

POLI 3493: Political Inquiry II

Winter 2019

Tuesdays & Thursdays 10:05-11:25AM

LSC Common Area C236

Instructor: Dr. Carlos Pessoa

Office: Henry Hicks, room 360

Office Hours: Tuesdays 11:30-12:30pm

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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 theoretical approaches, from which political enquiries are made. We discuss Marxism, Rational Choice Theory, Institutionalism, Feminism, Poststructuralist thought, Political Psychology and Constructivism. The aim is to create a strong conceptual base to carry out political analysis.

The last part of the course discuss 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. We look at Qualitative and Comparative methods for our last two classes, examining topics such as democratization and political regimes.

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.

Textbook

There is only one textbook for the courses. The textbook is available at the Dalhousie University Bookstore, located at the Student Union Building (902-494.2426).

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stoker (edit.), **Theory and Method in Political Science** 4th edition (New York, Palgrave, 2018).

The following books can be found at the Reserve Room, Killam Memorial Library (6225 University Avenue).

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 also other readings, which can be found in the brightspace component of the course.

Assignments

Exam I (February 14): 30%

Exam II: (TBA by the Registrar Office): 30%

Each of the exams is based on readings and lecture notes up to the exam. The Exam II will be scheduled by the Registrar's Office. They shall be written in pen.

Paper: 30%

To be able to write a paper is an important skill for an academic life. Students are required to write an eight-page 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. This assignment requires time in the library and the proper use of citations throughout the text. *The assignment requires a minimum of four sources, which should not be drawn from the course lectures or textbook.*

The student is responsible to keep an extra copy of the paper, in case the professor requests it. *Failure to provide an extra copy of the paper on request will lead to an 'F' for the assignment.*

The essay is due in class March 21. *Late papers will be penalized 5% per day, for a maximum of three days, after which the assignment will received 0%.*

Participation (10%)

Participation is important in this course. Attendance is taken five times, *randomly*, each worth 2%. In order to receive the full 10% of the participation mark, students must be in class when attendance is taken at any given time.

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

In-class Etiquette rules

The following are *prohibited* in the classroom:

- Speaking or text messaging on the phone
- The use laptop is restricted during the time of lecture
- Listening to music
- Reading unless requested by the professor
- Eating food
- Frequent entering and exiting the classroom
- Chatting with friends and other distracting behavior

Please be sure to follow these rules. You will be asked to leave otherwise and may receive 'F' as final letter grade for the course.

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.

Email Communication

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 of importance. You also need to use student's official Dalhousie email account.

COURSE PROGRAM

January 8: Introduction

We start with a thorough explanation on the expectations of the course and its assignments.

It is important for student to be familiar with Brightspace. Any question to this device should be asked at this very first day.

January 10: Defining Politics

Readings:

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

Robert A. Dahl & Bruce Stinebrickner, *Modern Political Analysis*, sixth edition chapter 3.

January 15 & 17: On Analytical Strategies, Social Structures and Agency

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.

January 22 & 24: On Explaining Political Changes

Readings:

Colin Hay, *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*, chapter 4.

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 16.

January 29 & 31: Marxism Theory

Readings:

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

February 5: Rational Choice Theory

Readings:

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

February 7: 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.

February 12 Revision for exam I

February 14: Exam I

Duration: One hour and 15 minutes

Format: Short-answers (no multiple-choices questions)

February 18-22: Winter Break

February 26: Feminism

Readings:

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

February 28: 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.

March 5 & 7: Political Psychology

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 9

Kathleen M. McGraw, 'Why and How Psychology Matters', in R. E. Goodin & C. Tilly(eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006.

March 12 & 14: 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. Goodin & C. Tilly(eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006.

March 19 & 21: Ontology, Epistemology and Methodology in Political Science

Readings:

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

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

March 26: Qualitative Methods

Readings:

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

March 28: Comparative Method

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 16.

April 2: Conclusion: The importance of political science today!

Readings:

Vivien Lowndes, David Marsh & Gerry Stroker (edit.), *Theory and Method in Political Science* 4th edition, chapter 19.

April 4: Revision & Course Evaluation