

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: Introduction to Political Science

Course Number and Section:

POLISCI

1020E 550

Instructor Name(s): William Kujala and Daisy Raphael

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

This course introduces students to the scholarly and academic study of political life – the exercise of power by, over, and with others. We will study politics in formal institutions such as legislatures, polling stations, and bureaucracies, and in spaces where people assemble to resist oppression and pursue their interests, from social media to the streets. A major aim of this course is to build a critical vocabulary or language for interpreting politics. This means learning to think like a political scientist, approaching political questions as matters for scholarly investigation. This course pursues this by re-introducing students to political ideas in historical context; critically examining political speech and discourse in relation to transformations in media; examining how institutions such as parliament, parties, elections, and bureaucracies shape, and are shaped by, the arrangements of power in our society; studying systems of domination – such as colonialism, racism, sexism, and ableism – and how social actors contest and resist these systems; and situating our local political life and struggles within the broader context of global politics. In doing so, this course provides a selective, but broad window into the contemporary study of politics, and a preparative introduction to the academic field of political science and its major subfields (Canadian Politics, International Relations, Comparative Politics, and Political Theory).

Learning Outcomes:

Define politics and political science, and explain why they are distinct;
Define and explain key theories, concepts, and ideas in the field of political science;
Discuss politics using a vocabulary and approach that go beyond common-sense or 'lay' understandings of political life;
Explain the implications and importance of multiple theoretical and conceptual lenses on the study of politics;
Identify one's own research interests and pose a research question;
Locate, read, annotate, summarize, digest, and ultimately use scholarly literature;
Cite academic sources according to standards of academic integrity and manuals of citation style;
Reflect on how theoretical and scholarly engagement with the field may have changed their perspectives

Engage productively in future courses and reading in the subfields of political science including Canadian Politics, Comparative Politics, International relations, and Political Theory.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Janine Brodie et al., Critical Concepts, 6th edition. Oxford University Press

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Article Deep Dive	08/14/24	5
Research Proposal	02/14/25	10
Literature Review Paper	03/27/25	20
Seminar Participation	Ongoing	15
Midterm Exam	TBD	20
Final Exam	TBD	30

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Monday, August 19, 2024