

Gloucester County College
Spring 2011 POL-103: Introduction to Political Science

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Class Meeting Time: R 6:00-8:30p
Class Location: College Center, Rm. 202
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description

This is an introductory course in political science with emphasis on the tools of the discipline, political systems, political policy making, political philosophy, and political change.

Course Objectives

1. Provide a general overview to the field of political science as an academic discipline.
2. Examine issues in the area of political science.
3. Evaluate generalized theories in light of America's political experience.
4. Provide a foundation for further exploitation in the field of political science.
5. Help to instill an interest in political participation.

Gloucester County College Core Competencies

This list reflects the *core* competencies that are essential for all GCC graduates, but does not include *all* competencies that our graduates should possess.

Solve Problems

Critical Thinking and Information Literacy

The ability to access, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and apply information from a variety of sources to make sound decisions

Mathematical Reasoning

The ability to understand and solve practical problems using mathematical methods

Teamwork

The ability to work collaboratively with others to solve problems efficiently and effectively

Share Information

Communication

The ability to communicate one's thoughts in a clear and concise manner both orally and in writing

Computer/Technological Literacy

The ability to use technology for research, information processing and communication

Live Responsibly

Awareness of the Arts

The ability to understand and appreciate literary, visual or performing arts

Community Skills

The ability to understand historical and current events in a global context and the social, political and environmental responsibilities of global citizenship

Personal Skills

The ability to understand the individual's responsibility for learning and for maintaining a healthy lifestyle

POL 103 Core Competencies

This course focuses on four of GCC's Core Competencies. Those four are:

1. Critical Thinking and Information Literacy
2. Communication
3. Computer/Technological Literacy
4. Community Skills

Student Learning Outcomes

| POL-103 students will | GCC Core Competency | Evaluation/ Assessment |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Provide a general overview to the field of Political Science as an academic discipline. a. Describe the central questions that political scientists investigate and the methods of inquiry they use to do so. b. Demonstrate an understanding of and an ability to apply the basic concepts and theories that political scientists use most frequently to analyze major political ideas, institutions, and issues. c. Define the basic vocabulary and concepts used by political scientists. | - Critical Thinking and Information Literacy -Communication | -Observation and Discussion -Class Participation - Examinations and Quizzes - Assignments |
| 2. Examine issues in the area of Political Science. a. Demonstrate an understanding of the central political, economic, and social issues driving contemporary inter-state relations and conflict in the world today. b. Identify, analyze, and compare the major types of political regimes, governments, electoral systems, and party systems in use in the world today. | - Critical Thinking and Information Literacy -Communication -Community Skills | -Observation and Discussion -Class Participation -Examinations and Quizzes -Research Project -Assignments |
| 3. Evaluate generalized theories in | - Critical Thinking and | -Observation and |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| <p>light of America's political experience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Demonstrate an understanding of America's political development. b. Develop a basic understanding of democracy and what it means today. c. Demonstrate a general knowledge of the U.S. Constitution. d. Understand the three cornerstones of American Government: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial, and their roles. e. Identify and analyze the problems facing America today. | <p>Information Literacy -Communication - Computer/Technological Literacy</p> | <p>Discussion -Case Study Analysis -Class Participation -Examinations and Quizzes -Assignments</p> |
| <p>4. Provide a foundation for further exploitation in the field of Political Science.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Differentiate between the four subfields of Political Science: Political Theory, International Relations, Comparative Politics, and Boundary Spanning as a foundation for further study. | <p>- Critical Thinking and Information Literacy - Computer/Technological Literacy - Communication</p> | <p>-Observation and Discussion -Class Participation -Assignments</p> |
| <p>5. Help to instill an interest in political participation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Construct an effective argument for the importance of the study of politics for every day life. b. Understand that events around the world influence our day-to-day lives. | <p>- Critical Thinking and Information Literacy - Computer/Technological Literacy - Communication</p> | <p>-Observation and Discussion -Class Participation -Assignments</p> |

Required Course Text

Ethridge and Handelman, *Politics in a Changing World 5th ed.* (New York: Thomson Learning, 2010); hereafter known as EH.

You are also required to keep abreast of current political news from around the world. You will also be asked to monitor news and analysis from selected non-American newspapers on the web for assignments.

Readings

The required readings from the text are listed in the class schedule; supplementary readings for each topic will be announced. You should be prepared to discuss the reading assignments in class.

Class Website

There is a website for this class. The URL for the website is listed at the beginning of this syllabus. Study guides, links to political-related websites, class syllabi, updated class schedule, and other material will be posted on the website. Details of the website will be discussed in class.

Requirements and Grading

Class Participation (15%): Class participation is important to active learning. The format of the class will be largely lectures, but there will be daily opportunities for questions and discussions. Your abilities to read and think critically can be improved by diligently reading the assignments and reflecting upon them. Your active listening and talking can also improve these abilities. Some class time will be scheduled to review, clarify, and expand on topics raised by the students based on their reading and class lectures.

Students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet at the beginning of each class meeting. I expect everyone to attend class on the scheduled dates and times. This means coming to class alert, willing to ask and answer questions, and to contribute intellectually to class discussions. Remember that you are expected to have completed the assigned readings before the class meeting.

Coming to class prepared is important particularly because when calculating your final grade, I will consider your class participation. In addition, exams will cover material from the readings and the lectures, so doing just one or the other will leave you at a disadvantage. If I consistently detect a pattern of only a few students reading, there will be graded "pop-quizzes." Note that the class participation portion of each student's grade is non-negotiable and left solely to the discretion of the instructor.

Consistent class participation and attendance will be important in assigning final grades to students that are on the "borderline" between two letter grades.

Please make an effort to create an environment conducive to intellectual conversation and learning for everyone in class. Avoid especially the following kind of disruptive or distracting behavior: side-conversations when someone else is speaking, sleeping, reading things that are not related to the course, working on crossword puzzles, doing homework for another class, playing with cell-phone/laptops, chronic lateness, unnecessary exits, etc. The students who will be seen doing any of these will be warned the first time. Thereafter, 10 points from the final course grade will be deducted each time.

Quizzes (10%): Periodically during the semester, quizzes will be given to enable students to see how they are doing in mastering the course material (readings, lectures, and discussions). These are geared to making sure students stay current with the course material and that students are studying effectively. Problems on the quizzes may presage problems on the midterm and final examination, so beware. If you are not

succeeding on the quizzes as well as you would like—and you have been trying, come see the instructor to develop a plan to help you improve your performance in the course.

Examinations (40%): To measure your progress in this class, I will administer two examinations – a midterm and a final. These exams will consist of a mix of short answer and essay questions.

Current Event Précis (10%): Throughout the semester, students will be required to submit several current events précis. Students may select any international news story they wish from the list of sources in the webliography on the course website and must summarize the information into a well structured one-two page brief. Additional details will be discussed in class.

Research Project (25%): There will be one research paper of approximately 6-8 pages which will make up 25% of your grade for the course. Further details will be discussed in class.

Policies for Assignments: Students are encouraged to plan in advance to make time to complete assignments. Things come up during the semester; relatives require our attention, cars break down, and students get sick. Students should begin their assignments early enough to allow for these foreseeable and unforeseeable eventualities. The instructor does not wish to receive any late assignments during the semester.

All work must be typed, double-spaced, and in 12-point font. All work must be submitted by the beginning of class. Each twenty-four hours that a paper is late may result in a penalty of 15%. Late papers must be submitted by e-mail (pasted into your message and attached in Word format) and must receive confirmation of receipt from the instructor to be considered "turned in." For your protection, submit your paper from an e-mail account which will keep a record of your outgoing e-mail. With this, you could demonstrate a true attempt to submit the paper that somehow disappears into the electronic ether. Do not submit papers to the instructor's faculty snail mailbox or to the department secretary. Late assignments will not be graded on the same schedule as assignments submitted on time. Under no circumstances should students miss class to complete an assignment. Exceptions to this policy will be granted only in extraordinary circumstances (see Exam Make-up Policy).

Exam Make-up Policy: Only extraordinary circumstances beyond your control will be considered for missed exams (i.e., severe illness, hospitalization, bereavement, etc). Documentation is required. Quizzes cannot be made up.

Grades are based on the following standard scale:

| Percentage | Letter | Percentage | Letter |
|------------|--------|------------|--------|
| 100-93% | A | 92-91% | A- |
| 90-89% | B+ | 88-84% | B |
| 83-82% | B- | 81-80% | C+ |
| 79-75% | C | 74-73% | C- |
| 72-71% | D+ | 70-66% | D |
| 65-64% | D- | 64 – Below | F |

Grades will be calculated as follows:

| Course Assignments | Maximum Points | Weight | Your points |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| Class Participation | 150 | 15% | |
| Current Event Précis (4 at 25 points) | 100 | 10% | |
| Quizzes (4 at 25 points) | 100 | 10% | |
| Exams (2 at 200 points) | 400 | 40% | |
| Research Paper | 250 | 25% | |
| Maximum possible points | 1000 | 100% | |

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity: One of the principle cornerstones of an educational enterprise is the concept of academic integrity. Just as integrity is a basic concept of a free society, so too it is a basic concept of a free and inquiring academic institution. In its most elemental form, academic integrity encompasses the principles of an honest, fair and continuing pursuit of the truth, and means that students are expected to do and be responsible for their own work. Moreover, the process takes place in a collegial environment where each participant has a responsibility for fair dealing with the other members of the community. Gloucester County College is committed to the principle of Academic Integrity and the educational experience it fosters.

Violations of Academic Integrity

Because of the importance the College attaches to the concept of Academic integrity, Gloucester County College finds the following to exemplify violations of this important principle.

Cheating

Cheating is the intentional use, or attempted use of materials, information or study aids, other than those specifically authorized, an attempt to claim credit for learning that is not one's own. Under this definition, cheating is not limited to examination matters but can encompass the myriad of educational activities that occur both within and outside the classroom setting.

Collusion

Collusion is the working together in preparation of separate course assignments in ways not authorized by the instructor. Unless specifically authorized by the instructor, all academic work of students is expected to be their own and if team work it permitted, the participation of all involved must be acknowledged.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the act of trying to pass off someone else's ideas, words, thoughts, or inventions as one's own. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional, but it is a violation of academic integrity in either case. You must acknowledge your use of other's work when you quote them word for word (you must use quotation marks in the case of direct quotations), paraphrase, borrow ideas, incorporate factual information from someone else's work, or rely on another person's organization of material. You do not need to provide citations for common knowledge, but it is better to err on the side of caution if you have any doubts. If your paper includes uncited information and/or I suspect plagiarism, I will not grade your paper until you provide satisfactory

documentation of your sources. Papers suspected of plagiarism will receive an immediate 0.

Caveat: This syllabus is composed in good faith, with a schedule of readings, quizzes, writing assignments and exams which will guide us throughout the term. Still, the instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to this schedule as deemed necessary for the overall enterprise of the class. Any changes will be communicated as far in advance as feasible, and you are responsible for knowing if and when any changes have been made.

Gloucester County College Information and Policies

All GCC Student Policies apply to this course. The following specific GCC policies can be found in the current College Catalog. The current GCC catalog can be found on the GCC website at www.gccnj.edu, the GCC portal, or is available in hard copy through Student Services.

The specific URL is:

http://www.gccnj.edu/general_information/policies/academic_policies.cfm

It is highly recommended that students review the Information Technology Policy and the Academic Integrity policy.

Technical Assistance: The Help Desk provides assistance with network and portal log-in along with campus computer hardware and software use. The Help Desk office is located in the Instructional Center, Room 449A; the phone number is 856-415-2298.

Blackboard/eLearning assistance is provided in-person in IC435, by phone at 856-415-2241, and online at http://www.gccnj.edu/academics/distance_learning/webct/help.cfm. Before entering your username and password to access Blackboard/eLearning from your home computer, review the Browser Check, Pop-up Blockers, and Java Security Certificate information at the right of the page. Having these technical aspects set up correctly at the beginning of the semester on your home computer will save you frustration and aggravation.

Accessibility: GCC's eLearning course management system is Blackboard. Blackboard explains that it "is committed to ensuring that our e-Education platform is usable and accessible. To fulfill this promise we are continually auditing our code and user interface design techniques to ensure that our applications are usable by everyone, to the greatest extent possible, regardless of age, ability, or situation. Blackboard measures and evaluates accessibility levels using two sets of standards: Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act issued from the United States federal government and the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) issued by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)."

Blackboard's full statement regarding accessibility can be found at:

<http://www.blackboard.com/Teaching-Learning/Learn-Resources/Accessibility.aspx>

Academic and Support Services

Student Success Center: formerly known as the Learning Resource Center (LRC) includes the following areas:

- Academic Test Proctoring – is located in LRC 608 across from the library, and provides make-up testing, distance learning, and outside Testing and Certifications. You are required to make arrangements with your instructor in order to make up a test. The phone number is 856-415-2238. Hours of operation: Monday – Thursday 9-6, Friday 9 – 1, and one Saturday per month by appointment.
- Tutoring Services – located in LRC601 and LRC602 above the College Bookstore, offers free tutoring for students seeking assistance in most subjects. The phone number is 856-415-2248. Hours of operation: Monday – Thursday 9 – 8 and Friday 9 – 5.
- Testing and Open Lab – located in LRC 603. The phone number is 856-415-2268.
- Additional information can be found at:http://www.gccnj.edu/student_services/lrc/index.cfm

Library: The GCC Library provides a wide range of materials and services to promote student learning and faculty instruction in a friendly and supportive atmosphere. Over 30 computers are available for students to use for research purposes. Your GCC library card also serves as your student ID.

Computer Lab: The Open Lab in IC431 provides over 50 computers for student use. Students must show their GCC student ID to access these computers.

Special Needs Services : If there are any students in this class who have special needs, or who think they may have special needs because of learning disabilities or other kinds of disabilities, please feel free to discuss this with your instructor, or call the office of Special Needs 415-2281. The Department of Special Services provides academic support to GCC students who have documented disabilities. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability. The Department of Special Services ensures GCC students receive appropriate accommodations which allow for academic success.

Information can be found at http://www.gccnj.edu/Special_Needs/index.cfm

Services for Students Whom English is a Second Language: The Division of Continuing Education offers English as a second language education to help students improve their language proficiency, so they can become academically successful. If you are experiencing difficulties with your course work due to English language limitations, please contact the Division of Continuing Education at 856+-468-5000, extension 6227.

Academic Calendar: The current calendar can be found at http://www.gccnj.edu/general_information/academic_calendar.cfm

Closing Notification

The official college closure notification is:

GCC website: <http://www.gccnj.edu>

814 – KYW 1060AM school closing number for day classes

2814 – KYW 1060AM school closing number for evening classes

GCC website: <http://www.gccnj.edu>

Or call 468-5000 for a recorded message of school closure notification.

Emergency Notices: Students are encouraged to register for Gloucester Alert. Register or login through the TEXT tab on the GCC portal.

Course Schedule

| Course Date | Topic | Reading(s) | Assignment(s)Due |
|--|--|-------------------|-------------------------|
| Unit One – Introduction: Key Political Questions and Concepts | | | |
| Thursday, Jan. 20 | What is Politics? | EH 1 | |
| Thursday, Jan. 27 | Classical and Modern Theories | | |
| Thursday, Feb. 3 | Political Ideologies | EH 2 | Précis #1 |
| Unit Two – Political Behavior | | | |
| Thursday, Feb. 10 | Political Culture and Socialization | EH 3 | Quiz #1 |
| Thursday, Feb. 17 | Political Parties and Interest Groups | EH 5/6 | Précis #2 |
| Unit Three – Political Institutions | | | |
| Thursday, Feb. 24 | Legislative and Executive Institutions | EH 7/8 | Quiz #2 |
| Thursday, Mar. 3 | Judicial and Bureaucratic Institutions | EH 9/10 | Précis #3 |
| Unit Four – Comparing Political Systems & International Relations | | | |
| Thursday, Mar. 10 | Coming to America | EH 11 | |
| Thursday, Mar. 17 | Spring Recess – No Class | | |
| Thursday, Mar. 24 | The British Invasion | EH 12 | Midterm Exam |
| Thursday, Mar. 31 | From Russia with Love | EH 13 | |
| Thursday, Apr. 7 | Big Trouble in Little China | EH 14 | Quiz #3 |
| Thursday, Apr. 14 | The Developing World/ Once Upon a Time In Mexico | EH 15/EH16 | Précis #4 |
| Thursday, Apr. 21 | No Class – All College Day | | |
| Thursday, Apr. 28 | International Relations | EH 17/18 | Quiz #4 |
| Thursday, May 5 | Course Wrap-up and Review | | Research Paper |
| Thursday, May 12 | Final Exam | | |