HOWARD UNIVERSITY  
Department of Political Science

POLS 001 - 5  
Introduction to Political Science  
Fall 2011  
CRN 84897  
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course is designed for undergraduate students considering political science or another liberal arts students, and students from other schools in the University. The major of objective of the course is to examine the range of ideological and institutional foundations upon which contemporary governments and political systems are based. Our goal for the course is to provide an overview of the political science within a domestic and international context. The subject matter is divided roughly into three major categories.

First, we will study the methods, concepts, and the ethical foundations of politics and political science. This includes the study of power and political theory. Second, we will examine political ideologies: Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism and Fascism. The third areas to be explored in the course are black politics, international relations, international development, public policy and public administration.

COURSE STRUCTURE AND EVALUATION

While there are no formal prerequisites, a genuine interest in the subject matter would help. The course is an “introduction” to politics and political science, which means no special expertise is expected of any student in the details of diverse political systems. On the other hand, a willingness to read the assigned material is necessary and a readiness to think for your self is mandatory. All students are welcome.

The course will move along three dimensions. First, there are reading assignments, which should be read before each class meeting. Second, at least once during the semester you may be called to lead the discussion. Prepare a 20- minute talk introducing the concepts and commenting on the strengths and weakness of the various materials such that you can synthesize it into a mega perspective. Do not give a book report!
The third dimension involves your written participation. There will be two examinations and a final examination. There may be unannounced quizzes. An incomplete for the course is out of the question.

The requirements for this course are weighted as follows:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination #1</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
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<td>Examination #2</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations/quizzes/attendance/short papers/class participation</td>
<td>25 percent</td>
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Total: 100 percent

Note: **Blue Books** are required for all in class written examinations and can be purchased at the university bookstore. Five points will be deducted from the exam if blue books are not used. Each examination will be one hour.

A short writing assignment taken from an article in the course text, *Global Perspectives: International Development, Politics, and Public Administration* can substitute for a low grade on one of the examinations excluding including the final examination. The assignment must be submitted on or before November 5, 2011. Papers after this date will not be accepted.

See attachment A for details.

**EXTRA CREDIT**

In general, there will be no make-up or extra-credit work to bring up poor performance in assigned papers and evaluations. Exceptions are made only upon valid proof of illness (physician’s statement) or other mitigating circumstance. Otherwise, all students are expected to execute these standard evaluation tests to the best of their abilities. Nevertheless, extra work is sometimes offered to all students and I encourage everyone to take advantage of these rare opportunities to improve upon academic performance.

**REQUIRED TEXT**


Supplemental readings will be available on Black Board or they will be emailed to students. Moreover, students are advised to read weekly both the national, state and local news sections of the *Washington Post* and, if possible, the *New York Times*. Course relevant topics about the political science such as war in Iraq, Afghanistan, health care reform, and other subjects will occasionally be taken from these newspapers for in-class discussion.

Like Mao I believe that theory and practice, understanding and action go together. But we should keep in mind that this equation has two parts: talk and work, curse and study. You should come to class with as many questions and answers and with as much forethought and introspection as your time, friends, or family will allow.

**SECHDULE OF TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

The following outline is intended to serve as a topical guide for this course. It is important to stress the significance of these assigned readings. The readings will serve as the basis for the lectures and the in-class discussions. As indicated above, these in-class discussions will frequently link issues encountered in the news with topic that we will encounter in our assigned readings.

**Unit One**
**Introduction to the Course**
*August 22th*

August 24 - First class session: distribution of syllabus and general course overview. What is political science? What are political ideologies? What is a system? Why do political scientist seek to address empirical (factual) and normative (ethical questions about politics? Why do political scientists usually disagree as to how best to study political science?

**Unit Two**
**Methods to Study Political Science and Power**
*August 24 – September 14*

Read: Grigsby - Chapters 1, 2, and 3
Frazier – Introduction and What is Developmental Studies? Andrew Sumner
Duties to the Distant: Aids Assistance and Intervention in the developing world - Dale Jamieson
September 9th First quiz

Unit Three
Political Theory: The Ethical Foundations of Politics
*September 16 - 28*

Read: Grigsby – Chapter 4: Political Theory


September 30th First Examination (Examination Blue Books are required)

Unit Four
Political Ideologies: Liberalism, Conservatism, Socialism, and Fascism
*September 30 – October 14*

Read: Grigsby – Chapters 5, 6, and 7

Frazier – Ideology, Progress, and Dialogue: A Comparison of Feminist and Islamist Women’s Approaches to the Issue of Head Covering and Work in Turkey - Gul Aldikacti Marshall

October 17th Second Quiz

Unit Five
Comparative Politics I and II
*October 3 – November 4th*

Read: Grigsby – Chapters 8

Government Systems: Democracy and Nondemocracy

Chapter 9

Interest Groups, Political Parties, and Elections

Unit Six
Black Politics

Read: Barker, Jones and Tate, “African Americans and the American Political System”

Read: Georgia Persons, From Insurgency to Deracialization: The Evolution of Black Mayoralties
(Readings to be provided by professor)

November 4th Second Examination (Examination Blue Books are required)

**Unit Six**  
**International relations**  
November 7 – December 2nd

Read: Ellen Grigsby – Chapters 11: International Relations I and 2

Read: Frazier – Barack Obama and Africa – Abdul Karim Bangura

Beyond the Glitter in the People’s Republic of China

December 8 – 14, 2011 Final Examination (Examination Blue Books are required)

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Monday, September 5th Labor Day (Legal Holiday)

September 9th First quiz

Friday, September 23rd Convocation - All students are required to attend and write a 1-2 page paper focusing on the central thesis of the key note speaker and students overall impressions of the event. Paper is due no later than Wednesday, 28, 2011.

Monday, October 10th Columbus Day (Legal Holiday)

October 17th Second Quiz

November 1 – 12th Spring Registration

November 2nd Second Examination

Thursday, November 11 Veterans Day (Legal Holiday)

November 21 – 26 Thanksgiving Recess

December 1 Last Day of Class

December 7 – 14 Final Examination

December 14 Semester Ends

December 14 Semester Ends
Attachment A:

Memorandum For Introduction to Political Science Students

Subject: Optional Political Science Writing Assignment Guidelines

Due Dates: **November 7, 2011**

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Introductions: In a coherent paper write develop a concise critical review of one article in the course text, *Global Perspectives: International Politics, International Development, Politics, and Public Administration*. Select one of the following articles from the following:

- Randall Peerenboom, Law and development of Constitutional Democracy: Is China a Problem Case?
- Rosa Ehrenreich Brooks, Failed States, or the State as a Failure?

Each critical review must include a discussion about the role if any of (1) international development policies, (2) politics, and (3) public administration. The expectation is that you will provide a well-written critique of the article selected which has to approved by the professor. Length is not an important consideration. The critical review is to be typed (with at least a 12 point font), and double-spaced. The cover page should contain your student number and the date that the paper was submitted to the professor. Be Sure to YOUR NAME is on every page of the paper.

The paper is to be submitted in three sections: Thesis, Analysis Section (Largest section of essay), and Synthesis Section

**Thesis Section [1-3 paragraphs]**

A. What, exactly, will you be discussing/considering?
B. Why is this interesting or important?
C. Provide a thesis assertion. What argument(s) do you want to make about the issue(s)? The thesis/introduction section should always be task oriented. Use the active voice. Use plain language. Minimize the adjectives. Be direct and focused.)
II. Analysis Section

A. Clearly define the concept of the book. Provide a logical explication of the elements surrounding your argument(s). Describe in detailed and coherent pieces the evolution of your assertions. How and why did you arrive at a particular question or conclusion?

B. Engage criticism surrounding thesis assertion. What are the questions/problems involved with the issue(s) that you are engaged in? Is there someone who agrees or disagrees with your approach or thoughts about the main issue or issues directly related?

C. Exactly how does the insight that you are developing speak to the significance of your thesis assertion? Your analysis should always move toward complicating and clarifying your thesis assertion and notions surrounding it.

III. Synthesis Section

A. Bring together poignant elements of analysis to widen the implications and scope of the thesis. After deconstructing points A, B, and C, considers what the results of your analysis might mean?

B. Give the reader something to consider beyond the argument of the essay in addition to a vivid picture of the effects of your argument. What are the implications of such a critical discussion?

C. Attempt to broaden the scope of the thesis assertion by using points of analysis as a step-ladder to a larger and potentially more profound significance.