

## Introduction to Politics

POLS 100  
MW 2:10-3:25pm  
McGannon 121  
Office Hours: M 1:00-2:00pm

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This class is designed to introduce students to the academic study of politics. A primary objective of the course is that students will learn to differentiate among the various fields of Political Science including Political Theory, American Politics, Comparative Politics and International Relations. The course thus prepares students to select coursework within the Political Science major appropriate to their interests and career goals. Additionally, the course aims to assist in the development of the analytical tools necessary for successful completion of the Political Science major. In particular, the course emphasizes learning to identify and evaluate arguments and the evidence that underpin them in both academic journals and newspaper articles. Finally, the course aims to assist students in developing the citizenship skills necessary for an individual interested in politics. An essential aspect of participation is the responsibility to be informed. In the context of this course, students are expected to develop a daily habit of reading the newspaper. For the sake of simplicity, students are asked to monitor the *St. Louis Dispatch*.

### Course Objectives

- Develop an understanding of the concept of Politics
- Learn to differentiate between the various fields of Political Science
- Explore opportunities related to the study of Politics
- Learn to identify arguments in newspaper articles and scholarly journal articles

### Course Requirements

Successful completion of this course requires attendance at lectures, active participation in course discussions, completion of all reading assignments in a thoughtful and thorough manner, and completion of four short papers. Finally, students are required to evaluate the class at the end of the semester. Students are encouraged to keep notes throughout the semester to assist them in providing specifics on course evaluations. Students should also feel welcome to share comments, concerns or suggestions about the course with the instructor at any time.

### Attendance Policy/Participation Grade:

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and participate actively in discussions in order to gain full participation credit. The professor will provide guidance on what types of comments in class discussions are beneficial for fulfillment of the participation grade. Three unexcused absences are allowed before the student's grade is impacted.

### Reading Assignments:

Students are expected to complete ALL reading assignments. Student progress toward this goal will be evaluated through class discussions as well as the final assignment.

### Office Hours:

All students are required to visit office hours by the end of week four for a 15-minute consultation on the course. Students will also complete a final conference during the final two class sessions.

### Major Assignments:

There are five written assignments for this course. The first is detailed below. The others will be distributed throughout the semester.

**Required Texts:**

Miller, David. 2003. *Political Philosophy: a Very Short Introduction*.

Wilkinson, Paul. 2007. *International Relations a Very Short Introduction*.

*The St. Louis Dispatch*

**Grand Breakdown:**

Participation	15%
Assignment 1	5%
Assignment 2	15%
Assignment 3	10%
Assignment 4	20%
Final Assignment	25%
Office Hours	10%

**Grade Scale:**

A	93-100	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	60-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	F	below 60
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

**Writing Assistance:**

If you understand the outline of an assignment, but are having trouble making progress with it, I suggest you take advantage of the services offered at the Student Success Center. For this course, it makes particular sense to consult one of the center’s trained writing consultants. They offer one-on-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, call 977-3484 or visit <http://www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml>.

**Laptop Policy**

I do not allow open laptops in my classroom during class time for any purpose.

**Letters of Recommendation:**

Students who anticipate seeking letters of recommendation from the professor should consult her webpage for guidelines on the appropriate procedure. The page is: <http://anmariewainescott.com/blog/2013/5/14/rules-for-letters-of-recommendation>

**Academic honesty:**

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student’s own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line

quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in *an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment* and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>

### **Student learning, disability statement:**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to [www.slu.edu/success](http://www.slu.edu/success).

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [314-977-8885](tel:314-977-8885) or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

### **Written Assignments:**

#### **Assignment One: Mini-Autobiography**

Write a two-page, double-spaced essay on your interest in politics and the study of politics. Include answers to the following questions in your response. Essays will be graded on language and following directions, not for content. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions.

1. How would you define politics?
2. When did you first become interested in politics?
3. What political events have you followed with the most attention?
4. How did you follow them? Did you read the newspaper? Did you watch the news? Did you listen to the radio?
5. What is your current system for following the news?
6. What current or recent news stories are you the most interested in?
7. What are your current study skills?
8. Evaluate your high school experience. What did you do well? What would you like to do differently in your college career?
9. What are some of your short-term (at college and/or in your twenties) and long-term career goals?
10. What skills or knowledge do you hope to acquire from the study of politics.

## Reading Schedule

*All readings in parentheses are due on the day that they are listed*

Weeks One and Two:	Introduction
26 August 2013:	Introduction to course, syllabus, accessing journal articles, fields quiz
28 August 2013:	What is politics? (Miller, ch. 1)
2 September 2013:	LABOR DAY – NO CLASS
4 September 2013:	Lecture: What is a journal article? How do you read it? <b>Mini-Autobiography due</b> – Share in class
Weeks Three and Four:	The discipline of Political Science
9 September 2013:	Lecture: The history of the academic discipline of political science (Farr, James. 1988. “The History of Political Science.” <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 32(4): 1175–95.) <i>Bring printed copy to class!</i>
11 September 2013:	Lecture: What is a newspaper article? How do you read it? How do you keep up with the news? (Bring an interesting newspaper article to class)
16 September 2013:	In class activity: outlining newspaper articles
18 September 2013:	<b>Dream Job assignment due</b> – Share in class
Weeks Five and Six:	Political Theory
23-25 September 2013:	(Miller 2, 3, 4 and 5)
30 September 2013:	(Miller 6 and 7)
2 October 2013:	<b>Opportunities assignment due</b> – Share in class
Weeks Seven and Eight:	American Politics (and Baseball)
7-9 October 2013:	In class movie: <i>Moneyball</i> (Nate Silver’s <i>Braying Idiot Detractors...</i> )
14-16 October 2013:	( <i>Insider Baseball</i> , Joan Didion, <i>The New York Review of Books</i> )
Weeks Nine and Ten:	Comparative Politics
21 October 2013:	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS
23 October 2013:	The Comparative Method (Lijphart, Arend. 1971. “Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method.” <i>The APSR</i> 65(3): 682.) <i>Bring to Class</i>
28 October 2013:	(Excerpts from Munck, Gerardo L., and Richard Snyder. 2007. <i>Passion, Craft, and Method in Comparative Politics.</i> )
30 October 2013:	<b>Newspaper assignment due</b> – Share in class
Weeks Eleven and Twelve:	International Relations
4 November 2013:	(Wilkinson Introduction and 1)
6 November 2013:	Discuss final assignment (Hoffmann, Stanley. 1977. “An American Social Science: International Relations.” <i>Daedalus</i> 106(3): 41–60)
11-13 November 2013:	(Wilkinson 2 and 3)
Weeks Thirteen and Fourteen	
18 November 2013:	(Wilkinson 4 and Conclusion)
20 November 2013:	Faculty Roundtable (Prepare 3 questions)
25 November 2013:	<b>FINAL ASSIGNMENTS DUE</b>
27 November 2013:	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS
Weeks Fifteen and Sixteen	
2 December 2013:	Lecture “What I tried to accomplish with this class”
4 December 2013:	End of semester conferences with professor
9 December 2013:	End of semester conferences with professor