Political Science 105  
Introduction to Politics  
Spring 2010

Professor David Darmofal  
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Office Hours: M 4-5, W 10-11  
and by appointment

Class Meetings:  
MW 8:40 – 9:55 A.M., 151 Gambrell

Course Overview:

What is political science? What topics do political scientists study? What kinds of questions do political scientists try to answer when studying these topics? As we will see in this course, political science is a surprisingly diverse discipline. Its concerns range from individual and mass behavior to formal governmental institutions to relations between nations. This course will introduce students to each of these topics as well as several others drawn from three of the discipline’s core subfields: American Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Relations. By studying these topics, students will develop a strong factual grasp of the discipline’s core concerns.

As we will see, political scientists use their factual knowledge of politics as a foundation for thinking critically about political phenomena. Political scientists are not primarily interested in factual descriptions of citizens, institutions, and states. Rather, they use these facts to develop theoretical explanations for why citizens, institutions, and states behave as they do. Likewise, students will be challenged to use the factual knowledge they gain to think critically about why political actors, institutions, and states behave as they do.

The course is structured to build cumulatively throughout the term. First, we will examine the nature of politics, governing, and political ideologies. Next, we will examine individual and mass behavior. In the next portion of the course, we will examine formal governmental institutions and the linkage institutions that connect citizens to governments. Finally, we will move beyond the discussion of citizen behaviors and institutions to examine how states interact with each other.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Identify and discuss the central topics studied by political scientists
- Identify the types of questions asked by American Politics, Comparative Politics, and International Relations scholars
- Evaluate and contrast the major modern political ideologies
- Identify the central debates regarding political behavior, linkage institutions, and formal government institutions
Textbooks:

There is one required textbook that is available at the campus bookstores:


Course Grades and Grading:

Course grades will be determined by student performance on three non-cumulative exams during the semester. There will be two non-cumulative midterm exams and one non-cumulative final exam (dates of each exam are noted on the syllabus). The two midterm exams will each count for 30% of the student’s grade in the course, while the final exam will count for 40%. Makeup exams will only be offered in extreme circumstances (e.g., a documented death in the family or medical emergency). Verifiable proof of the emergency is required.

There will be one extra credit assignment allowed during the course. More information will be provided about the extra credit assignment during the semester. The maximum number of points awarded for the extra credit assignment will be two percentage points on the student’s overall course grade.

Course grades will be based on the following grading scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90 – 100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87 – 89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80 – 86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 – 79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70 – 76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60 – 66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67 – 69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Course grades at the end of the semester will be rounded up a half point if they are at .5 or higher. Thus, an 89.5 will become a 90. There will be no other adjusting of grades or curving of grades. If you cannot accept this, you should not take this course.

Academic Honesty and Integrity:

Students’ work in this course is expected to be their own. The University’s commitment to academic integrity is enshrined in the *Carolinian Creed* and is detailed in the *Rule of Academic Responsibility*. Information on violations of academic honesty and integrity and the University’s punishments for these violations can be found in the *Carolina Community Student Handbook* (Student Affairs Policy STAF 6.25). It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of and adhere to the *Rule of Academic Responsibility*, which can be found online at [http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm](http://www.sa.sc.edu/carolinacommunity/housing.htm).

Disabilities Issues:

Students with disabilities should contact me during the first week of the semester about their needs and any assistance or arrangements that may be necessary. Students with disabilities
should also contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 777-6742 to learn about the many programs and services that the University provides.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

In order to get the most out of the course, students should read the assigned material prior to the classes for which it is assigned.

**Week 1 (Week of January 11th): Course Introduction and the Nature of Politics**  
Shively, Chapter 1

**Week 2 (Week of January 18th): The Nature of Politics and Governments and Governing**  
**MONDAY, JANUARY 18TH: DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR DAY -- NO CLASS**  
Shively, Ch. 1 and 3

**Week 3 (Week of January 25th): Governments and Governing**  
Shively, Ch. 3

**Week 4 (Week of February 1st): Democracy and Authoritarianism**  
Shively, Ch. 7

**Week 5 (Week of February 8th): Political Ideologies**  
Shively, Ch. 2

**MONDAY, FEBRUARY 15TH: EXAM 1**

**Week 6 (Week of February 15th): Political Psychology, Political Socialization, and Culture**  
Shively, Ch. 8

**Week 7 (Week of February 22nd): Public Opinion**  
Shively, Ch. 8

**Week 8 (Week of March 1st): Political Communication**  
Shively, Ch. 13

**WEEK OF MARCH 8: SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES**

**Week 9 (Week of March 15th): Voting Behavior**  
Shively, Ch. 10

**MONDAY, MARCH 22ND: EXAM 2**

**Week 10 (Week of March 22nd): Political Parties and Party Systems**  
Shively, Ch. 11
Week 11 (Week of March 29th): The Legislative Process
Shively, Ch. 14

Week 12 (Week of April 5th): Executives and the Administrative Process
Shively, Ch. 15 and 16

Week 13 (Week of April 12th): The Administrative Process; Human Rights
Shively, Ch. 16 and 6

Week 14 (Week of April 19th): Human Rights; Politics Among Nations
Shively, Ch. 6 and 18

Week 15 (Week of April 26th): Politics Among Nations
Monday (April 26th)
Shively, Ch. 18

Final Examination
Thursday, April 29th
2:00-5:00 p.m.
151 Gambrell