

Political Science 411/511

Advanced Overview of Political Science

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Fall 2023
Monday, 4:00-7:40 pm
KMC 590

Office Hours

Kinsella: Wednesday noon-1:00 and Thursday 1:30-2:30, URBN 650L or via [Zoom](#)

Chris Shortell (co-instructor): Tuesday and Thursday, 12:30-1:30, URBN 650J

Safia Farole (co-instructor): Wednesday 2:00-3:00 via [Zoom](#). Use [sign-up sheet](#).

Nathan Gies (co-instructor): Wed 10:00-1:00, URBN 650H or via [Zoom](#)

Course Description: This course provides an advanced overview of the four established fields of research in political science: International Relations, American Politics, Comparative Politics, and Political Theory. This course is thus divided into four segments, with each field taught by a professor who specializes in it. During each field segment, students learn about some of the central research areas, questions, and themes of the field, as well as read advanced political science research that represents the typical analyses performed in that field. In addition, each field segment will include a special focus on the professor's field of expertise. At the end of the course, students will have a strong understanding of the main fields of political science, and be better prepared to design and perform advanced research in political science.

Learning Objectives of this course include understanding differences between the four established fields of research in political science: International Relations, American Politics, Comparative Politics, and Political Theory. However, this course goes well beyond a simple field introduction, and will instead serve to acclimatize students to each fields' norms, perspectives, and methodologies. Students will read advanced political science research in each field and, at the conclusion of each of the four field segments, have an opportunity to submit a paper that advances an original theoretical contribution relevant in that field. All students will therefore learn how we conceptualize politics at the most advanced levels, and how their own research could contribute to the discipline.

For *graduate students*, there are additional learning objectives. Because graduate students are asked to write substantially longer papers, this will facilitate gaining high-level knowledge in each field. Graduate students will gain a more in-depth understanding of, for example, what sorts of questions are asked in each field as well as how the scholars in those fields form theories to answer those questions. In addition, because each field segment provides both a field overview as well as emphasis on the particular research area of the professor teaching that segment, graduate students will learn how to craft research that aligns with the expertise of the faculty.

Learning Outcomes: At the end of this course, students should understand:

- The differences between the four major fields in political science
- From the American Politics segment: An understanding of the difference between institutional

and behavioral approaches to American politics as well as the role of historical institutionalism in the study of courts.

- From the Political Theory segment: How and why methods of inquiry are themselves political.
- From the Comparative Politics segment: an understanding of the differences between regime types, the impact of domestic institutions, and the use of representation as a tool of the elites.
- From the International Relations segment: A grasp of the major theories that political scientists use to interpret and analyze events in world politics.

In addition to the above outcomes, *graduate students* will have gained:

- A clear understanding of the particular areas of expertise that each professor has, and how the student's MA thesis research plans will fit into that existing expertise.
- Experience with advancing their own original theoretical contributions to each field of political science literature.
- Strong knowledge of the most prominent research themes in each field of political science.
- Experience giving a professional presentation of their work.

Readings

The following book is available from the PSU Bookstore:

- Bonica, Adam and Maya Sen. 2021. *The Judicial Tug of War: How Lawyers, Politicians, and Ideological Incentives Shape the American Judiciary*. Cambridge University Press.

All other assigned readings can be retrieved from the [Millar Library website](#), Canvas, or are available online. If no link provided for the course reading, log into the library and search the online holdings. Searching by the title of the article (in quotes) is usually the most efficient.

Paper Assignments

Written work for this course takes the form of analytic papers on the subjects from the different subfields of political science. The goal of the subject papers is to teach you how to develop an original theory. [Each assignment](#) focuses on a different element of the original theory process, and each instructor will discuss their assignment and expectations during their sessions. At the end of the quarter, our hope is that you will have gained the skills and confidence to make your own new theoretical contributions to political science.

Submission Instructions: The subject paper is due on the final Friday of the field segment. For example, if you are writing a paper in International Relations, then your paper is due on Friday, October 20. If you are writing a paper in Comparative politics, then your paper is due on Friday, November 17. Please submit all papers to our course Canvas site.

If you are an undergraduate, you must write three subject papers – i.e., pick any three fields, and write papers for those fields. Each paper should be 6-8 pages long. *If you are a graduate student*, you must write four subject papers – i.e., you will write a paper every two weeks. Each paper should be 10-12 pages long. Subject papers that are simply a summary of the assigned reading will be considered weak and will receive substantially lower grades.

Grading

Undergraduate Students:

25% Discussion in Class/In-class Activities

25% Subject Paper 1

25% Subject Paper 2

25% Subject Paper 3

Graduate Students:

20% Discussion in Class/In-class Activities

20% Subject Paper 1

20% Subject Paper 2

20% Subject Paper 3

20% Subject Paper 4

Attendance

We want you to come to class because you will get the most out of this class if you attend regularly. However, so you should not come to class if you are sick, even if you're sure that you don't have covid.

- You can miss one class with no consequences at all. This means that you don't have to email anyone or worry that there will be a negative impact on your participation grade; you can just miss the class with no worries.
- If you miss more than one class, please email the instructor for that week to let them know. We then we have two options for you:
 - take the small penalty in your participation grade
 - make-up the participation penalty by submitting a discussion of the reading of the lecture that you missed. This discussion should be a summary of the readings of that day (in your own words), as well as 3 questions that you have about the readings. This summary should be 750-1,000 words, and should be submitted to the instructor for the class session you missed within one week of the day that you were absent.

Policies

Late Papers: Late papers may be accepted but may receive a lower grade. Consult the instructor for whom you are writing the paper to determine whether a late paper will be accepted and with what penalty.

Academic Honesty: Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, and any violation is a very serious matter. Students are responsible for being familiar with the PSU [Student Code of Conduct](#), especially the section concerning academic misconduct -- that is, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty. Unless otherwise indicated, all assignments in this course are *individual* assignments. Study groups are permitted, even encouraged, but collaboration with any other person when writing papers is not. Any academic dishonesty will be reported to the student's dean for disciplinary action.

Use of Generative AI Tools: The use of tools which check and correct your own writing (like traditional spell check or Grammarly) is importantly different from artificial intelligence tools that generate content or structure in response to your prompting (like ChatGPT or GrammarlyGO). In your work for this course,

use of the first sort of tool is encouraged, while use of the second sort of tool is strongly discouraged. For this course in particular, the use of generative AI tools make it almost impossible to properly attribute sources, something you will be expected to do in advanced work. As a result, the use of such tools to write an entire paper is not permitted at all. If you do use generative AI tools to create any part of a paper turned in as your own work (including drafts, outlines, etc.), you must acknowledge this in a brief appendix to the paper. For example: "I used the following prompt to ask ChatGPT to generate the structure for this essay, and then revised and filled in that outline" or "I used the following set of prompts to instruct ChatGPT to generate a rough draft of Paragraph 3, and used that as a basis for revision incorporating my own ideas and phrasing." Failure to do this is [academic misconduct](#).

Title IX Statement: Portland State is committed to fostering a safe, productive learning environment. Title IX and our school policy prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, which regards sexual misconduct — including harassment, domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking. We expect a culture of professionalism and mutual respect in our department and class. Please be aware that as a faculty member, I have the responsibility to report any instances of sexual harassment, sexual violence and/or other forms of prohibited discrimination to PSU's Title IX Coordinator, the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Dean of Student Life and cannot keep information confidential. You may report any incident of discrimination or discriminatory harassment, including sexual harassment, to either the Office of Equity and Compliance or the Office of the Dean of Student Life. If you would rather share information about sexual harassment or sexual violence to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact a confidential advocate at 503-725-5672 or by scheduling on-line (psuwrc.youcanbook.me) or another confidential employee found on the sexual misconduct resource webpage. For more information about your obligations and resources for sex/gender discrimination and sexual violence (Title IX), please complete the required student module *Creating a Safe Campus* in your D2L.

Access and Inclusion for Students with Disabilities: PSU values diversity and inclusion; we are committed to fostering mutual respect and full participation for all students. My goal is to create a learning environment that is equitable, usable, inclusive, and welcoming. If any aspects of instruction or course design result in barriers to your inclusion or learning, please notify me. The [Disability Resource Center](#) (DRC) provides reasonable accommodations for students who encounter barriers in the learning environment. If you have, or think you may have, a disability that may affect your work in this class and feel you need accommodations, contact the Disability Resource Center to schedule an appointment and initiate a conversation about reasonable accommodations. If you already have accommodations, please make sure that I have received a faculty notification letter. We will discuss your accommodations if necessary.

Class Schedule

Oct 2: Introduction and foundations (Kinsella)

Overview of political science and theory building

Oct 9: International Relations (Kinsella)

- Schweller, Randall L. 2016. "The Balance of Power in World Politics." In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Politics*. Oxford University Press. ([online](#))
- Hathaway, Oona A., and Scott J. Shapiro. 2017. *The Internationalists: How a Radical Plan to Outlaw War Remade the World*. Simon and Schuster. Chapters 13-15. (Canvas)
- Hurd, Ian. 1999. "Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics" *International Organization*

53 (2): 379–408.

Oct 16: International Relations (Kinsella)

- Wolford, Scott. 2019. *The Politics of the First World War: A Course in Game Theory and International Security*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1-2. (Canvas)
- Doyle, Michael W. 1983. "Kant, Liberal Legacies, and Foreign Affairs." *Philosophy & Public Affairs* 12 (3): 205–235.
- Coady, C. A. J. 2004. "Terrorism, Morality, and Supreme Emergency." *Ethics* 114 (4): 772–789.

*Friday, Oct 20: Subject Paper on International Relations due

Oct 23: American Politics (Shortell)

- Henderson, Jeffrey, Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, Matto Mildemberger, and Leah Stokes. 2023. "Conducting the Heavenly Chorus: Constituent Contact and Provoked Petitioning in Congress." *Perspectives on Politics* 21 (1): 191-208.
- Miller, David Ryan. 2023. "The President Will See Whom Now? Presidential Engagement with Organized Interests." *American Political Science Review* 117 (3): 1019-1035.
- Ahler, Douglas J. and Gaurav Sood. 2018. "The Parties in Our Heads: Misperceptions about Party Composition and Their Consequences." *Journal of Politics*. 80(3): 964-981.
- Kreiss, Daniel and Shannon McGregor. 2023. "A Review and Provocation: On Polarization and Platforms." *New Media & Society*. 1-24.
- Trachtman, Samuel. 2023. "Policy Feedback and Interdependence in American Federalism: Evidence from Rooftop Solar Politics." *Perspectives on Politics*. 21 (2): 462-477.

Oct 30: American Politics (Shortell)

- Bonica, Adam and Maya Sen. 2021. *The Judicial Tug of War: How Lawyers, Politicians, and Ideological Incentives Shape the American Judiciary*. Cambridge University Press.

*Friday, Nov 3: Subject Paper on American Politics due

Nov 6: Comparative Politics (Farole)

- Geddes, Barbara. 2003. "Big Questions, Little Answers: How the Questions You Choose Affect the Answers You Get." In *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. University of Michigan Press.
- Bates, Robert H. 2009. "From Case Studies to Social Science: A Strategy for Political Research." In *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford University Press. Available online.
- Pepinsky, Thomas B. 2019. "The Return of the Single-Country Study." *Annual Review of Political Science* 22(1): 187-203.
- Koter, Dominika. 2013. "Urban and Rural Voting Patterns in Senegal: The Spatial Aspects of Incumbency, c. 1978-2012." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 51(4): 653-679. **[Single-country qualitative case study]**
- Stenberg, Matthew, Philip Rocco, and Safia Abukar Farole. 2022. "Calling in "Sick": Covid-19, Opportunism, Pretext, and Subnational Autocratization." *Global Studies Quarterly* 2(3): 1-11. **[Multi-country qualitative case study]**

Nov 13: Comparative Politics (Farole)

- Reuter, Ora John and Graeme B. Robertson. 2012. "Subnational Appointments in Authoritarian Regimes: Evidence from Russian Gubernatorial Appointments." *The Journal of Politics* 74(4):

917-1191. **[Observational design: single-country using quantitative data]**

- Clayton, Amanda and Par Zetterberg. 2021. "Gender and Party Discipline: Evidence from Africa's Emerging Party Systems." *American Political Science Review* 115(3): 869-884. **[Observational design: cross-country using quantitative data]**
- Tucker, Joshua. 2013. "Is Theory Getting Lost in the "Identification Revolution"?" *The Monkey Cage Blog*. ([online](#))

Choose and read only two of the following:

- Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545. **[Experimental design: natural experiment]**
- Clayton, Amanda, Amanda Lea Robinson, Martha C. Johnson, and Ragnhild Muriaas. 2020. "(How) Do Voters Discriminate Against Women Candidates? Experimental and Qualitative Evidence from Malawi." *Comparative Political Studies* 53(3-4): 601-630. **[Experimental design: survey experiment]**
- Lauren E. Young. 2019. "The Psychology of State Repression: Fear and Dissent Decisions in Zimbabwe." *American Political Science Review* 113(1): 140-155. **[Experimental design: lab-in-the-field]**
- Blair, Robert A., Sabrina M. Karim, and Benjamin S. Morse. 2019. "Establishing the Rule of Law in Weak and War-torn States: Evidence from a Field Experiment with the Liberian National Police." *American Political Science Review* 113(3): 641-657. **[Experimental design: field experiment]**

*Friday, Nov 17: Subject Paper on Comparative Politics due

Nov 20: *Political Theory (Gies)*

- Wolin, Sheldon S. "Political Theory as a Vocation." *The American Political Science Review* 63.4 (1969): 1062–1082. Read ONLY Section V (pp. 1078–1082).
- Deleuze, Gilles. 1987. "What is the Creative Act?" 17 March lecture at the FEMIS film foundation. ([online](#))
- Berenstain, Nora, Kristie Dotson, Julieta Paredes, Elena Ruíz, and Noenoe K. Silva. 2022. "Epistemic Oppression, Resistance, and Resurgence." *Contemporary Political Theory* 21: 283–314.

Nov 27: *Political Theory (Gies)*

- Dean, Jodi. 2016. "Big Data: Accumulation and Enclosure." *Theory & Event* 19 (3).
- Amoores, Louise. 2019. "Doubt and the Algorithm: On the Partial Accounts of Machine Learning." *Theory, Culture & Society* 36 (6): 147–169
- Koopman, Colin. 2022. "The Political Theory of Data: Institutions, Algorithms, & Formats in Racial Redlining." *Political Theory* 50.2 (2022): 337–361.

*Friday, Dec 1: Subject Paper on Political Theory due

Mon, Dec 4, 3:30-5:20: *scheduled final exam period, if needed (Kinsella)*

This syllabus is available on Canvas and online at <http://web.pdx.edu/~kinsella/ps411f23.pdf> and all course materials can be linked from this address. Last updated: 22 September 2023.