

POLI 3493: Political Inquiry II

(Fall 2021)

Instructor: Dr. Carlos Pessoa

Classroom: Sir James Dunn Building 101

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:35 – 9:55am

Office Hours & Location: YET TO BE DETERMINED

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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 student's official Dalhousie email account.

DESCRIPTION

We are in the area of offering explanations. Explanations about politics. 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 and Social Constructivism. The aim is to create a strong conceptual base to carry out political analysis.

The second 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.

OBJECTIVES

- To introduce keys 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, 2018).

Other books that add readings to the textbooks are the following two. However, due to exceptional circumstances accessibility of these might be difficult.

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: 30%

Exam II: 30%

Each of the exam is based on readings and lecture notes up to the exam. Each of the exam, you have a full week to write it. The exam is about 2 hours.

Research Paper (November 23): 40%

To be able to write a paper is an important skill for an academic life. Students are required to write a fully written eight-pages 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 proper use of citations throughout the text, the APA citation style. Paper Rubric and possible topics are uploaded in the Brightspace.

The assignment requires a minimum of four sources, which should not be drawn from the course lectures or textbook. Students are also 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.

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

COURSE PROGRAM

September 7 & 9: 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.

September 14 & 16: Defining Politics and Theory

Readings:

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

September 21 & 23: 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 28 & 30: Rational Choice Theory

Readings:

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

October 5 & 7: Marxism Theory

Readings:

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

October 12 & 14: Feminism

Readings:

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

October 19 Revision for Exam I

October: 21: Exam I

October 26 & 27: 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 2 & 3: 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. Goodin & C. Tilly(eds), *The Oxford Handbook of Contextual Political Analysis*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2006.

November 08 - 12: Fall Break

November 16 & 18: 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 23 & 25: 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 30 - December 2: Political Science in Times of Popuism

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

December: 2: Revision for Exam II

December 7: Exam II(Online Format through Brightspace)