

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

*Humanities Department / Political Science
Takoma Park / Silver Spring Campus*

POLI: 105 - INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

TEMPLATE

Course Description

Basic principles and concepts of political science. Scope and methods of political science, nature and purposes of the state; government, its organization and functions; politics, elections, parties, pressure groups, international relations, and political thought. Assessment Level(s): ENGL 101/ENGL 101A, READ 120. Three hours each week. 3 semester hours

Course Outcomes

Upon course completion, a student will be able to:

- *Demonstrate an understanding and appreciation for key political science concepts. (Knowledge)
- *Describe the theory and ideology of prominent political philosophers. (Knowledge)
- *Identify the theory behind and purpose of American political institutions including elections, parties, and pressure groups. (Ability)
- *Analyze and compare contemporary political ideologies, institutions and processes in a variety of nation-states in both democratic and non-democratic systems. (Ability)
- *Demonstrate an understanding of the complexity and historical context of political problems in contemporary society. (Knowledge)
- *Exhibit skill in presenting ideas through writing and class discussions and presentations. (Ability)

Course Materials

The primary sources of information will be class assignments and assigned readings in the following:

Political Science: An Introduction / Michael G. Roskin, Robert L. Cord, James A. Medeiros, Walter S. Jones – 14th Ed. and **additional readings as determined by the professor.**

-In addition, students must read or visit the website of one of the following media sources on a weekly basis:

The Washington Post
The New York Times
The BBC / CNN
Al-Jazeera (available live online)
Press TV (available live online)

Course Syllabus

Introduction to Politics is a survey course designed to enhance the student's understanding of political systems and processes. In addition to understanding the theoretical aspects of the study of government and politics, students will also concentrate on the specific goals, ideals, structures and functions of different governments.

This syllabus is a planned course of study that is subject to change by the professor. Change in assignments, readings, and due dates are made to facilitate individual and group learning as needed.

Teaching procedure:

To achieve these objectives we will be making use of selected readings and occasional guest speakers, in an attempt to create an active learning environment. Therefore, attendance and participation are essential. Each week we will be focusing on a part of the political system. The three main divisions are the institutions, policy and politics. *The amount of time we will spend on each period will vary depending on the amount of important and relevant events that take place in that period, and the amount of knowledge you already have on it.* The course will not be a straight lecture of your book, nor consist of memorizing names. Rather, students will take an active role in searching for evidence, examining viewpoints, analyzing cause and effect, making conjecture and understanding the relevance of Political Science.

In any subject it is essential to use what you learn. Service learning is “the process of integrating thoughtfully organized service experiences with guided reflection to enhance student learning of course materials.” In a democratic society that virtually demands participation from citizens, use of civic and governmental knowledge is critical. In order to expand your opportunity to use your knowledge of government, there may be opportunities to engage in service for extra credit.

WEEKLY COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1

- Introduction, syllabus overview
- Chapter 1: Politics and Political Science, sections 1.1 and 1.2
- Chapter 1: Politics and Political Science, sections 1.3 and 1.4

WEEK 2

- NO CLASS
- Chapter 2: Political Ideologies; review of material for Quiz 1
- Short class discussion on news; **Quiz 1**

WEEK 3

- Guest speaker: TBD
- Chapter 3: States, sections 3.1 and 3.2; review quiz results
- Chapter 3: States, sections 3.3 – 3.5

WEEK 4

- Paper 1** due on political philosophers; class discussion on news
- Guest speaker: State Delegate Aruna Miller, former candidate for Congress
- Chapter 4: Constitutions and Rights

WEEK 5

- U.S. Articles of Confederation and U.S. Constitution
- U.S. Bill of Rights
- 1st amendment in U.S. Bill of Rights; review of material for Quiz 2

WEEK 6

- Short class discussion; **Quiz 2**
- Chapter 5: Regimes; review quiz results
- Chapter 6: Political Culture; discuss 2nd paper

WEEK 7

- Chapter 7: Public Opinion
- Chapter 8: Political Communication
- Chapter 9: Interest Groups

WEEK 8

- Chapter 10: Parties
- Chapter 11: Elections
- Selected readings on electoral college; wrap up chapters 6-11; discuss 2nd paper

WEEK 9

- Selected readings on political parties
- Selected readings on political polling
- Paper 2** due on fixing government; brief discussion of presentations; class discussion on news

WEEK 10

- Chapter 12: Legislatures
- Chapter 13: Executives and Bureaucracies
- Chapter 14: Judiciaries

WEEK 11

- Pre-election discussion; selected readings on election
- Post-election discussion; selected readings on election
- Selected readings on Maryland legislature

WEEK 12-Guest speaker: TBD

- Selected readings on President and relationship to 3 branches of government; review of material for quiz 3
- Short class discussion; **Quiz 3**

WEEK 13

- Review quiz results; long discussion on individual presentations

WEEK 14

- Chapter 15: Political Economy (continue w/ presentation discussions)
- Chapter 16: Violence and Revolution; (continue w/ presentation discussions)
- Chapter 17: International Relations (continue w/ presentation discussions)

WEEK 15

- Individual Presentations**
- Individual Presentations**
- Individual Presentations**

Grades

Students will demonstrate in examinations, papers and in the class presentation, the ability to analyze the systems and processes of government and describe how they work. Additional points may be available through extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. Extra credit will be available on each quiz, on each paper (for those who go to the writing center), attendance at specific campus events plus extra assignments related to the election.

Grading standard / Scale

3 Short Quizzes	450 points (150 each)
2 Short Papers	300 points (1 st paper -100; 2 nd paper 200)
Individual Presentation	150 points
Class Participation & Attendance	<u>100 points</u>

Total 1000 points

Scale**900-1000 points =A****800-899 points =B****700-799 points =C****600-699 points =D****0-599 points =F**

- A** Superior work; student demonstrates comprehensive knowledge and understanding of subject matter and course objectives.
- B** Good; student demonstrates moderately broad knowledge and understanding of course objectives
- C** Average; reasonable knowledge and understanding of course objectives
- D** Pass without recommendation; minimum knowledge and understanding of course objectives
- F** Failure; unacceptable low level of knowledge and understanding of subject matter. F is also for excessive absences, academic dishonesty or misconduct.

Important Student Information Link

In addition to course requirements and objectives that are in this syllabus, Montgomery College has information on its web site (<http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/mcsyllabus/>) to assist you in having a successful experience both inside and outside of the classroom. It is important that you read and understand this information. The link provides information and other resources pertaining to the following: student behavior (student code of conduct), student e-mail, the tobacco free policy, withdraw and refund dates, disability support services, veteran services, how to access information on delayed openings and closings, how to register for the Montgomery College alert System, and finally, how closings and delays can impact your classes. If you have any questions please bring them to your professor. As rules and regulations change they will be updated and you will be able to access them through the link. If any student would like a written copy of these policies and procedures, the professor would be happy to provide them. By registering for this class and staying in this class, you are indicating that you acknowledge and accept these policies.

College Closing/Delay Policy

On occasion, Montgomery College will announce a late opening or early closing of a specific campus or the entire college because of weather conditions or other emergencies. Since classes begin at various times throughout the day, a late opening or early closing will possibly occur during our regularly scheduled class period.

If the College opens or closes at a time when more than 50% of a class period will be missed, that class will be cancelled for the day. For example, if the College is closing at 5:00 p.m., a class that begins at 4:45 p.m. would not meet.

If less than 50% of a class will be missed, or if the class will meet for at least 50 minutes, that class will meet for the remaining portion of its regularly scheduled time. For example, if the College opens at 11:00 a.m., a class that begins at 10:55 a.m. will meet, starting at 11:00 a.m.

For the most up-to-date information regarding College openings, closings, or emergencies, all students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to sign up for email and text alerts via the Montgomery County MC ALERT at <https://alert.montgomerycountymd.gov/index.php?CCheck=1>

Student Code of Conduct

The Montgomery College Student Code of Conduct that outlines the policies, regulations, and procedures of the College regarding academic honesty and student behavior, including penalties and appeals, governs this class. The complete code can be found in the student handbook and at http://cms.montgomerycollege.edu/pnp/#Chapter_4

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of intellectual honesty and are prohibited from "cheating on assignments or examinations; submitting materials that are not the student's own; taking examinations in the place of another student; plagiarizing from written, video, or internet resources, assisting others in committing academic dishonesty, failing to use quotation marks for directly quoted material unless using block quotes or other accepted formats, and, copying from another student during examinations."

In addition, students have "the responsibility to treat the instructor and classmates with civility, respect and courtesy." No student has the right to interfere with the freedom of the faculty to teach or the right of other students to learn.

Students who violate the guidelines of acceptable standards as described above or in the code, will receive a warning and a copy of which will be sent to the Dean of Student Development. If the student refuses to exhibit the stated behaviors, the matter will be referred in writing to the Dean of Student Development for action under the Student Code of Conduct.

CLASSROOM LEARNING TIPS

1. TYPICAL CLASS DAY. Learning objectives are usually reviewed orally and placed on the board daily. We usually begin each "new chapter" by reviewing the chapter organization, summary~ and discussion questions (if any). Students are responsible for any questions, learning objectives, or material not covered during class. This means that if students are not prepared for class, we end up spending more time reviewing material you should have read at home and that we have "less time" to answer your questions. This also means you must cover the material on your own.

2. NOTE TAKING. Don't feel you must write every word down (and miss big picture). Write down key points (main ideas) with supporting evidence (examples to support main idea). Listen and look for the big picture. If you have gaps, compare your notes with a fellow classmate. Fill in gaps from textbook or readings OR see instructor during office hours.

3. LISTEN...BE AN ACTIVE NOT A PASSIVE LEARNER. Sit at front of class or in a seat where the instructor can easily see your hand. Read material thoroughly and identify questions or areas you would like to have instructor go over in advance.

4. ORGANIZING YOUR LEARNING SURVEY. As you read each chapter, think of the following elements: 1) What are the topics covered? 2) What is the key vocabulary highlighted or in boldface. 3) Are there review questions or a summary at the end to clue you in to KEY IDEAS? 4) READ the material. 4) Stop at the end of every topic and make sure you understand what it said before going on to the next section. 5) REVIEW: Having surveyed the chapter, go through review questions; these will increase comprehension and allow you to identify gaps.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS & Policies: Teaching & Learning

1. Student Handbook: Students should refer to the **Student Handbook** for the official wording of all academic, classroom, and college wide policies. The policies contained in this syllabus are not intended to override or contradict those of the college or the Student Handbook.

2. Critical Thinking: Political Science is a learning process that requires the ability to think conceptually and analytically. This skill like all other skills, requires practice that is constant and at different levels of difficulty. The most learning takes place when you apply your new way of thinking to real life problems and situations of your own.

3. Classroom participation and homework: Learning requires your active participation. Plan on **spending at least an additional 3-5** hours per week outside of class doing your reading and preparing for class; this includes reading select media sources. Your homework is to read the material thoroughly, digest what you have read, and come prepared to present your questions and learning. Ask questions no matter how uncertain - there are no “right”, wrong or dumb questions. Every question and inquiry is important if it helps you and others in the class.

4. Classroom Relationships: I encourage you to find a study partner, or two, from class. Select your study partner carefully so you can be a real help to each other.

5. Attendance: will be taken daily. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. You are allowed three unexcused absences during the semester. **Points will be deducted on the final grade for each and every class missed above the 3 class threshold.** Financial aid policy requires that your attendance be monitored. If you anticipate a long absence (e.g., death in family or illness), please ensure that we discuss your situation personally before the event or as soon as you learn that it will impact your attendance.

6. Classroom Etiquette (arriving late/leaving early): Class begins promptly on time. Students entering the class more than 15 minutes after scheduled time will be counted as late/tardy. If you are tardy 3 times - it will count as one of your unexcused absences. If you must leave class early for some reason, please discuss it with me before class begins so that we can determine whether you should attend that session or not. You are rude to me and to your classmates when you leave us

without explanation or disrupt our normal routine. **Cell Phones** must not be visible and should be switched off during the class. If you use your phone in class, I will count you as absent.

7. Talking: Students talking disruptively in class will be asked to leave.

8. Make up exams and assignments: Make up exams are usually not granted. They are available at the discretion of the instructor and requests must be substantiated by medical note or other good extenuating reasons. In the event a make-up exam is granted, the instructor (not the student's calendar) will specify time, date, and location of make-up. Do not schedule vacations, dental appointments, etc. on test days. **Assume that a test cancelled due to inclement weather (e.g., a "snow" day) will be held on the following class session.**

9. Diversity in Learning Style: I am committed to meeting reasonable requests to accommodate individual needs and learning styles of students. If you have a disability that will require accommodation, please contact the Disability Support Services office to obtain a letter authorizing your accommodations.

10. Extensions/delays in submitting: Work shall be submitted on a timely basis. Requests for extensions to submit work must be secured from the instructor a week in advance -- not the day the assignment is due. Do not assume your absence from class excuses you from meeting the deadline to submit work.

11. Plagiarism: The writing in this course will require you to use the ideas and words of other writers in your papers. You must become familiar with using the MLA or APA style to credit those writers and avoid any possibility of plagiarism. Plagiarism is copying ideas from someone without acknowledging the sources of those ideas. Plagiarism is not tolerated and student may be subject to dismissal or other disciplinary action.

12. Disability: Any student who may need an accommodation due to a disability, please make an appointment to see me during my office hour. In order to receive accommodations, a letter from Disability Support Services(R-CB122; G-SA175; or TP/SS-ST120) will be needed. Any student who may need assistance in the event of an emergency evacuation must identify to the Disability Support Services Office; guidelines for emergency evacuations are at: www.montgomerycollege.edu/dss/evacprocedures.htm.