Political Science 600: Discipline and Profession
Fall 2013

Instructor:
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Office Hours: M 1:00 - 3:30; or by appointment.

Description (from the departmental website)
The primary goal of this course is to introduce graduate students to the discipline of political science. We will discuss the big questions in the field, consider the subfields in the discipline, study the philosophical foundations of political science, and focus on practical issues faced by academics. We will also address pedagogical issues and emphasize the ethical considerations involved in teaching and doing research. In sum, this course is designed to socialize students into the discipline of political science, i.e., to turn graduate students into political scientists. Along the way, students will do a significant amount of reading and writing with an eye toward improving critical thinking, communication, and research skills.

My addendum, specific goals: There are lots of ways to teach a course like this one and, although I hope I do it well, my way is bound to be imperfect. Overall, I intend to expose you to the logic of scientific inquiry, the cross-disciplinary nature of the discipline, and methodological issues within the discipline. I also want to get you thinking now about the next steps in your careers – becoming teacher-scholars.

GRADING AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Class procedures:
The format of each class meeting will typically consist of two parts. The first half of class time will consist of a reading summary period, in which I will “randomly” select students to summarize each article/chapter. After a short break, we will reconvene and I will pontificate about the topic followed by a class discussion.

Grade Components
1) Class participation 1/8 of the course grade
Students are expected to be prepared for class. This means that readings and assignments are complete before the class begins and students are prepared to discuss the topics dealt with in the readings and homework. Students will be “randomly” selected to summarize articles assigned at the beginning of each class. If you are present but cannot present evidence of your familiarity with the reading, you will be penalized. If you are selected, but are absent, you cannot avoid a penalty with an excuse. During the discussion phase of each class meeting, I will expect you to voluntarily contribute to the discussion and will note the quantity and quality of your remarks.
2) Integrative summaries & homework

In addition to being able to summarize each reading, a short (2-5 page) paper will be due at the beginning of each class. These papers should attempt to organize the readings thematically and integrate the ideas presented. If you desire, you may also offer your own assessment of the readings in addition to the integrative summary, but not in lieu of the required summary. You will also be required to complete three homework assignments listed in the schedule below.

3) Literature Review

You must summarize a body of literature relevant to a topic for which you are considering writing your dissertation. Use this opportunity to get a jump start on it. A literature review should be an integrated, analytic essay containing an overarching thesis, an introduction, and a series of arguments supported by reasons and evidence from the specific articles upon which you draw. Do not simply summarize one article after another; instead, you should synthesize the material into a coherent and compelling essay. The assignment is for a review of the literature, not for an analytical or descriptive essay on some topic in which you use the literature. The literature itself is the topic. The literature review should be 5-6 double-spaced pages.

4) Take-home exam

The take-home exam will be designed to assess your familiarity with the material. You should be able to identify the linkages among the readings within and across the various topics covered during the semester, identify and evaluate theoretical and methodological approaches, controversies, etc. I will periodically offer advice on what to expect for the exam as well as how to adequately answer the questions. The take-home exam will be handed out at the end of our ??? class meeting and a hard-copy of your answers will be due on ?????

5) Professional life in the department

The department holds colloquia (e.g., SSM and PIRCAT), has outside speakers, brings in job candidates, and practice job talks for grad students who are on the market. You are expected to attend a “significant” number of these events, which will be determined at the end of the semester. They are as much a part of your education and socialization as what happens inside the classroom. To be safe, you should attend pretty much all of these events unless they conflict with class time. I will make you aware of them as information becomes available.

COURSE MATERIALS

I will make many of the readings listed in the schedule below available on Blackboard. Otherwise, they can be accessed through the library’s website, JSTOR, etc.

Professional Associations

There are many professional associations for the discipline in general as well as those catering to the specific fields of Political Science. You are strongly encouraged to join one or more of these. At the very least, you should join the American Political Science Association (APSA). As a member of APSA, students will receive three journals, the American Political Science Review (APSR), Perspectives on Politics (POP), and PS: Political Science and Politics (commonly known as PS). APSA has a student rate for membership.
Recommended Books:


**POLICIES, EXPECTATIONS, ETC.**

**Attendance and Missed Assignments**
Because this is a graduate course, I expect students to attend every meeting. I will not accept late homework or exams unless you provide me with a documented excuse.

**Bereavement**
In the event that you have a death in the family and seek some accommodation from me, please contact the Dean of Students first. See [http://www.purdue.edu/odos/services/griefabsencepolicyforstudents.php](http://www.purdue.edu/odos/services/griefabsencepolicyforstudents.php).

**Academic Integrity**
Academic dishonesty/plagiarism is commonly defined as passing off someone else’s words, writings, ideas, etc. as one’s own. Plagiarism is tantamount to lying and stealing. If you cheat, you will fail this course and suffer other penalties. You must abide by the University’s Honor Code. Go to [http://www.purdue.edu/odos/aboutodos/respondingtoacademicdishonesty.php](http://www.purdue.edu/odos/aboutodos/respondingtoacademicdishonesty.php) for more information.

**Campus Emergencies**
In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor’s control.

**Students with Disabilities**
If you believe you have a disability that requires accommodation, contact the Disability Resource Center. For more information, see [http://www.purdue.edu/odos/drc/welcome.php](http://www.purdue.edu/odos/drc/welcome.php).

**SCHEDULE**

1. Business meeting
2. History of the Discipline


3. Reading and Writing


OWL Avoiding Plagiarism Handout: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01/.


OWL Annotated Bibliographies Handout: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/614/01/.


OWL English as a Second Language Handouts, Resources, and Exercises: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/section/5/. If you are an ESL student, check out these resources and use as needed. If you are not an ESL student, you should still check out these resources. You will teach ESL students at some point in your graduate school career and will therefore need to know what resources are available at Purdue.

4. Science and Progress

Isaac Asimov, ch. 1 "What is Science?" in ASIMOV'S NEW GUIDE TO SCIENCE (Basic Books, 1984).


5. Political Science as a science?


*Homework for next time: Construct a “Scientific Puzzle”*

6. Democracy and Cross-fertilization
"Scientific Puzzle” Assignment due.


7. Other Debates


Due next time: research statement

8. Research Methods


Schrodt, P. n.d. “Seven Deadly Sins...”
http://polmeth.wustl.edu/media/Paper/Schrodt7SinsAPSA10.pdf

**9. Teaching and Learning**


Take a look at some of the syllabi in the “Syllabus File” in the Department of Political Science Main Office. Warning: there may be as many examples of what not to do in that file as what to do.

**Homework for next time: Prepare a syllabus and teaching philosophy/statement**

**10. Literature Review presentation**

**THE FUTURE**

**11. Proposals, Presenting, Publishing, and Placement**


**Homework for next time: Plan of Study**

**12. The Academic Career, Ethics, and Both**

**ASSIGNMENTS:** Plan of Study is due. Bring three copies and the Department’s Guide to Graduate Study (electronic or hard copy) to class. Come to class with 2 discussion questions based on the readings.


**Homework for next time: c.v.**

13. Wrapping up

**ASSIGNMENT:** Curriculum vita is due. Bring three copies to class.

**Final exam is due on __________.**