scientists actually do? What issues do they face? How do they balance professional and personal commitments? Particularly, how do they get jobs after graduate school?

Finally, this course offers you a chance to, in conjunction with other members of your cohort, reflect on the ongoing set of new experiences you face as you transition into the graduate student phase of your life.

Thus, the objectives of the class include:
- To provide you with some history and background about the discipline of political science and its development.
- To introduce you to the major subfields in the discipline and some core concepts and methodologies of each.
To begin to “socialize” you to life as a professional political scientist.
- To give you a chance to reflect on your experiences as you go through your first graduate school semester.

Course Readings


Article packet available on Blackboard.
(Optional) Join the APSA at [https://www.apsanet.org/content_5748.cfm?navID=1028](https://www.apsanet.org/content_5748.cfm?navID=1028)

Requirements

1. Weekly Reaction Papers: 20% (1-2 pages, due before class by email. You get one bye week, and none will be due after 11/10).*
2. History of the Field Assignment: 15% (approx. 7 pages. Due Friday 10/3 by midnight).
3. Subfield comparison in-class presentation: 15% (Due 11/17).
5. Attendance, class participation and short in-class assignments: 20% (As students in a graduate seminar, your participation in class is required and expected. Please notify me before class if extenuating—and they need to really be extenuating-- circumstances make it impossible for you to attend).
6. One-on-one meeting with the instructor twice during the semester: 5%.

*Reaction Papers*

In a couple of solid paragraphs, raise and explain a central controversy, debate or key point of interest highlighted in the week’s reading. Thereafter, be sure to critique each weeks reading with what you think of the author’s argument. If there is a debate, who do you agree with more? Also, include one or two discussion questions which follow from your discussion above and which you think it is important for the class to consider.
Please turn in by email to sfriedman2@albany.edu before the seminar begins.
You get one bye week.

Policies

*Students with Disabilities:*
If you need any class accommodations due to a disability, please utilize University resources as needed, and please let the professor know well in advance of any
assignments requiring accommodation(s). It is a function of the University to provide such accommodations as needed.

Plagiarism and Academic Honesty:
The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Plagiarism is the use of someone else's work, words, or ideas as if they were your own without giving the original author credit by citing him or her. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please contact me before submitting assignments for grading. Plagiarism violations will result in disciplinary action.

Additionally, it goes without saying that students are expected to meet the broader standards of academic honesty expected of students at a major university.

See link on University policy: http://www.albany.edu/eas/104/penalty.htm
See also the UAlbany Library “Plagiarism 101” Tutorial:
http://library/albany.edu/usered/tut.html

Course Outline

Part I. History of Political Science: From the Theory of the State to Post-Behavioralism

8/25 Introduction (no reading) & New Student Orientation

9/1 NO CLASS – LABOR DAY

9/8 History of the Field
- Robert Putnam, The Public Role of Political Science (presidential address to the American Political Science Association, 2002)
- James Farr and Raymond Seidelman, parts 1 & 2 – read all paying particular attention to the editors’ introductions and at least 5 articles

9/15 Development of the Field
- Farr and Seidelman, parts 3 & 4 –same instructions as above

9/22 How Political Scientists Have Approached a Contemporary Concern: The Consequences of Income Inequality
- PS: Political Science and Politics Symposium on Income Inequality and American Political Science, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Jan., 2006). See Black Board for complete list of articles. Skim these, but read 5 closely—which do you find most relevant/interesting?
- Bring in one news article of your choice on income inequality from the past year
to share and discuss.

**9/29  Current Issues in the Discipline (History Paper Due 10/3 by Midnight)**
- Frank Goodnow, 1903, “The Work of the American Political Science Association: Presidential Address”
- Theodore Lowi, 1991, “The State in Political Science: How We Become What We Study”
- Robert Axelrod, 2007, “Political Science and Beyond: Presidential Address to the American Political Science Association”
- Pick another APSA presidential address of your choice.
- APSA Presidential Addresses are available at: http://www.apsanet.org/content_2936.cfm but these are on blackboard

**Part II: Introduction to the Subfields of Political Science**

**10/6 International Relations**
- Robert Keohane’s piece on international institutions, (link forthcoming).

**10/13 Comparative Politics: Conflict, Identity, and Politics**
- Clifford Bob, “Marketing Rebellion”
- Victor Asal, Richard Legault, Ora Szekely, and Jonathan Wilkenfeld, “Contentious Choices”
- Alexander Moytl, “Imagined Communities, Rational Choosers, Invented Ethnes”

**10/20 American Politics: Representation in a Pluralistic Society**
- Susan Carroll, “Representing Women”
- Michelle Swers, “Transforming the Agenda”
- David Leal, “Latino Public Opinion: Does it Exist?”
- José Cruz, “Pluralism and Ethnicity in New York City Politics”

**10/27 Public Law: Redefining Law and Politics**
- Jeffrey Segal, “Judicial Behavior”
- Mark Graber, “Legal, Strategic, or Legal Strategy”
- Julie Novkov, review essay, Law and Social Inquiry (paper)
- Matthew Ingram, “Crafting Courts in New Democracies: Ideology and Judicial Council Reform in three Mexican States”
- Stephan Stohler, Slavery and Just Compensation in American Constitutionalism (paper)

11/3  Political Theory: Interpretation, Ideology, and History
- Charles Taylor, “Interpretation and the Sciences of Man”
- Quentin Skinner, “Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas”

11/10 Public Policy: The Relationship between Policy and Politics
- Frank Baumgartner and Bryan D. Jones, Agendas and Instability in American Politics (excerpts)
- Paul Pierson, Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis (excerpts)
- Patricia Strach, All in the Family (excerpts)
- Peter Gourevitch, Politics in Hard Times (excerpts)

11/17 Presentations (Compare Across Subfields Assignment)

Part III: Professionalization

11/24 Seminar on Writing
- Tarshis, Barry, How to Be your Own Best Editor: The Toolkit for Everyone that Writes (1998)

12/1  Professional Development & Career Discussion (format to be announced)

12/8  Review and Conclusion; Take-home Final Exam Handed Out.

12/15 Final Exam Due