

University of Wisconsin Oshkosh | Department of Political Science

PS401 – Political Analysis, 3 cr. Fall 2022

Prof. Druscilla Scribner (Ph.D., University of California San Diego)

Office Location: Virtual

Office Hours: Tu/Th, 11:30-1:00 pm and by appointment via MS Teams

Email: scribned@uwosh.edu

Class Time: Tu/Th 9:40-11:10

Class Location: Online Synchronous

Department Office: Sage 4631, (920) 424-3456

UWO COURSE BULLETIN DESCRIPTION

Political Science 401 Political Analysis (SS) 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.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- *Demonstrate* knowledge of the subfields of political science;
- *Curate* a portfolio of their best work, reflecting on their learning processes;
- *Create* a detailed research design around a question of their choosing;
- *Defend* the scholarly choices they have made;
- *Present* their research orally and field questions about it;
- *Market* their skills as political scientists and students of the liberal arts; and
- *Apply* their knowledge and skills toward a future career.

You should view 401 as an opportunity to *survey the field* of political science, *apply* your knowledge and research skills, *demonstrate* and *reflect* on what you have learned in the major, and to think through the relationship between your achievements in the major and your *future goals and plans*.

This is a SYNCHRONOUS online course. We meet over zoom with our cameras ON during regular class time. We have a schedule of readings and activities for in-class and out-of-class. 401 is special. We have several BIG things we want to accomplish. These include:

- a portfolio of your major work and your learning journey
- a piece of significant research
- career preparation and planning
- a major field test

COURSE MATERIALS

Please buy, rent, or borrow the following for the semester: Kevin L. Dooley and Joseph N. Patten. *Why Politics Matters: An Introduction to Political Science*, 3rd Edition. It is available at the university bookstore.

Political Science Major Field Test (administered by ETS). The Major Field Test assesses your knowledge, understanding, and application of American Politics, Comparative Politics, International Relations, and Political Theory. The test will be administered in one of the campus computer labs during class or at the testing center.

Technology Requirements

We will use Canvas and Zoom extensively for class. Set up your Canvas notifications, so you do not miss anything! Keep in mind that Canvas does not play that well with Apple. So be sure you are accessing Canvas through Chrome (not firefox, and not safari). Canvas only supports some file types (again, not Apple) - so save yourself a lot of headaches by using Word (.DOC or .DOCX) and .PDF and NOT .pages; and use .MP4 for video and not .MOV.

You may have other technology requirements related to your textbook, depending on how you decided to purchase your text for this class (e.g., rental, paper copy, or electronic book). You have purchase options, so you can do you!

You will be creating an electronic portfolio. I encourage you to use WIX (free account) or Google Sites.

Office Hours

My office hours are via MS Teams video/phone. They are scheduled directly after our class from 11:30 AM - 1:00 PM Central Time. Just email me or chat me up on Teams to connect during office hours or make an appointment.

Email communication

I am happy to hear from you via email. *Please always include our course number in the subject AND the text of the email* so I can easily find your email and address your questions quickly. If you do not hear back within 24 hours, please email again!

ASSIGNMENTS – THE BASICS

I. Short assignments, reading quizzes, and discussion

Our course material is organized to provide you with a review of major concepts, theories, approaches, and methods in Political Science before you take the major field test. We are using an introductory book to provide a review of the major subfields and a jumping-off place for discussion each week. The reading is a *review*. You will be required to submit a pre-reading assignment on the day's tasks (we'll work out a schedule) and occasionally short assignments complementing our discussion topics. There is a multiple-choice chapter quiz for each chapter. You can take it twice. In sum, numerous short assignments are associated with the required readings, and these assignments are designed to help you review.

II. The Major Field Test in Political Science

We will schedule your MFT just before Thanksgiving break. There is no reading after the holiday, so you can focus exclusively on your research and the other major course requirements (see below!)

III. Signature Work

This is a research project of your choosing in which you will address a real-world issue, challenge, puzzle, or idea that is meaningful and important to you. We will start on this early with shared progress reports, peer review, and consultations with me throughout the semester. Your portfolio will showcase your signature work, so your project should reflect your interests and demonstrate your political science knowledge to future employers or graduate programs. You will present your final project in class at the end of the semester.

IV. Career planning and exploration

You will individually and collectively consider how you plan to use your liberal arts college degree and your political science major post-graduation. Along the way, we will take advantage of what UWO Career Services offers. Activities include working with career services to understand the job search process, completing a professional résumé, and honing your interviewing skills.

V. Electronic Portfolio

The centerpiece of 401 is a digital portfolio presentation of your work across the major. You gather and reflect on your significant experiences, best-written work, and acquired knowledge and skills in the major. The EP includes your professional résumé, a personal video pitch introducing yourself, and your signature work. Your EP will show your skills, knowledge, research, and presentation skills to your peers, professors, and family. A well-done EP can allow future employers or graduate school admissions committees to experience your many accomplishments in a way that a traditional paper resume or application does not. The EP should be the best evidence of who you are as a student and what you have to offer a potential employer or graduate program as you leave the major.

We will discuss these assignments in class and work on them collectively and individually across the semester!

COURSE POLICIES

Grades

Your final grade in this course will be based on the following weighted assignment groups, using the UWO **93/87/80** grading scale. The MFT may be graded on a curve.

- Short assignments, reading quizzes, and discussion: 20%
- The Major Field Test in Political Science: 10%
- Signature Research Project: 35%
- Career planning and exploration: 15%
- Electronic Portfolio: 20%

If you think there is a significant error or you did not get a grade and don't know why, please let me know immediately (just like you, every now and then, I miss hitting the "submit" button!).

If you think you deserved a different grade (not due to error) or are unsatisfied with how your work has been graded, you may request that it be re-graded. This request must be submitted *in writing (typed)* no later than one week after the assignment was returned. The request should provide a reasoned and persuasive account that addresses all comments and substantive feedback. This process does not guarantee a "better grade."

Participation expectations

This is your senior seminar. You are expected to attend class meetings prepared to discuss central questions, puzzles, and concerns arising from the readings and assignments and to participate fully in every class. I expect you to have your camera on and be present, just as you would in a course on campus. So, comb your hair, brush your teeth, wear pants and find a spot where you can fully participate in class. Occasionally we will not hold a class, particularly toward the end of the semester, to give you time for intensive work and to consult with me individually. You should take advantage of the open relationship that our department has with students and that you have with your peers. *Set up an appointment with me* to discuss your ideas, concerns, and questions! Get together with your peers outside of class time. Discuss your research ideas, career plans, and post-graduation plans with me, with your faculty advisor, and with your family and friends.

Absences, late work, and accommodations

Life happens to us all! So sometimes, you may need to miss class, makeup quizzes, assignments, or other work. That's OK, but you must communicate with me before your absence and keep me informed. If you need accommodations, you need to use the university accommodations request system AND talk with me directly.

Know that *missing work will receive a zero, and late submissions are automatically subject to a 7% per day late penalty*. Both can be dealt with depending on the nature of the absence and communication.

- **Excused absences and late work:** According to University policy, *excused* absences require *documented evidence of medical necessity or an approved college-sanctioned event*. We will work out a schedule for you to complete your work before or after your absence. Zeros and late penalties will be removed as work is turned in. In-class discussion and collaboration cannot be made up, but alternative written assignments may be devised as a substitute.
- **Unexcused absences and late work:** If you just miss class (it happens) you are not excused. You can still submit your work. *The late penalty is 7% per day* - it is automatic and will diminish your potential grade up to a floor of 65%. This means you can turn in late work and at least get a D up until the end of week 10. You are always better off submitting something rather than nothing! No previous unexcused late work is accepted after Week 10. In-class discussion and collaboration cannot be made up.

Citations

In all your written work for this course, you must cite your sources (even course material) appropriately using the *American Political Science Association* (APSA) citation style, including in-text citations. The Political Science Department has [writing resources](#) for you, including the APSA style guide. You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the APSA citation style and using it properly – *if you have questions, ask*.

COURSE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ACTIVITIES

We have a course schedule that we will follow over the course of the semester. The basic schedule is reproduced below. In Canvas, this schedule includes hyperlinks to our weekly pages with detailed plans and additional resources for each week. If anything changes in our schedule, I will inform you via announcements.

I have structured the course with lots of reminders and deadlines to keep you on pace to completion. You should sign up for Canvas notifications to ensure you do not miss class announcements and reminders.

Week 0: Introduction

- Read: Chapter 1 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, September 8th

Week 1: Ancient Political Theory review

- Read: Chapter 2 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: Civil Disobedience / David Thoreau excerpt on Canvas
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, September 13th
- No class meeting on Thursday, September 15th (Scribner at APSA Conference)

✍ Submit: a preliminary research project interest statement on Canvas

Week 2: Modern Political Theory review

- Read: Chapter 3 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: Wide Partisan Divide on whether voting is a fundamental right (2021) Pew Research
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, September 20th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, September 22nd

Week 3: Origins and Design of American Democracy

- Read: Chapter 4 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: the excerpt from Federalist Paper No. 10
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, September 27th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, September 29th

✍ Submit: Final version of your research question

Week 4: Nationalism and Populism in the US and Abroad

- Read: Chapter 5 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: Making Modernity work (on Canvas)
- Read: Ideological divisions over cultural issues are far wider in the U.S. than in the UK, France and Germany (Pew Research 2021)
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, October 4th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, October 6th

Week 5: Comparing Democratic Legislatures

- Read: Chapter 6 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: The independent state legislature doctrine could reverse 200 years of progress and take power away from the people (The Conversation July 2022)
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, October 11th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, October 13th

Week 6: Comparing Democratic Executives

- Read: Chapter 7 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: The Case for a Multi-Party U.S. Parliament? (on Canvas)
- Read: Debunking the myth of legislative gridlock as laws and policy are made in the nation's capital (The Conversation March 2021)

- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, October 18th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, October 20th - *Mock Interviews*
- ☞ Submit: A final copy of your resume on Canvas (PDF)

Week 7: Judicial Process in a Comparative Perspective

- Read: Chapter 8 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: After Roe's overturning, Americans are demanding Supreme Court term limits (The Conversation July 2022)
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, October 25th - *Mock Interviews*
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, October 27th

Week 8: Authoritarian States

- Read: Chapter 9 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: Authoritarianism's Last Line of Defense (on Canvas)
- Read: For Vladimir Putin and other autocrats, ruthlessly repressing the opposition is often a winning way to stay in power (The Conversation April 2021)
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, November 1st
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, November 3rd
- ☞ Submit Signature Work Draft / Peer review

Week 9: International Relations Theory, War and Diplomacy

- Read Chapter 10 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read Chapter 11 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, November 8th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, November 10th
- ☞ Individual Research check-in (scheduled appointments)

Week 10: Competing Visions of our collective future

- Read: Chapter 12 AND take the quiz on Canvas
- Read: Here's why we need climate protests: even if some think they're annoying (The Conversation December 2017)
- Read: Coronavirus is a failure of global governance – now the world needs a radical transformation (The Conversation May 2020)
- Read: the US seeks to change the rules for mining the Moon (The Conversation May 2020)
- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, November 15th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, November 17th
- ☞ Individual Research check-in (scheduled appointments)

Week 11: MFT

Week 12: Independent Writing / Consultation

- No meetings this week - individual consultation
- Final drafting and polishing of Signature Work + Portfolios

Week 13: Independent Writing / Consultation

- No meetings this week - individual consultation
- Final drafting and polishing of Signature Work + Portfolios
- ☞ Submit: Final Draft of Signature Work Project on Canvas

Week 14: Project and Portfolio presentations

- Meet on Zoom Tuesday, December 13th
- Meet on Zoom Thursday, December 15th
- ☞ Presentations
- ☞ Submit: Final Portfolio Link
- ☞ Submit: Senior Survey and course evaluations

POLITICAL SCIENCE DEPARTMENT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Office Hours: The [Political Science Department](#) uses Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) for holding office hours. This system is available to all UWO students. Your Poli Sci faculty are available during their posted office hours (whether you are taking an in-person or an online class). To use MS Teams during office hours, send a chat to your instructor to let them know you want to meet - think of that as the equivalent of knocking on the door. We're here for you! Please use our office hours freely and often. Many faculty are also happy to set up meetings outside of office hours if students have conflicts with the posted times.

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 appropriately (quoted when using someone's words and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When you are asked to work in teams, that work should be done by the group collaboratively. [More information can be found here.](#)

Concerns or Grievances: The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback very seriously. You should contact me if you have concerns about this course, assignments, or teaching method. That goes for your other classes, too: always talk to your professor first. But if you are not comfortable speaking to your instructor, you can always reach out to the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at kruegerj@uwosh.edu. As needed, he can guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science or the Dean of Students.

Note to Political Science Majors: Congratulations on joining a great major - the world needs your critical thinking, creative problem-solving, knowledge of the issues, and stellar communication skills! Please **NOTE** that majors should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore year or the first semester of their junior year. Political Science 245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently. If you are currently a political science major or think you will be one of our majors in the future, save your written work from your classes, so you are prepared to put together your portfolio of significant work when you are a senior. Please let me know if you have questions about the major or advising!

Changes: If substantive changes are made to this course syllabus, such as changes in schedule or assignments, notification will be provided promptly, and a revised syllabus will be made available (see our course schedule page).

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

UW Oshkosh strives to create inclusive learning environments. Reasonable accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or meet course requirements. See the [Dean of Students](#) and the Accessibility Center for more information

If you have any situation/condition, either permanent or temporary, that might affect your ability to perform in this class or access class assignments; please reach out to me so that we can work together on a plan for your success. Canvas is an ADA-compliant course

management software suite. Both Canvas and our textbook have accessibility features that you may find helpful such as the immersive reader function.

Diversity drives innovation, creativity, and progress. At the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, the culture, identities, life experiences, unique abilities, and talents of every individual contribute to the foundation of our success. Creating and maintaining an inclusive and equitable environment is paramount to us. This pursuit prepares all of us to be global citizens who will contribute to the betterment of the world. We are committed to a university culture that provides everyone with the opportunity to thrive.

By federal regulations set forth by [The Higher Education Act of 1965](#) (amended in 1998), [consumer information](#) is available to all students at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh.