

POLS 2101—Introduction to Political Science

North Georgia College & State University

Fall 2009

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9:05-10:00

208 Young Hall and online

Three Credits

Professor: Dr. Ross C. Alexander
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Office Hours: Monday 10:00-11:00 and 1:00-2:00
Tuesday 10:00-11:00
Wednesday 10:00-11:00 and 1:00-2:00
Thursday 10:00-11:00
**or by appointment

Undergraduate Bulletin Course Description

The purposes of this course are to define the discipline of political science, and to study political systems and their environments, political inputs, governmental structures, governmental authorities, and processes and policy outputs and impacts.

Course Delivery Method: Hybrid

Course Objectives

- 1) To attempt to “define” the discipline of political science
- 2) To better understand political science as a discipline through comparative analysis
- 3) To investigate the various sub-disciplines of the field of political science
- 4) To gain a better understanding of the American political system by comparing it to systems in other westernized democracies
- 5) To learn how to write a proper political science research paper
- 6) To become immersed in information literacy
- 7) To respect differing opinions
- 8) To have fun

Course Structure/Success in this Course

This course will be a mixture of lecture, class and group discussion, and online discussion formats. As a result, your ultimate success in this course depends largely upon your ability to take quality notes, pay attention, participation in group, class, and online discussions, and your overall preparation for each and every class period. If you have good attendance and come prepared you will be successful, if not, you will not be successful.

Information Literacy

So what exactly is Information Literacy (IL)? Information literacy, the topic of North Georgia's Quality Enhancement Plan, is the ability to know when information is needed and to access, evaluate and use information effectively and ethically. Information literacy, with its focus on definable skills and critical thinking, supports and extends the institution's overall learning outcomes.

Information Literacy Learning Outcomes*

- 1) The information literate student determines the nature and extent of the information needed. (Know)
- 2) The information literate student accesses needed information effectively and efficiently. (Access)
- 3) The information literate student evaluates information and its sources critically and incorporates selected information into his or her knowledge base and value system. (Evaluates)
- 4) The information literate student, individually or as a member of a group, uses information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose. (Use)
- 5) The information literate student understands many of the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information and accesses and uses information ethically and legally. (Ethical/Legal)

*Learning Outcomes adapted from the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) standards

Assigned Text

Lawson, Kay. 2003. *The Human Polity: A Comparative Introduction to Political Science* (5th). New York: Houghton Mifflin. ISBN: 0618043640

Assignments

Midterm Exam—100 points; a combination of short answer and essay questions addressing material from the first half of the course. Please bring a blue book to the exam. *Midterm Exam Dates:* Monday, September 28 & Wednesday, September 30

Final Exam—100 points; short answer questions addressing material from the second half of the course. Please bring a blue book to the exam. The final exam must be taken at the assigned time and date for the course. *Final Exam Date:* Friday, December 4 from 8:00-10:00

Research Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography—100 points; a detailed description of a research project (but not an actual research paper) detailing the justification for examination of the topic, how it relates to the discipline of political science, and research questions posed. In addition, the annotated bibliography must include a minimum of 12 peer-reviewed journal articles with an overview and analysis of each source (roughly a paragraph per source). The proposal and bibliography should be written in Times New Roman or Calibri, 12-point font, standard margins, and paginated and stapled. The proposal should be double-spaced, while the annotated bibliography should be single-spaced. The project should conform to APA format. Late papers will be deducted 10% per calendar-day late. Papers not submitted by class time on the due date will be considered late. Papers must be submitted to turnitin.com to receive credit. Turn in an electronic copy to turnitin.com and bring a paper copy to class. *Due Date:* Monday, November 23.

Turnitin.com Enrollment Password: 2101F09

Turnitin.com Class ID: 2793891

Movie Analysis Paper—50 points; a detailed, three (3) to four (4) page analysis of the themes of the two movies watched in class—*Syriana* and *Thirteen Days*—as they pertain particularly to the international relations perspective of political science. Papers should be written in Times New Roman or Calibri, 12-point font, double-spaced, standard margins, with page numbers and stapled. No outside research is necessary for this paper. This is an analysis, not a summary. Papers can be written in either first or third person. Papers not submitted in class on the due date will be considered late. Late papers will be deducted 10% per calendar-day late. Papers will be deducted a minimum of 10% per page short. Emailed papers will not be accepted without prior approval. *Paper Due Date:* Friday, November 13.

Group Project—50 points per person; 20-minutes per group addressing some topic pertaining to political science. Be creative. Each group member must contribute equally to the presentation, although not all group members are required to speak. Presentations should incorporate a relatively elaborate powerpoint presentation and should engage the class. Dress for presentations is professional. *Presentation Dates:* Monday, November 16; Wednesday, November 18; and Friday, November 20.

Discussion and Participation—100 points; your active and informed participation in group, class, and online discussions is expected and will be graded. All Vista discussions will be worth varying points (from 10-20 points typically). These points are not gimmies and must be actively earned.

500 Total Points for the Course

Attendance

Attending every class is integral to your success in this course. However, attendance will not be taken on a daily basis. Simply, if you attend class each and every time (or nearly) you will do well in this course. However, if you miss class often, you will perform poorly. I understand that many of you have work and military commitments over the summer that will require you to miss class occasionally. If you plan in advance for these absences, and inform me, your performance should not be negatively affected.

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to change the syllabus as I deem appropriate and necessary, especially with regard to the day-to-day and week-to-week schedule.

Class evaluations

Class evaluations at NGCSU are now conducted on-line through Banner. Evaluation of the class is considered a component of the course and students will not be permitted to access their course grade until the evaluation has been completed. The evaluations will be accessible beginning one week prior to Final Exam week. Specific instructions will be made available when the surveys are activated.

Grading Scale

90-99=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, 59 and below=F

Cheating and Plagiarism

Any instance of cheating or plagiarism will result in the following: zero grade for the assignment; the submission of an academic integrity report to the Academic Integrity Council which may result in serious disciplinary action by the university; and possible assignment of an “F” grade for the course. Don’t cheat, and don’t tolerate those who do (see below).

Academic Integrity Policy

Honor Code: “On my honor, I will not lie, cheat, steal, plagiarize, evade the truth or tolerate those who do (Undergraduate Bulletin, pp. 81-83).”

If the professor concludes that a violation of the Academic Integrity policy has occurred, the professor will either (1) penalize the student and file an incident report with the Academic Integrity Council or (2) refer the matter directly to the Academic Integrity Council. If an incident report is filed, the professor will review the completed report with the student and will request that the student sign the report as an indication that the student is aware of its contents.

“Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use posted on the Turnitin.com site (Turnitin.com).”

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

NGCSU is committed to the full inclusion of individuals with disabilities to the principle of individual rights and responsibilities. To the end, the policies and procedures of NGCSU reasonably ensure that a person with a disability is not, on the basis of that disability, denied full and equal access to and enjoyment of academic programs and co-curricular activities or otherwise is subjected to discrimination in such programs and activities.

The policies for access by individuals with disabilities at NGCSU are designed to ensure full compliance with all pertinent federal and state legislation, specifically to include Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. To receive disability accommodations, the student should contact the Coordinator of Disability Resources, Office of Academic Support Programs, room 207 Barnes Hall. Approval of reasonable accommodations will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Course Schedule

Wednesday, August 19

Course overview, introductions, syllabus, expectations, Vista orientation

Friday, August 21

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, August 24

Lawson, Chapter One—Political Science in an Era of Globalization

Wednesday, August 26

Lawson, Chapter Two—Political Ideologies

Friday, August 28

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, August 31

Lawson, Chapter Three—Politics and Culture

Wednesday, September 2

Research Project Workshop

Friday, September 4

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, September 7

No Class—Labor Day Holiday

Wednesday, September 9

Lawson, Chapter Four—The Individual in Politics

Friday, September 11

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, September 14

Lawson, Chapter Five—Organizing for Politics: The Group

Wednesday, September 16

Lawson, Chapter Six—Political Parties

Friday, September 18

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, September 21

Lawson, Chapter Seven—Acting in International Politics

Wednesday, September 23

Research Project Workshop

Midterm Exam Review

Friday, September 25

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, September 28

Midterm Exam Part One

Wednesday, September 30

Midterm Exam Part Two

Friday, October 2

To be announced

Monday, October 5

Movie, *Syriana*

Wednesday, October 7

Movie, *Syriana*

Friday, October 9

No Class—Fall Break

Monday, October 12

Chapter Eight—Making the Laws

Wednesday, October 14

Chapter Nine—Making Government Work: Executives and Bureaucrats

Friday, October 16

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, October 19

Chapter Ten—Public Policy

Wednesday, October 21

Chapter Eleven—Justice Under the Law

Friday, October 23

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, October 26

Chapter Twelve—Levels of Government within the State

Wednesday, October 28

Chapter Thirteen—International and Regional Governments

Friday, October 30

Virtual class—online assignment

Monday, November 2

Movie, *Thirteen Days*

Wednesday, November 4

Movie, *Thirteen Days*

Friday, November 6

Movie, *Thirteen Days*

Monday, November 9

Virtual class—online assignment

Wednesday, November 11

Research Project Workshop

Friday, November 13

Movie Analysis Paper Due

Monday, November 16

Group Presentations

Wednesday, November 18

Group Presentations

Friday, November 20

Group Presentations

Monday, November 23

Research Project Due

Wednesday, November 25

No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday

Friday, November 27

No Class—Thanksgiving Holiday

Monday, November 30

Final Exam Review

Friday, December 4

Final Exam—8:00-10:00