

POLITICS & CULTURE: GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

POLITICAL SCIENCE 111 | FALL SEMESTER 2021 | 3 credits

Bulletin Description: This Quest I Global Citizenship course focuses on a current global issue or set of issues. Students will gain an ability to analyze, understand, evaluate, and appreciate the complex dynamics that shape our collective capacity to address global challenges in a complex and interconnected world. The course provides an introduction to governance in societies with different cultural perspectives and examines different vantage points of political actors tasked with governing (global, transnational, national, and local) in societies outside the United States.

Fall 2021 Description: What are human rights, and do they apply to everyone? What happens when human rights are violated? In this course, we explore the evolution of human rights and then focus on the worst, most shocking of all human rights violations: genocide. Prior to World War II, the word “genocide” did not even exist, but we know that the crime happened. Since then, the world has experienced multiple genocides, despite promises that it would never happen again. Why does genocide occur—indeed, why is it happening in 2021?—and can we do anything to stop it?

ABOUT QUEST I & THE USP

Why are you taking this class? **This is a Quest I course, a special type of class designed only for first-year students at UW Oshkosh.** If you look around the room, you’ll notice that all of your classmates are first-year students like you. You’ll also notice that you have a **Peer Mentor** who is here to help get your first year off to a great start in this class and beyond. You can view this course as your college “lifeline:” the first semester can be rough, but this course is here to help you make sense of it and succeed.

Quest I is part of the **University Studies Program (USP)**, which is UW Oshkosh’s way of welcoming you and preparing you for advanced study in your eventual major. This semester you’ll take Quest I, next semester you’ll take Quest II, and next year you’ll take Quest III. You’ll top it all off with an advanced writing course called Connect.

BASIC COURSE INFORMATION

Course Time: MWF, 12:40-1:40pm

Course Location: Sage 3215

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Dr. Tracy H. Slagter (Ph.D., University of Iowa)

Office Location: Sage Hall 4626

Office Hours: MW, 10:30-12:00pm

(in-person or via MS Teams)

Email: slagtert@uwosh.edu *

**Note that email is the best way to reach me.*

DEPARTMENT MAIN OFFICE

Contact: Angelee Hammond

Office Location: Sage Hall 4631

Office Phone: (920) 424-3456

Office Hours: T,W,Th, 7:30am-3:00pm

Email: hammond@uwosh.edu

PEER MENTOR

Your Peer Mentor for this class is **Grace Herrmann** (herrmg66@uwosh.edu). She is your guide to UW Oshkosh, and is here to help you make your first semester a great one. She’s *not* a tutor for the class but can be considered an expert on getting involved and doing well at UW Oshkosh. You’ll be meeting with her throughout the semester and attending campus and community events with her as well. She’s a great resource!

REQUIRED MATERIALS

The following book is available at University Books & More or via online retailers:

Power, Samantha, *A Problem from Hell: America in the Age of Genocide*. (New York: Basic Books, 2013).

Other readings will be made available to you on Canvas. Please let me know immediately if you have trouble finding them.

You should bring your assigned readings to each class meeting. I expect that you will have completed the reading before we discuss it in class. Note that I do not lecture out of the book; lectures are designed to *supplement* what you have read.

OUR SIGNATURE QUESTION

Each Quest course addresses a Signature Question related to Intercultural Knowledge, Civic Learning, or Sustainability. These are significant areas of research and conversation at UW Oshkosh and across the globe. Our class is about **intercultural knowledge and competence**: *How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?*

Being culturally knowledgeable and competent means understanding your own culture as well as cultures beyond your own; recognizing the cultural values and history, language, traditions, arts, and social institutions of groups of people; having the ability to negotiate and bridge cultural differences in ways that allow for broader perspectives to emerge; and possessing the skill to investigate a wide range of world views, beliefs, practices, and values.

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

This course also satisfies your USP Global Citizenship requirement. Global Citizenship is the knowledge of nations, cultures, or societies beyond the U.S.; the recognition of how interaction, interdependence, and inequity among diverse geographical, social, political, or economic systems have shaped historical and contemporary global challenges and opportunities; and the skills to engage with the responsibilities of informed citizenship in a complex, interdependent, and changing world.

Our exploration of politics and cultural through a global perspective are part of what it means to be liberally educated. A liberally educated person is prepared to deal with complexity, diversity, and change. Such individuals possess broad knowledge of the wider world (e.g. science, culture, and society) as well as in-depth knowledge of a specific area of interest.

ABOUT LIBERAL EDUCATION

Some of you came to college knowing what you want to do. Most of you have no idea, and even those who do will likely change their minds. The first year of college is an exploration of the world of knowledge that is out there. At UW Oshkosh, we're giving you a foundation in **liberal education** (sometimes also called "general education"), which means that we're going to expose you to a LOT of different disciplines and ways of knowing in your first and second years. This is to help you make informed decisions about your future, and also to equip you with the knowledge and skills you'll need to be a 21st century citizen. A foundation in liberal education is the whole point of the University Studies Program.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to:

- *Understand* and know how to use the resources available to them at UW Oshkosh;
- *Explain* the development of human rights around the world;
- *Distinguish* between the different types of human rights abuses, particularly crimes against humanity and genocide;
- *Recognize* the construction of identity as shaped by cultural heritage and / or patterns of power or privilege;
- *Critique* the depiction of human rights in both text and film;
- *Synthesize* information and arguments from a wide variety of sources; and
- *Recognize* an increase in confidence in their ability to read critically and write succinctly.

GRADING

The following grading scale will apply to all assignments in this course:

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	65-66
F	0-64

Please feel free to see me at any time if you have questions about your grade. I *do not* give extra credit, so please do not ask me for it.

COURSE POLICIES

COVID-19: The University requires us all to wear a mask that covers both the nose and mouth whenever we are indoors. If you will not abide by this requirement, we cannot have a class. This is non-negotiable. Please wear your mask properly—better yet, wear a mask AND get vaccinated. Vaccination is free, safe, effective and our best chance to fully exit this pandemic.

Attendance: This is a Quest I course, and we cover a lot of material each session. *I expect you to be in class every day.* In many cases, work we do in class cannot be made up. If you absolutely must be absent, please inform me ahead of time.

Missed exams or assignments require documentation of your absence.

Late Work: It's always better to turn work in late than to not turn it in at all. Late work will receive a half letter-grade deduction per day. Plan ahead and don't let this happen to you! Note again that work done in class *cannot* be made up or turned in later if you miss it.

Email: I will send all course communications to your University email account (@uwosh.edu). Be sure you check it regularly or have it forwarded to the email address you use the most. All of your professors expect you to check your University email account several times per day.

Cell Phones: Please be courteous and set your phone to silent during class. It is disruptive to all of us if it rings during lecture or discussion. *I ask that all phones be kept in your bag, out of sight, during classtime.* I will do the same.

Laptops/Tablets: It is my strong preference that you take notes by hand in class. Laptops and tablets often prove distracting not only to you, but to those around you as well. You may bring your devices to class if they are where you keep your reading materials, but they should not be on during lecture unless I tell you it is OK.

Other Distractions: Please refrain from playing on your phone, listening to music, or frantically completing your reading or assignments for other classes while you're in mine. It's disrespectful to me and to your classmates, and I will call you out on it. If you cannot give this class your full attention, you probably shouldn't come at all.

Changes: As I get to know you as a group and as individuals, I may decide to make some slight modifications to this syllabus. If I do, I will let you know in advance via email and will post the change on our course Canvas site.

ASSIGNMENTS

Participation (10%): You'll note that I don't take attendance, but you can't participate if you're not in class. I expect you to be in class every day, and I also expect you to come prepared with the readings and assignments completed to the best of your ability. If you need to miss class, please let me know as soon as you can. If you will miss an exam or paper deadline, I need written documentation of your absence (e.g., note from your doctor). In some cases, the work we do in class cannot be made up after the fact; if you are not in class, your grade will be a "0" for that assignment.

Your participation grade includes *individual or small group meetings with me*. I will post a schedule for us to meet in the first few weeks of class.

Additionally, your participation grade includes *campus and community events* you'll attend with your Peer Mentor. More details will follow in class.

I Thought You'd Never Ask (5%): For the first few weeks of the semester, you'll submit questions about college life, the university, studying, Oshkosh, etc. and Grace and I will take time to answer them in class. (I won't reveal your names, so you can ask about anything.)

Midterm Exam (30%): The midterm will include all the material from the first half of the course. It consists primarily of short essay questions and will be written in class.

Film Analyses (25%): You will have access to several films this semester via Canvas that you will watch on your own (but you are encouraged to get together and watch them!). Several short film assignments (details in class) ask you to think about them more deeply and compare them.

Final Exam (30%): Our course readings will cover massive human rights abuses of the past. Your final exam (take home, limited time to complete) asks you to investigate human rights abuses happening *now*. More details will follow in class.

EARLY ALERT NOTICES

After the first several weeks of class, you will receive a notice about your overall progress in this course and each of the courses you are taking in your first semester. This process is called "Early Alert," and it is designed to help you evaluate your study skills and your class attendance so that you know if you are on the right track. These Early Alert notices are not permanent and will not appear on your transcript.

RESOURCES

Your tuition dollars support these excellent campus resources, so it makes sense to use them. We will talk about these resources this semester so you know where to find them.

Counseling Center:

<https://uwosh.edu/counseling/>

Need help working through some things? Don't be ashamed—get the help you need, free to students. Call (920) 424-2061. If you're worried about going alone, I'm happy to walk you to their offices in the Student Success Center.

Writing Center: <http://www.uwosh.edu/wcenter>

The Writing Center helps students of all ability levels improve their writing. The Writing Center is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102; call them at 424-1152.

Center for Academic Resources: <http://www.uwosh.edu/car>

CAR provides free, confidential tutoring for students in most undergraduate classes on campus. CAR is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102; call them at 424-2290.

Reading Study Center:

<http://www.uwosh.edu/readingstudycenter> The center offers strategies for improved textbook study, time management, note-taking, test preparation, and test-taking. For more information, visit them in Nursing Ed Room 201, or call 424-1031.

Polk Library:

<http://www.uwosh.edu/library>

Our library is staffed with helpful professionals who are experts at helping you find what you need. This isn't your high school library! You can even set up a research advisory session with a librarian for more specific help:

<https://www.uwosh.edu/library/services/forms/research-assistance> Polk Library is located behind Albee Hall.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY

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 instructor directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team. More information can be found here:

<https://uwosh.edu/politicalscience/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/08/Academic-Honesty.pdf>

GRIEVANCES

The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom or online 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.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have or think you may have a learning difference or a disability—a mental health, medical, or physical impairment—that would limit your access to learning or demonstrating your knowledge in this course, please contact the Dean of Students Office. If you already have an accommodation, please let me know in the first week of class. Note that this class *may* be recorded for accommodation purposes.

STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW ACT (1990)

Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Student Right to Know Act of 1990:

<https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>

POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJORS

If you are currently a Political Science major or if you think you might be one of our majors in the future, it is important that you save your graded coursework from this class. Seniors in our department are required to take Political Science 401, a seminar in which students' progress through the major is surveyed and a professional digital presentation of their work is created. This portfolio can then be used to showcase your work to graduate/professional schools or employers.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

We will follow this schedule fairly closely as the semester progresses, so be sure to keep your syllabus with you as you prepare for class, assignments, and exams. The reading assignment listed for each day indicates the readings you should have *completed* by the time we meet for class. Because there is a lot of information presented in each of the readings, discussions, and in the lectures, it's a good idea to keep a set of detailed notes. I will give you some tips on good note-taking on the first day of class.

WEEK ONE

INTRODUCTIONS

September 8

What is this class about? Who are these other people?!

READ: this syllabus. Come with questions!

September 10

What is a state and why does it matter?

READ: O'Neil, Patrick, Karl Fields, and Don Share. "States." Chapter 2 in *Cases & Concepts in Comparative Politics*, 2e. New York: W.W. Norton. (Available on Canvas)

WEEK TWO

FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PART I

September 13

What is democracy?

READ: Schmitter, Phillippe, and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. "What Democracy Is... And is Not." *Journal of Democracy* 2 (3). (Available on Canvas)

September 15

What is authoritarianism?

READ: O'Neil, Patrick, Karl Fields, and Don Share. "Non-Democracies." Chapter 8 in *Cases & Concepts in Comparative Politics*, 2e. New York: W.W. Norton. (Available on Canvas)

September 17

Where do human rights come from? (Part I)

READ: Langlois, Anthony. "Normative and Theoretical Foundations of Human Rights." Chapter 1 in Goodhart, Michael. *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press. (On Canvas under "Goodhart – Human Rights Packet.")

WEEK THREE

FOUNDATIONS OF HUMAN RIGHTS, PART II

September 20

Where do human rights come from? (Part II)

READ: Smith, Rhona. "Human Rights in International Law." Chapter 4 in Goodhart, Michael. *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press. (On Canvas under "Goodhart – Human Rights Packet.")

September 22

What are human rights abuses and who commits them?

READ: Davenport, Christian. "Political Democracy and State Repression." Chapter 14 in Goodhart, Michael. *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press. (On Canvas under "Goodhart – Human Rights Packet.")

September 24

What can we do about human rights abuses?

READ: Quinn, Joanna R. "Transitional Justice." Chapter 22 in Goodhart, Michael. *Human Rights: Politics and Practice*. New York: Oxford University Press. (On Canvas under "Goodhart – Human Rights Packet.")

WEEK FOUR

A CRIME WITH NO NAME

September 27

Is genocide just a fancy word for "murder?"

READ: Power, Samantha. Preface and Chapter 1.

September 29

What happened to the Armenians?

READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 2.

- October 1 **What happened to the Armenians?**
NO CLASS: Dr. Slagter at a conference
WATCH: *Ararat* (2002) (Canvas)
- WEEK FIVE**
October 4 **GENOCIDE EXPOSED**
Who could believe it?
NO CLASS: Dr. Slagter at a conference
WATCH: *Night and Fog* (1950) (Canvas)
- October 6 **Why “genocide?”**
READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 3.
- October 8 **How did we get the Genocide Convention?**
READ: Power, Samantha. Chapters 4 and 5.
- WEEK SIX**
October 11 **THE PERPETRATORS**
Who could do such a thing?
READ: Browning, Christopher R. 1992. *Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland*. New York: HarperCollins. (Excerpt available on Canvas.)
- October 13 **Did ordinary Germans know what was happening?**
READ: Goldhagen, Daniel Jonah. 1996. “Presentation on *Hitler’s Willing Executioners*.” United States Holocaust Research Institute. (Canvas)
- October 15 **Are we all capable of genocidal violence?**
READ: Waller, James. 2002. “Killers of Conviction.” Chapter 2 in *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killing*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. (Canvas)
- WEEK SEVEN:**
October 18 **THE WORLD’S ONLY AUTO-GENOCIDE**
What happened in Cambodia?
READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 6 (until the section labeled “Response”)
- October 20 **What happened in Cambodia?**
READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 6 (finish the chapter)
- October 22 **Why did it take so long to sign the Genocide Convention?**
READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 7.
WATCH: *The Killing Fields* (1984) (Canvas)
- WEEK EIGHT**
October 25 **RESERVATIONS TO THE GENOCIDE CONVENTION**
Why wouldn’t states sign the Genocide Convention?
READ: International Court of Justice. *Reservations to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide*. General List No. 12, May 28, 1951. (Case excerpt on Canvas.)
- October 27 **Reading Day:** this is a break day I have built into the syllabus for you to catch up with your reading, study your notes before the exam, work out, get together with a friend, or sleep until noon. Students use reading days in a lot of different ways, so do what is best for you. We are not meeting as a class today.

October 29	🦋 MIDTERM EXAMINATION (in class)
WEEK NINE November 1	THE PLIGHT OF IRAQI KURDS What happened in Iraq? READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 8 (read up to “In Search of Proof”)
November 3	What happened in Iraq? READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 8 (finish the chapter)
November 5	What’s so bad about chemical weapons? READ: Price, Richard and Nina Tannenwald. 1996. “Norms and Deterrence: the Nuclear and Chemical Weapons Taboo.” Chapter 4 in Peter Katzenstein, ed., <i>The Culture of National Security</i> . New York, Columbia University Press. (Available on Canvas)
WEEK TEN: November 8	ETHNIC TENSIONS AT A BOILING POINT What was the Cold War and why did it end? READ: Mingst, Karen, Heather McKibben and Ivan Arreguin-Toft. <i>Essentials of International Relations</i> , 8e. New York: W.W. Norton. (Pgs. 42-63 available on Canvas)
November 10	How did the world change after the Cold War was over? READ: Mearsheimer, John. 1990. “Why We Will Soon Miss the Cold War.” <i>Atlantic Monthly</i> 266 (2): 35-50. (Available on Canvas)
November 12	What happened in the former Yugoslavia? READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 9 (read up to “Response (Clinton)”)
WEEK ELEVEN November 15	ETHNIC TENSIONS AT A BOILING POINT What happened in the former Yugoslavia? READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 9 (finish the chapter)
November 17	How was Srebrenica different? READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 11 (read entire chapter; yes, it’s long)
November 19	Who was to blame? READ: “Radislav Krstic Becomes the First Person to be Convicted of Genocide at the ICTY...” Chapter 11.2 in Samuel Totten and Paul Bartrop, eds., <i>The Genocide Studies Reader</i> . New York: Routledge.
THANKSGIVING WEEK November 22	NO CLASS Go home and be with your families if you can!
November 24	NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break
November 26	NO CLASS Thanksgiving Break
WEEK TWELVE November 29	GENOCIDE, TELEVISED AND NARRATED Are the Hutu and Tutsi different? READ: Gourevitch, Philip. 1998. Chapter 4 in <i>We Wish to Inform You That Tomorrow We Will Be Killed With our Families</i> . New York: Picador. (Available on Canvas)
December 1	What happened in Rwanda? READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 10 (Read up to “Response”)

- December 3 **What happened in Rwanda?**
READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 10 (finish the chapter)
WATCH: *Sometimes in April* (2005) (Canvas)
👑 **FINAL EXAM PROMPTS DISTRIBUTED**
- WEEK THIRTEEN** **JUSTICE?**
December 6 **What happens afterward?**
READ: Power, Samantha. Chapter 13.
- December 8 **Can genocide be prevented?**
READ: Hirsch, Herbert. 2014. "Preventing Genocide and Protecting Human Rights: A Failure of Policy." *Genocide Studies International* 8 (1): 1-22. (Available on Canvas)
- December 10 **Do human rights matter?**
Discussion and catch-up.
- WEEK FOURTEEN:** **CONCLUSIONS**
December 13 **Questions and Snacks:** meet in class to work on your exams, ask questions of me or your colleagues, and eat snacks.
- December 15 👑 **FINAL EXAMS DUE** (by class time)
- December 17 **NO CLASS** | Enjoy the winter break!

WHAT CAN YOU DO WITH A POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR?

After completing this course, you might wonder: what would I do with a major in Political Science? There are a lot of opportunities, as there are with any liberal arts major (e.g., Psychology, Criminal Justice, Sociology, Chemistry).

Here's a small sample of some of the positions our recent graduates have held; I can provide many more upon request:

Wisconsin State Assembly Representative, 57th Assembly District
Executive Director, Wisconsin Asphalt Pavement Association
Political Director, Wisconsin League of Conservation Voters
Strategy and Innovation Consultant, United Airlines
Aerospace Consultant, Accenture
Senior Financial Analyst, VF Corporation
Paralegal, International Maritime Group (Seattle, WA)
Associate Attorney (several, in Wisconsin and beyond)
Director of Marketing and Investor Relations, New North
Assistant Manager of Championship Communications, United States Golf Association
Clinical Research Associate, ProHealth
Revenue Agent, Wisconsin Department of Revenue
Economic Developer, City of Oshkosh
Elections Specialist, Ramsey County (Minnesota)
Foreign Military Sales Subject Matter Expert (SME), Defense Security Cooperation Agency
Public Policy Coordinator, Planned Parenthood Federation of America
Enrollment Coordinator, St. Mary's University of Minnesota
IT Business Consultant, SAP (Germany)
Operations Support Associate, Thrivent Financial
Research Associate, Educational Policy Improvement Center