

PSCI 210 (L18)
Fall 2017
W 7:05-9:45pm
El Centro 320
3 credit hours

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Introduction to Political Science **College of Arts & Sciences Syllabus**

An introduction to the discipline through an examination of the concepts and skills utilized in the contemporary study of politics. The course provides an overview of political science, including its various sub-fields, and a framework for further study.

Required Texts

There are two required texts for this course:

- Craig Parsons, *Introduction to Political Science: How to Think for Yourself about Politics* (Pearson, 2017)
- Michael A. Allen and Justin S. Vaughn, eds., *Poli Sci Fi: An Introduction to Political Science through Science Fiction* (Routledge, 2016)

Course Learning Objectives

Besides imparting substantive material regarding politics and the study of political science, this course aims to assist students in developing other skills. By the end of the semester, students should be able to identify political arguments and make arguments of their own on critical policy questions; explain key concepts about government; clearly and effectively communicate ideas in writing; and be able to critically examine claims made by different authors on political topics.

Academic Integrity Policy

By enrolling in this course, you are bound by the NEIU Student Code of Conduct: <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-rights-and-responsibilities/student-code-conduct>. You will be informed by your instructor of any additional policy specific to your course regarding plagiarism, class disruptions, etc.

ADA Statement

Northeastern Illinois University (NEIU) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To request accommodations, students with special needs should make arrangements with the Student Disability Services (SDS) office, located on the main campus in room D104. Contact SDS via (773) 442-4595 or <http://www.neiu.edu/university-life/student-disability-services>.

Campus Safety

Web links to Campus Safety: Emergency Procedures and Safety Information can be found on NEIUport on the MyNEIU tab or as follows:

http://homepages.neiu.edu/~neutemp/Emergency_Procedures/MainCampus/.

Course Requirements

- 1) Complete all readings on schedule. If you miss a class, email me for the next reading assignment, as the schedule may change. Bring the assigned readings with you to class.
- 2) There will be regular quizzes. At the end of each chapter of the Parsons textbook is a list of key terms. After you have read the chapters, I will quiz you on some of those terms.
- 3) Attend on time and actively participate in class discussions. Those who arrive more than 5 minutes late, or who leave in the middle of class, will be marked for half of an absence. Each student is allowed only **three** unexcused absences. Your participation grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter for each unexcused absence over three. Not being active during discussions will also result in lowering your participation grade. During week 6 of the semester I will update you as to your current participation grade, so that you will have an opportunity for improvement.
- 4) Keep up with the news. We will frequently relate current events to the concepts we discuss in class. This way, we will be able to connect what can be abstract ideas to real-world outcomes. Read a newspaper, visit cnn.com, or do anything that helps makes you an informed citizen.
- 5) Take the **three** required exams. All will consist of essay questions. I will give you the questions ahead of the test. Make-up exams will only be given in the event of an emergency, verified with proper documentation.
- 6) Write **three short papers** about topics in this course. At the end of each chapter of the Parsons textbook is a list of “Develop Your Thinking” questions. On the schedule of readings below, I have noted three of these that I would like you to write about. Provide evidence for your views, whether it is in the form of statistics, logical reasoning, or quotations from others. You **must** use outside sources besides the texts assigned on the syllabus - **at least 3 for each paper – and you must cite them appropriately**. Each paper must be **at least 2 pages in length**.

Once you have received a grade on your paper, I will give you the option of revising it, if you wish. All revisions are due within one week of when you receive your grade.

All written assignments must be typed in a 12 point font, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and have page numbers. Papers not meeting these criteria will be penalized.

Grading

Work conducted towards the end of the semester will be more heavily weighted in my mind when dispensing final grades; in other words, *improvement counts*.

Participation: 20%
Quizzes: 10%
Short Papers: 20%
First Exam: 15%
Second Exam: 15%
Final: 20%

90-100 A
80-89 B
70-79 C
60-69 D
Below 60 F

Incompletes will only be given for valid, documented emergencies.

NOTE ON PLAGIARISM: Any student found plagiarizing work will receive a grade of **zero** for that assignment and an **F** for the course. You will also be reported to the University for violating the academic integrity policy. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: direct copying of material that is not your own, copying the material even while providing a citation, or copying ideas without proper attribution. **It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism; if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask!**

Schedule of Classes and Exams

August 30th: Introduction: What is Politics?

Parsons, chapter 1

September 6th: Political Philosophy and Political Science

Parsons, chapter 2

Jennifer Kelkres Emery, "Improving Public Policy: Measurement and Prediction in *Minority Report*," in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 1

September 13th: Ideologies

Parsons, chapter 3

Jocelyn Evans, “One Choice Can Transform You: Political Ideology and Culture in *Divergent*,” in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 5

September 20th: States
(online session)

Parsons, chapter 4

September 27th: Governments

FIRST PAPER: “Would you accept limited rights during wartime or some other major crisis?”

Parsons, chapter 5

Zachary Callen, “*Star Wars* and Legislatures,” in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 7

October 4th: FIRST EXAM DUE

October 11th: class canceled

October 18th: Individual Participation and Collective Action

Parsons, chapter 6

Jennifer Kelkres Emery and Jocelyn Evans, “‘We Shall Overcome’: The Districts of Panem and Identity Politics in *The Hunger Games*,” in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 12

October 25th: Representation

Parsons, chapter 7

Lily J. Goren, “The Politics of Gender in the World of the Twelve Colonies,” in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 11

November 1st: Power and Policymaking

SECOND PAPER: “Given unlimited power, would you redesign American policymaking to give more influence to bureaucratic experts?”

Parsons, chapter 8

Joseph E. Uscinski, “*Star Wars* and the Executive Branch,” in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 6

November 8th: Political Economies

Parsons, chapter 9

November 15th: Economic Development

Parsons, chapter 10

November 22nd: Authoritarianism and Democratization

SECOND EXAM DUE

Parsons, chapter 11

Raymond V. Carman, Jr., “Yes... Yes... All Your ‘Rights’ As Defined By the Cardassian Articles of Jurisprudence Will Be Protected: Civil Liberties in *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*,” in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 9

November 29th: War and Terrorism

THIRD PAPER: “Is there really such a thing as a ‘just war’? If so, do few or many wars qualify?”

Parsons, chapter 12

Mary Elizabeth Sullivan, “Buggers and Astronauts: Ethics and Security in *Ender’s Game*,” in Allen and Vaughn, chapter 15

December 6th: Globalization

Parsons, chapter 13

FINAL EXAM: TBA