

**POSC 500:
FOUNDATIONS AND SCOPE OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Fall 2014
TH, 6:30-9:30 pm
SSPA 102**

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Regular Office Hours (SSPA 251): M, 11-12; T, 10-12; or during class break
(Book appointments for regular hours here:
www.CSULBPOSCWHITEHEAD.clickbook.net)

Course Description and Goals. This course analyzes the theoretical foundations and the empirical scope of discipline of political science. Through the course readings, written assignments and class discussions, we will address two (often contentious) questions: (1) What is political science? and (2) How do political scientists think about and practice political science?

The answers to these questions are extremely diverse and wide-ranging. No one seminar could possibly survey them all. However, we will explore the most prominent ways of answering them, as well as the most fruitful debates between those answers. My first goal is for you to understand and be able to discuss intelligently the basic details of the various answers and debates. My second and more important goal is for you to develop your own identity within political science generally and within your chosen sub-field(s) specifically.

Required Texts:

David Marsh and Gerry Stoker, eds. 2010. *Theory and Methods in Political Science*, 3rd edition.
New York: Palgrave MacMillan

Various articles available on JSTOR:

Log in through CSULB library website, using student account.

Various articles and book chapters available on BeachBoard

Course Requirements:

- **Class Participation (30%).** You will be expected to attend all class sessions, complete all assigned readings before class, and participate in class discussions. If for some reason you are not prepared to participate in the discussion, please let me know before class begins. See further instructions below on “Your Responsibilities.”
- **Two Analytic Essays (30% – each worth 15%) – Due Online Oct. 5 and Nov. 2.** These are 6-8 page papers, each of which must compare and analyze at least two different “approaches” to political science covered in Part Two of the course. See separate instructions posted on BeachBoard.

- **Oral Presentation (10%).** During one of the last two class sessions, you need to make a 10-15-minute oral presentation of the preliminary content of your critical literature review (see below). During this presentation, you must both summarize your paper and respond to questions from myself and your fellow class members.
- **Critical Literature Review (30%) – Due Online, Thursday, Dec. 11 at 9:15 PM.** This is a 15-20 page analysis of the work done by political scientists on a substantive topic of your own choosing.

Your Responsibilities as a Graduate Student. You should come to class with an understanding of, and a point of view about, the assigned readings. You should be an active, critical, and tenacious reader. At the same time, remember that it is always easier to find the weakness of an argument than to appreciate its strength. You should always make a special effort to understand the author’s point of view, even if you disagree.

Beyond these basics, remember that your primary responsibility as a graduate student is not merely to complete the assigned work, but to train yourself to think like a political scientist. The assigned readings are only a gateway into a vast landscape of literature that you will eventually be expected to master on your own. A very helpful way to acclimate yourself to this literature is by becoming a member of relevant professional organizations, such as the American Political Science Association (www.apsanet.org), the Western Political Science Association (www.wpsanet.org), and organized sections of those organizations corresponding to your sub-field. Relatedly, you should also find out which journals publish the best work in your field, subscribe to those journals (subscription is usually included in association membership), and make a practice of reading them. Finally, especially if you are interested in advanced graduate study, you should make an effort to attend and participate in professional conferences related to your sub-field.

E-mail and Office Hours. I will make every reasonable effort to help you understand the material better outside of class. The best way to reach me is almost always through e-mail (address noted at beginning of syllabus). I enjoy discussing these issues with you via e-mail, and I encourage you to take advantage of that opportunity. I will make every effort to reply to class-related e-mails within 24 hours, EXCEPT on weekends and holidays. I generally have a huge number of e-mails to answer immediately before exam dates or paper deadlines. Thus, I cannot guarantee a timely reply within 48 hours of these events. So, it is in your interest to start studying and working on your papers early so that you can take maximum advantage of my advice and help. I am also available during scheduled office hours, or by appointment when necessary. I love when students come by and chat about course-related issues – it’s one of the most significant things you can do to improve your college experience!

Grade-Related Communication –24-hour Cooling-off Period. I am always happy to review your essays and papers with you in order to help you improve for the future. However, if you are unhappy or dissatisfied with your grade, I require you to wait for at least 24 hours before e-mailing or talking to me in person. The reason for this delay is to allow you time to re-read the assignment, read and understand my comments, and otherwise consider your performance in a deliberate, thoughtful way. After 24 hours have gone by, if you have questions or concerns, please don’t hesitate to contact me. Always remember, this is not a game or a competition – it is

a learning process. Grades are designed to help you learn the material. If your focus is only on getting a better grade, you are missing the point. I am committed to helping you grow and develop as thinkers and writers, but that will only happen if you approach class the same way.

Problems. Come and see me as soon as possible if you are having problems understanding, keeping up, or if there is any reason you cannot be effectively engaged in the course. I will not provide any accommodations for these issues at the last minute, but if you talk to me in advance, we can almost always work something out.

Specific course policies regarding paper submission, exceptions, makeups, late assignments, cheating and plagiarism, students with disabilities and course withdrawal can be seen in the appendix at the end of this syllabus.

Course Outline and Reading Schedule

Part One: Introduction to Political Science

Aug. 28: The Origin of the Study of Politics

Aristotle, *The Politics*, Book I, 1252a-1253a; Book III, 1276b-1284b; 1287-88
(**BeachBoard**) (Section numbers can be found in the text boxes on right-hand side of the page).

Sep. 4: Social Science Theory

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 9
Emile Durkheim, "What is a Social Fact" (**BeachBoard**).
C. Wright Mills, "Abstracted Empiricism" (**BeachBoard**).
Richard Rorty, "A World Without Substances or Essences" (**BeachBoard**).

Sep. 11: History of Political Science

Marsh & Stoker, *Introduction*
Thomas F. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Summary by Frank Pajares) (**BeachBoard**)
John G. Gunnell. 2006. "The Founding of the American Political Science Association: Discipline, Profession, Political Theory and Politics." *American Political Science Review* 100(4): 479-86.
John S. Dryzek. 2006. "Revolutions Without Enemies: Key Transformations in Political Science." *American Political Science Review* 100(4): 487-92.
Rogers Smith. 2002. "Should We Make Political Science More of a Science or More About Politics?" *PS: Political Science and Politics* 35 (2): 199-201

Part Two: Approaches to Political Science

Sep. 18: Behavioralism

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 1

Robert A. Dahl. 1961. "The Behavioral Approach in Political Science: Epitaph for a Monument to a Successful Protest." *APSR* 55(4): 763-772.

David Easton, "The Future of the Postbehavioral Phase in Political Science" (**BeachBoard**).

Applications:

Angus Campbell, et. al, "Theoretical Orientation" (**BeachBoard**)

Seymour Martin Lipset. 1959. "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *APSR* 53 (1): 69-105.

Sep. 25: Rational Choice

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 2

Donald P. Green and Ian Shapiro, "Methodological Pathologies" (**BeachBoard**).

Application:

Kenneth Arrow. 1950. "A Difficulty in the Concept of Social Welfare." *The Journal of Political Economy* 58 (4): 328-346.

Timothy J. Feddersen. 2004. "Rational Choice Theory and the Paradox of Non-Voting." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 18(1):99-112.

Oct. 2: Institutionalism

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 3

James G. March and Johan P. Olsen. 1984. "The New Institutionalism: Organizational Factors in Political Life," *APSR* 78(3): 734-749.

Applications:

Rogers M. Smith. 1988. "Political Jurisprudence, the 'New Institutionalism,' and the Future of Public Law." *APSR* 82(1):89-108.

Barry R. Weingast, 1995. "The Economic Role of Political Institutions: Market-Preserving Federalism and Economic Development." *The Journal of Law, Economics & Organization* 11(1):1-31.

Oct. 5 at 11:59 PM: Analytic Essay #1 Due Online

Oct. 9: Marxism and Critical Theory

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 7 & pp. 164-67

Karl Marx, "Marxist Methodology (With Theses on Feuerbach)"

(BeachBoard) (NOTE: you are only required to read pp. 20-23).

Max Horkheimer, "Traditional and Critical Theory"

(BeachBoard).

Ben Agger. 1991. "Critical Theory, Poststructuralism, Postmodernism: Their Sociological Relevance." *Annual Review of Sociology* 17:105-18.

Applications:

Michael Parenti. 1970. "Power and Pluralism: A View From the Bottom." *The Journal of Politics* 32(3):501-30.

Ben Agger. 1991. "Critical Theory, Poststructuralism, Postmodernism: Their Sociological Relevance." *Annual Review of Sociology* 17:118-31.

Oct. 16: Interpretivism

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 4 & pp. 170-73

Hans-George Gadamer (Richard Kearney, ed.), "The Universality of the Hermeneutic Problem" **(BeachBoard).**

Charles Taylor, "The Dialogical Self" **(BeachBoard).**

Applications:

Gibbons, Michael T. 2006. "Hermeneutics, Political Inquiry, and Practical Reason: An Evolving Challenge to Political Science." *APSR* 100: 563-87.

Michael McCann, "Rights at Work: Introduction" **(BeachBoard).**

Oct. 23: Feminism

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 6

Judith Grant, "Inventing Feminist Theory" **(BeachBoard)**

Applications:

- Heidi I. Hartmann, “The Family as the Locus of Gender, Class, and Political Struggle (**BeachBoard**).
- Joan C. Tronto, “Is Morality Gendered?” (**BeachBoard**).

Part Three: Research Methods

Oct. 30: Quantitative Methods

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 13

Applications:

Amy Widestrom and Christopher Dennis, “Party Control of State Governments and Income Distribution in the American States” (**BeachBoard**)

Kevin Wallsten, “‘Yes We Can’: How Online Viewership, Blog Discussion, Campaign Statements, and Mainstream Media Coverage Produced a Viral Video Phenomenon” (**BeachBoard**)

Nov. 2 at 11:59 PM: Analytic Essay #2 Due Online

Nov. 6: Qualitative Methods

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 12

“Book Reviews: Symposium on Qualitative Research Methods in Political Science.” *Journal of Politics* 70(1):272-92.

Applications:

Jason Whitehead. “Searching for the Rule of Law: An Empirical Overview,” (**BeachBoard**).

Cora Goldstein, “The Afghanistan Experience: Democratization by Force” (**BeachBoard**)

Nov. 13: Mixed & Comparative Methods

Concepts:

Marsh & Stoker, Ch. 14

Isadore Newman, “Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods: An Interactive Continuum” (**BeachBoard**).

Applications:

Seymour Martin Lipset, "The End of Political Exceptionalism?"

(BeachBoard)

Teresa Wright. 1999. "State Repression and Student Protest in Contemporary China," *China Quarterly* 157 (March), pp. 142-172.

Nov. 20: Oral Presentations

Nov. 27: No Class – Thanksgiving Day

Dec. 4: Oral Presentations

Thursday, Dec. 11 at 9:15 PM: Critical Literature Review Due

Appendix: Miscellaneous Course Policies

Paper Submissions. You must upload your paper to the appropriate electronic "dropbox" on BeachBoard. *I will not accept papers submitted in any other way.* You must save a copy of the electronic notification you receive when you successfully upload your paper to BeachBoard. In the event of a discrepancy as to whether or when you submitted your paper, this electronic notification is the only proof I will accept. You must also keep an electronic or paper copy of your paper.

Exceptions, Make-ups, and Late Assignments. Exam Dates and Paper Deadlines are firm! It is your responsibility to arrange your schedule around your academic responsibilities. In general, **exceptions will only be made for the following reasons, for which satisfactory documentation must be provided:** (1) Illness or injury to the student; (2) Death, injury, or serious illness of an immediate family member or the like; (3) Religious reasons (listed in California Education Code section 89320); (4) Jury duty or government obligation; or (5) University sanctioned or approved activities, such as artistic performances, forensics competitions, participation in research conferences, intercollegiate athletic activities, student government, required class field trips, etc.. **To be excused under #1 or 2, you must provide BOTH satisfactory documentation as soon as possible AND evidence of work completed on the assignment at the time of sickness or illness. To be excused under #s 3-5, however, you must provide me with satisfactory documentation at least 1 week prior to the exam or deadline.** If you have a legitimate excuse for missing an exam, I will arrange for an appropriate make-up exam. If you have a legitimate excuse for missing a paper deadline, we will work out

an appropriate alternative deadline AS LONG AS you can demonstrate that you have already completed an appropriate amount of work on the assignment.

Grade Reduction for Late Papers. Written assignments are due at the *beginning* of the class period on which the deadline falls. **In the event of an unexcused late paper, I will immediately mark it down by a third of a grade for being late on the day it is due. I will then mark it down another third of a grade for every 24-hour period in which it is late.** For example, a paper due on Tuesday but not turned in until Thursday will be reduced by two-thirds of a grade -- a "B" paper would receive a "C+." Note, however, that this does not apply to the required case briefs, which will only receive credit if they are turned in by the deadline. *You will not receive any credit for late briefs.* Make the most of the time you have to complete written assignments; no allowances will be made for last-minute problems with computers, networks, etc..

Cheating and Plagiarism. It is my policy to deal with any form of cheating and/or plagiarism by immediately giving a failing grade on the assignment and reporting you to the department and other administrative authorities for other possible sanctions. If you are having problems with the course material, please come and see me before doing something that could put your academic career in jeopardy.

Please note that "plagiarism" includes *any use* of the ideas or work of others as if they were one's own, without giving appropriate credit. That means that *failing to cite your sources* is more than just a technical glitch -- it is plagiarism and will be handled as such. See separate paper instructions for citation guidelines and please see me if you are having difficulty understanding what is required in this area.

Students with Disabilities. I am completely committed to providing reasonable accommodations for any student with a verifiable physical or other disability. This may include alternative testing or note-taking arranged through Disabled Student Services. However, it is your responsibility to notify me in advance of the need for such an accommodation.

University Withdrawal Policy. It is your responsibility to withdraw from class if you wish to do so. I have no obligation to withdraw registered students who stop attending or completing assignments. **The deadline to withdraw from a class without a "W" for this semester is Sep. 8, 2014.**

Withdrawal from a course after that date requires the signature of the instructor and the department chair, and is permissible only for serious and compelling reasons. For example, severe or extensive medical problems would be serious and compelling, but fear of receiving a final grade lower than desired, or a change in one's work schedule would not be considered serious and compelling. If withdrawal is allowed, a "W" will appear on your transcript.

DURING THE FINAL THREE WEEKS OF INSTRUCTION (AFTER Nov. 14, 2014) WITHDRAWALS ARE NOT PERMITTED EXCEPT IN CASES SUCH AS ACCIDENT OR SERIOUS ILLNESS WHERE THE CIRCUMSTANCES CAUSING THE WITHDRAWAL ARE CLEARLY BEYOND THE STUDENT'S CONTROL. THE CAUSE MUST BE

DOCUMENTED. ORDINARILY, WITHDRAWALS IN THIS CATEGORY INVOLVE TOTAL WITHDRAWAL FROM THE UNIVERSITY. YOU WILL NEED THE APPROVAL OF THE COLLEGE DEAN AS WELL AS THAT OF THE CLASS INSTRUCTOR AND THE DEPARTMENT CHAIRPERSON FOR EACH CLASS.