

# Introduction to Political Science

Political Science 1000  
University of Nebraska Omaha  
Fall 2015

Tuesday & Thursday 10:00-11:15 am  
Arts and Sciences Hall 384

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Office: Arts and Sciences Hall 275  
Office Hours: M&W 9:00-11:00 am  
T 1:00-2:00 pm  
(And by appointment)

## Course Description

This course serves as an introduction to the world of politics—both domestic and international. It will cover fundamentals of government and politics and introduce you to political science as a field of study. Political science approaches big questions of the human experience: Who guards the guardians? Why do countries democratize? Why do countries go to war? We will examine basic political concepts and ideas as well as processes and institutions found in different types of political systems around the world. This course seeks to guide you in understanding politics through systematic, scientific study and to help you to develop the skills necessary to analyze political issues that you observe in your daily lives. My goal for you as citizens is to be savvy political actors—mature consumers of political information and empowered participants in your own right.

## Course Materials

Textbook: Grigsby, Ellen. 2015. *Analyzing Politics: An Introduction to Political Science*. Stamford: Cengage Learning, sixth edition. (**AP** on reading schedule).

*The New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com>)

Supplementary individual class readings will be available on the UNO online system, Blackboard.

**Evaluation:** Your course grade will be based on the following:

Attendance and Participation: 20% (including written assignments, discussions, in-class activities)

Exam 1: 20%

Exam 2: 20%

Exam 3: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

## **Participation (20%)**

The course will require active student participation. Students are expected to do the assigned readings and come to class prepared to share your questions, comments, and ideas. Plan to ask and answer questions, clarify readings, to discuss course material, and to participate in activities. The classroom offers you a forum to engage with your peers and to learn from each other. I expect everyone to promote an active learning environment by supporting each other intellectually, asking questions, and by being an aggressive learner.

We will routinely have in-class discussions, activities, and written assignments (both in-class and take-home) that are part of your participation grade. **A standing assignment for each class session is to have read the politically relevant news in *The New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/>)** before coming to class. We will begin each day with a discussion of current events.

A few basic ground rules:

- Always be present, physically and mentally—**Laptops, phones, texting devices are not allowed during class**
- Treat everyone in the class with patience and respect
- Be curious and ask questions of your classmates, of our readings, and of me
- When you speak, remember that you are in dialogue with the entire class. Speak to and listen to all of your classmates
- You are responsible for your own learning and accountable for your own work—you are ultimately in charge of your own educational experience

## **Exams (4 total, 20% each)**

The in-class exams will consist of identification questions and short essays. Mastery of both the lecture material and the assigned readings will be necessary for the exams. *Do not miss exams. If an emergency arises and you cannot make it, please contact me beforehand to request a makeup exam. The ability to make up work missed will be at the discretion of the instructor. Make up exams will be more challenging in format and content than the in-class exams. Un-excused absences from exams will result in a grade of “zero” for that exam.*

## **UNO Writing Center**

The UNO Writing Center offers free one-on-one consultations with trained consultants to all students, faculty, and staff. Their goal is to help writers improve their writing skills and confidence in all types of writing, in all subject areas, and at all stages of the writing process. For more information about their hours and locations or to schedule an appointment, visit their website at [www.unomaha.edu/writingcenter](http://www.unomaha.edu/writingcenter) or visit them at their main location in Arts and Sciences Hall, Room 150. I strongly encourage you to meet with the Writing Center to explore what they have to offer and to see how they can support your success here at UNO.

## Academic Integrity

You must maintain academic integrity at all times. Plagiarism/cheating are serious academic crimes, and I will pursue any infringements seriously and actively. At a minimum, any infringement will result in a grade of “zero” on the assignment. For more information on University of Nebraska Omaha policies on academic integrity, please see: <http://www.unomaha.edu/student-life/achievement/student-conduct-and-community-standards/policies/academic-integrity.php>

## Special Accommodations

Accommodations are provided for students who are registered with Disability Services and make their requests sufficiently in advance. For more information, contact Disability Services (MBSC 111, Phone: 402-554-2872, TTY: 402-554-3799) or go to the website: [www.unomaha.edu/disability](http://www.unomaha.edu/disability).

## Late Policy

Late papers will be penalized by two-thirds of a letter grade per day late. For example, an “A+” paper one day late would receive a grade of an “A-.”

## Schedule of Class Meetings

| Week | Topics  | Date  | Day     | Assignments                   |
|------|---|---|---------|-------------------------------|
| 1    | Introduction and orientation to the course                              | 08/25<br>08/27                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 1                      |
| 2    | Political Science and Scientific Methods in Studying Politics           | 09/01<br>09/03                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 2<br>(Review AP Ch. 2) |
| 3    | Key Concepts in Political Science                                       | 09/08<br>09/10                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 3                      |
| 4    | Key Concepts continued  | 09/15<br>09/17                              | T<br>Th | <b>Exam I</b>                 |
| 5    | Political Theory: Examining the Ethical Foundations of Politics         | 09/22<br>09/24                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 4                      |
| 6    | Political Ideologies I: Liberalism, Conservatism, and Socialism         | 09/29<br>10/01                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 5                      |
| 7    | Political Ideologies II: Fascism  | 10/06<br>10/08                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 6                      |
| 8    | Political Ideologies III: Feminism, Environmentalism, and Postmodernism | 10/13<br>10/15                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 7<br><b>Exam II</b>    |
| 9    | Comparative Politics I: Democracies and Nondemocracies                  | 10/20 (Semester Break, No Classes)<br>10/22 | Th      | AP Ch. 8                      |
| 10   | Comparative Politics I continued  | 10/27<br>10/29                              | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 8<br>continued         |
| 11   | Comparative Politics II: Interest Groups, Political Parties, Elections  | 11/3<br>11/5                                | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 9                      |
| 12   | Comparative Politics II continued                                       | 11/10                                       | T       | AP Ch. 9                      |

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|----|--|---|---------|------------------------------|
|    |  | 11/12   | Th      | continued<br><b>Exam III</b> |
| 13 | Comparative Politics III: Governing Democracies: Executives, Legislatures, Judiciaries | 11/17<br>11/19                                | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 10                    |
| 14 | International Relations I: Introduction  | 11/24<br>11/26 (Thanksgiving Break, No Class) | T       | AP Ch. 11                    |
| 15 | International Relations I: Introduction (continued)/II: Contemporary Issues            | 12/1<br>12/3                                  | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 11<br>AP Ch. 12       |
| 16 | International Relations II: Contemporary Issues  | 12/8<br>12/10                                 | T<br>Th | AP Ch. 12                    |

**Final Exam: Thursday, December 17 at 10:00 am**