

Political Science 401
Fall semester 2020
Office Hours: M 2-4, W 8-9
or by appointment
TTh 11:30-1 Sage 3224*

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Political Analysis (3 credit senior capstone)

Course Description: Political Analysis is a seminar designed to provide a capstone experience for majors. The course will assess the student's mastery of the discipline of Political Science. Possible areas of study include the proper methods of political analysis, revision and extension of previous work, advanced analysis of texts, and/or a culminating research project. In addition, students will take a comprehensive departmental exam covering the discipline and prepare a portfolio of their undergraduate work in the discipline. Prerequisite: Political Science 245, senior standing and Political Science major. Special fees may apply.



Learning Outcomes:

- successfully plan and execute a major research project or research design
- curate a reflective portfolio of your best work and academic reflections
- exhibit knowledge gained in the subfields of political science
- effectively communicate with your peers and professor

Course Materials: There are a single book to buy that you can get either at the University book store or purchase on line:

Lisa A. Baglione

Writing a Research Paper in Political Science, 4th edition

Please get this edition. Other readings are available on Canvas or via weblink as noted below.

*in an attempt to keep our community healthy, we will generally meet in person only once a week

Graded Components:	total points	% of grade
Research Paper Proposal	20	5%
Annotated Bibliography	40	10%
Test on Baglione	60	15%
Major Field Test	60	15%
Research Paper	100	25%
Paper Presentation	40	10%
Completed Portfolio	40	10%
<u>Participation</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>10%</u>
	400	100%

I use a standard grading scale (93% and up is an A, 90% to 93% is an A-, 88 and 89% is a B+ etc.)

Research Paper Proposal: You are tasked with writing a major research paper or research design in this class. To do a good job with this you need to settle on a subject sooner rather than later, and engage in extensive planning and effort. Accordingly, you will submit a research paper proposal by the end of the third week of class. We will walk through the components of this proposal on the first day of class. The proposal is worth 5% of your grade, but the better you do on it, the better poised you are for the work of the semester. I hope you will talk with me about your project before you attempt to write up your proposal. Please note, I will send back proposals that I don't think are workable or well-conceived without a grade, expecting you to turn in a new proposal within a week.

Annotated Bibliography (AB): This is a compendium of professional research on the topic (or relevant to the topic) of the research paper that you are writing. It briefly summarizes the approach and findings of each article and says how it may relate to and be useful to your project. Remember that a research paper strikes out into new territory, and often challenges past research, so you are encouraged to question the approaches and findings of others when that is warranted. No research is perfect; it is done by human beings who face significant limitations. This means that there is much to learn that we do not yet know, offering you many avenues for meaningful research. The literature review of your paper builds off of the AB, so it is a vital step on the way to a finished paper. It also makes you read, comprehend, and learn what real Political Science research is.

Test on Baglione: This test will gauge your competency in understanding the components and the logic of conducting research, as well as writing it. It will use a variety of assessment mechanisms—multiple choice questions, identification of terms, and essay. This test is scheduled for Thursday October 1 and will be held in class, unless we have switched to all on line learning by then.

Major Field Test: The Educational Testing Service's Major Field Test in Political Science will be taken by every student as a gauge of overall learning in Political Science. You will receive a grade based on your proficiency compared to other majors nationwide that corresponds to your percentile score. This test will be scheduled for the week before Thanksgiving.

Research Paper: Our field is about discovering knowledge—learning things that we did not know before careful analysis and research has been done. In your final Political Science experience we are expecting you to engage in that practice, or outline how you would conduct such research if you had the necessary time to do it (which one you do depends on the nature of the project). You will need to seriously grapple with what others in Political Science have written that is on this topic or close to

it in a literature review. If doing a research design, you will carefully and specifically lay out how you will conduct illuminating original research, with specific information on data sources, research protocols, and expected findings. If completing a research paper you will submit a fully-formed paper with all the elements discussed in Baglione's book. Neither paper is to be a report of what others have found. That's for high schoolers and for the initial stages of undergraduate work. Real research discovers knowledge, requiring an independence of mind and thoroughness of approach that you probably have not engaged in heretofore.

In the past, we have had students revise a previous paper. In general, this meant re-envisioning the paper from the ground up. That was valuable in teaching about how challenging research is. This semester I am not tying you to a past paper to give you more latitude. You get to research the subject you want that involves politics, within reason. A paper can be quantitative or qualitative in design and execution. If you are not well-versed in statistics I would encourage you to stick with a qualitative paper. A paper can be primarily descriptive or normative (most PS is primarily descriptive, most political theory is normative). The paper's topic should be sufficiently concentrated and specific to be manageable. Almost everyone initially chooses topics that are too large. You do not have time to write a book, and it is beyond your power to explain something comprehensively (like voting behavior in the US). You are trying to explain or elucidate one very specific thing and trying to do that well.

You should consult with me regularly on your project. I am here to help you. Don't think you can last all semester on a basic, initial set of instructions. This is the hardest thing to get through to students. Research is an ongoing project that takes a great deal of effort. Also, please don't think of this as "how do I satisfy my professor." Instead think of this project as how do I develop the skills of logic and research and hard work and writing ability that I need to conceive of, execute, and write up a successful research project." You should also consult regularly with at least one other professor. Please know that we are specialized in our knowledge. If you choose a topic about Latin America, talk to Dr. Scribner; in American law seek out Dr. Thomas; if you are doing a quantitative project Dr. Krueger will be most helpful.

Your final paper is due on **December 7th** (a day that will live in infamy). You will also be writing a reflection on this paper as part of your portfolio.

ePortfolio requirements: The purpose of a portfolio is to present your work as a major and reflect on your experience as a Political Science student. In turn, the faculty use these portfolios to gauge the state of our program, including its strengths, of course, but also to find ways to remedy its weaknesses. Directions about how to submit will be distributed in class. These are all the elements that you will compile (to be submitted in this order):

1. a cover page
2. a list of courses completed, with the grade you earned
3. your polished final resume
4. a personal statement summarizing your accomplishments in the major and your professional goals
5. a reflection on a paper that you wrote early in your major with the paper itself (preferably w/ the professor's grade and feedback)
6. a reflection on a paper that you wrote in an upper level class with the paper itself (preferably with the professor's grade and feedback)
7. a reflection on the paper you wrote for this class, including the final paper itself

You will hand in several components of this portfolio in draft form (the resume, personal statement, and earlier paper reflections). I will provide you with feedback in revising them. So your grade on the ePortfolio is my judgment about whether you have all the above elements in the correct order, have presented them in a professional and appealing way, and whether the items handed in via drafts are successfully revised and well-written. **Complete portfolios are due Monday December 14th** and are to be presented via webpage. Please be aware that it is department policy that if you do not hand in a portfolio, you cannot pass the class.

Final Paper Presentations: Each student is responsible for presenting a summary of their research to Political Science faculty and fellow 401 students. The presentation itself is worth 10% of the course grade. I make the final call on your grade, but I typically solicit feedback from the other faculty and your peers. You will be given guidelines on length, format and criteria of judgment well in advance. In preparation for this presentation you will run through a mock presentation with me alone, and I will give you feedback on how to make your presentation the best that it can be.

Participation: I expect you to attend class, whether we are in person or on line. Politics is a participatory activity, as is political science, and we have stressed active participation in nearly all our classes. By now you should be accustomed to articulating your thoughts about the reading for the day and asking good questions. I expect you to participate frequently, thoughtfully, and respectfully. If you are absent for a University-accepted reason (illness, University event, religious holiday etc.) please tell me and I will mark you excused. Unexcused absences negatively affect your grade; serial unexcused absences are grounds for failure in the course.

Synchronous Collaborate Ultra Sessions: On days we do not meet face to face we will be in a synchronous lecture/discussion environment. There are three ways to join. Use this link: <https://us.bbcollab.com/guest/324fcc96b2984d8ba2f040b78b4b094f>, go to this course's Canvas page and then click Collaborate Ultra and click on the tab that appears, or dial this number and use the following ID number +1-571-392-7650 PIN: 473 728 1103.

Readings Assignments and Daily Class Activities

Please note we are meeting **in-person** this day and every day that is in bold, usually Tuesdays

September 10 syllabus and requirements; what makes for a good research proposal and project; brainstorm paper ideas

September 15 Writing and thinking well in social science; why research?; developing a good Research Question; advice on resumes
Reading: Baglione, chapters 1 and 2

September 17 Citations and Annotated Bibliography
Reading: Baglione chapter 3
Assignment: submit resume draft

September 22 Literature Review; Thesis, Model, and Hypotheses
Reading: Baglione chapters 4 and 5

- September 24 Writing well: revising and editing
Reading: Baglione chapter 6
Assignment: *Research Proposal due*
- September 29** Research Design; Analysis
Reading: Baglione chapters 7 and 8
- October 1** Introduction, Conclusion, Title, Abstract
Reading: Baglione, chapter 9
Exam on Baglione material
- October 6** Epistemology; Political Science methods I: What do we do, and how do we do it?
Reading: Booth et al., “Claims and Evidence” (Canvas)
LaPorte, “Confronting a Crisis of Research Design” (Canvas)
- October 8 Methods II: How is political science scientific and how scientific is political science?
Reading: Almond and Genco, “Clouds, Clocks and the Study of Politics” (Canvas)
- October 13** American Politics I: Foundations and Political Culture
Reading: Siemers, “The Founding Generation and Interbranch Power” (Canvas)
- October 15 American Politics II: Institutions
Reading: Skowronek, “Twentieth Century Choices” from the symposium Has the Constitution Exacerbated the Crisis of Governance?” to be found at
<https://www.bu.edu/bulawreview/files/2014/08/SKOWRONEKDYSFUNCTION.pdf>
- October 20** Discussion of personal statements
Assignment: *Annotated Bibliography due*
- October 22 American Politics III: Political Behavior
Reading: Zaller, “How Citizens Acquire Information” (Canvas)
- October 27** Comparative Politics I: Institutions and regime types
Reading: Lijphart, “Constitutional Choices for New Democracies” (Canvas)
- October 29 Comparative Politics II: Political development and political economy
Reading: Anderson, *Transitions to Democracy*, Introduction (chapter 1, Google Books)
Assignment: *Draft of Personal Statement due*
- November 3** Political Theory I: Foundations and Key Concepts
Reading: Roberts and Sutch, *An Introduction to Political Thought*, Introduction (Canvas)
Assignment for Monday, Tuesday, or Weds: individual progress meeting about your paper
- November 5 Political Theory II: Modern Political Thought and Recent Developments
Reading: Friedman, “The Role of Government in a Free Society” and
Walzer, “Money and Commodities” (both on Canvas)

November 10 International Relations I: Major IR theories
Reading: Mingst et al, Theories of International Relations (Canvas)
Assignment: draft of two paper reflections due

November 12 International Relations II: International law and organization; security studies
Reading: Mingst et al, International Law (Canvas)

Week of November 17/19 **Assignment 1: The Major Field Test will be scheduled this week**
Assignment 2: schedule and individual progress meeting about your paper

November 24 Reflections on the PS Major I: Debriefing and Discussion of Major Field Test
Reading: Robinson, "The Workplace Relevance of the Liberal Arts PS BA" (Canvas)

Week of December 1/3 this week dedicated to completing the writing of your research paper
Assignment: hand in reflection on your research paper by December 3^d

December 7 **Major research paper due**

December 9-11 one on one practice presentations for research presentations

December 10 reflections on the PS major II
Reading: Excerpts from the "Truman Report" (Canvas)

December 14 **complete portfolio due to Professor Siemers via weblink**

December 15 research paper presentations, session 1

December 17 research paper presentations, session 2

Additional Course and University Policies

Electronics Policy: Given the ample evidence that computer usage in the classroom harms academic performance, both for the user and the students around the user, electronics use *in the classroom* is by permission only.

Mask Policy: You are required to wear a mask while in all University buildings at all times, including while in the hallways and in this class.

Office Hours on MS Teams: The Political Science Department uses Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) for holding office hours. This system is available to all UWO students. Faculty will be available during the hours noted on your syllabus. When logging into MS Teams, look closely at the status symbols for your instructor. A green dot by the professor's icon (which may be their picture or their initials) means they are available. A red dot means they are busy. Generally, you are able to join office hour meetings and talk openly in the forum or use the chat function freely. At times, your instructor may be in a private meeting with a student during office hours, and will mark my availability as "busy" (a red dot).

We hope that using MS Teams for office hours for all of our courses will help students become more accustomed to virtual office hours during the pandemic. *The main point to remember is that we are available to you. Please use our office hours freely and often. We are here to help.* I am also happy to set up meetings outside of my office hours if you have a conflict with the posted times.

Late or Missing Assignments: Please submit assignments on time. If there are chronic problems with lateness or not turning in assigned work we will have a discussion of sanctions and work out a schedule for completion.

Expectations for Academic Honesty: A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person all graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your teacher directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team.

Two general rules should be kept in mind: all quoted and paraphrased material must be cited and when something is not common knowledge, you should have a citation. Plagiarism is using others' ideas without giving them credit. Most of it is inadvertent; some is intentional; some covers a small amount of text, others involve a whole paper. More information can be found here: <https://uwosh.edu/politicalscience/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/08/Academic-Honesty.pdf>

Class Quality and Feedback: The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback very seriously. If you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method, you are encouraged to first speak with your instructor directly. If you are not comfortable speaking with the instructor, you are invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at kruegerj@uwosh.edu. Should he be unable to resolve your concerns, he will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.

Disability Accommodations: It is the policy and practice of UW Oshkosh to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion, please notify me as soon as possible. You are also welcome to contact Services for Students with Disabilities at 920-424-3100 or dean1@uwosh.edu. For more information, visit the Services for Students with Disabilities website at: <http://www.uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/disability-services>.

Note: If any major changes are made to this schedule and these policies, I will announce them in a timely manner via your UW Oshkosh email account and make a revised syllabus available (they make me write this. I don't anticipate doing that, but you never know when you might have a day when school is cancelled, for instance).

The following URL contains a description of students' consumer protection rights required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990: <https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>