

POLI 3493: Political Inquiry II

(Fall 2023)

Instructor: Dr. Carlos Pessoa

Classroom: Sir James Dunn Building 101

Class Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:35am

Office Location: Henry Hicks building, room 352

Office Hours: Thursdays 1:00, online using Teams App.

Email: cr966457@dal.ca

In order to get a response from your instructor, you need to include the following in your email: full name, student number and the course number. You also need to use the student's official Dalhousie email account.

Besides by email, I am available for virtual meetings on anything from the course structure and content, to discuss questions about assignments. We can hold these meetings by the use of Team App.

DESCRIPTION

This course examines key philosophical issues in the analysis of politics. The course differentiates from other political science courses, which focus on institutions (parliament, political parties, etc.), institutional power (legislature, executive, etc.) and political processes (electoral system, public policy, etc.), in so far as it examines the philosophical background of key approaches and theoretical frameworks. The general aim is to understand how political enquiry is carried out at a qualitative level.

We start by discussing various definitions of politics and how - together with scientific thought – they set the basic analytical parameters of political science. We then examine the debate of structure and agency, which often shapes how explanations can focus on political actors or their surrounding context. Discussions, then, turn towards analyses of how political systems are able to maintain themselves in place or suffer rupture and dramatic changes.

This course is heavily focused on the theoretical approaches from which political enquiries are made. We discuss Marxism, Rational Choice Theory, Institutionalism, Feminism, Poststructuralist thought and Social Constructivism. The aim is to create a strong conceptual base to carry out political analysis.

The second part of the course discusses the difference between ontology, epistemology and methodology in Political Science. It is important for students to

understand questions on the nature of political and social relations, how knowledge is established and methods to carry out political inquiry.

OBJECTIVES

- To introduce key concepts, approaches and themes in the analysis of politics.
- To introduce theoretical tools with which one can make critical analysis in the domain of politics.
- To enable students to proceed into further study of the various areas of political science at graduate level.

Textbook

There is only one textbook for the courses.

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), **Theory and Method in Political Science** 4th edition (New York, Palgrave, 2017).

Other books that add readings to the textbooks are the following two found in the Reserve room in the Killiam Library:

Colin Hay, **Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction** (New York: Palgrave, 2002).

Robert A. Dahl & Bruce Stinebrickner, **Modern Political Analysis**, *sixth edition* (Upper Saddle River: Prentice Hall, 2003).

There are other readings that can be found in the Brightspace component of the course.

Assignments

Exam I (October 19): 25%

Exam II (TBA by Register Office): 25%

Each of the exams is based on reading lecture notes up to the exam. Exam I will be held in-class. The location and time of Exam II will be set by the register office. Exams are correct according to class notes and textbook readings only. In other words, it is an exam about the topics of this course discussed only in this course and from no other source outside of this course. This basically means any point brought out to answer the question from other sources will be graded as incorrect.

Reading Review (October 12): 10%

You are required to write one reading review for this course. The Reading Review should consist of a summary from the weekly assigned chapter of the textbook AND your point of view on the topic. It should demonstrate you have read the chapter and have thought about some of the discussed points. The length of the review should be about 1200 words.

Research Paper (November 9): 40%

To be able to write a paper is an important skill for an academic life. Students are required to write a fully written 3000 words paper (typed, double-spaced, 12cpi, one-inch margin, paginated) on one of the questions assigned by the professor, or on a topic approved by the professor. It is imperative that the paper use ONE of the theories discussed in the course. Not making any reference to any of the theories discussed in this course, will automatically lead to F for this assignment. No other theories, outside the scope of theoretical discussions in this course, will be accepted as valid theoretical component for this assignment.

This assignment requires proper use of citations throughout the text, the APA citation style. The Paper Grading Rubric, as well as, possible topics are uploaded in the Brightspace.

The assignment requires a minimum of six peer-reviewed sources, which should not be drawn from the course lectures or textbook. All sources for this assignment must be academic in nature and not be drawn from non-academic sources. Less than required paper length and required peer-reviewed sources, leads automatically to an F for the assignment.

Late papers will be penalized 5% per day, for a maximum of three normal calendar days, after which the assignment will receive 0%.

Grade Scale

Grade Scale and definitions can be found in the following link:

https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/grades-and-student-records/grade-scale-and-definitions.html

ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation – Form A.

A note taker may be required as part of a student's accommodation. There is an honorarium of \$75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to be checked

electronically for originality. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.

Class Representative

There is a class representative from which students can contact with concerns regards class lectures, assignments, class notes, or any issue regard this class or the instructor professional capacity. The class representative will then let the instructor be aware of the issue in an anonymous manner. This create a safe way for students to bring up ANY issue without concern of repercussions to their grades.

COURSE PROGRAM

September 5 & 7: Introduction Week

During our first day, the instructor will give a thorough explanation on the expectations of the course and its assignments. This is a very important class, please try to participate.

The second day of the week, we will familiarize ourselves with the course component of Brightspace. It is an important day to attend class.

September 12 & 14: Defining Politics and Theory

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 1: introduction.

September 19 & 21: Analytical Strategies and the Social Structures and Agency debate

Readings:

Stuart McAnnula, 'Structure and Agency', in David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* second edition (New York, Palgrave, 2002).

Colin Hay, *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*, chapter 1.

September 26 & 28: Rational Choice Theory

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 3.

October 3 & 5: Marxism Theory

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 7.

October 10& 12: Feminism

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 6.

October 17 Revision for Exam I

October: 19: Exam I

October 24 & 26: Institutionalism

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 4.

James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, 'Elaborating the New Institutionalism', in R. E. Goodin (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Political Science*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011.

November 31 & 2: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology (Qualitative Methods)

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 11 & 14

Colin Hay, 'Political Ontology', in R. E. Gordin & C. Tilly(eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006.

November 7 & 9: Poststructuralism

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 8.

Colin Hay, *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*, chapter 7.

November 13 - 17: Fall Break

November 21 & 23: Social Constructivism

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 5.

Courtney Jung, 'Race, Ethnicity and Religion', R. E. Gordin & C. Tilly(eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006.

November 28 & 30: Conclusion: Political Science in Times of Populism and War (revision and course evaluation)

Reading: Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, "The Relevance of Political Science today"

