

University of Tennessee
Political Science Department
Introduction to Political Science (POS 102)
MWF 8:00-8:50 am, HSS 114
MWF 1:25-2:15 pm, HSS 123
Spring 2009

Instructor: Dr. Nikki Mitchell

Office Number: 1010 McClung Tower

Office Hours: Hours designated for student consultation include Mondays and Fridays from 12:15 pm-1:15 pm and Tuesdays from 2:15-3:15 pm. Students may also be seen by appointment.

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"No one is born a good citizen; no nation is born a democracy. Rather, both are processes that continue to evolve over a lifetime. Young people must be included from birth. A society that cuts off from its youth severs its lifeline."

-- Kofi Annan, former Secretary General of the United Nations

Course Description: This course is an introduction to the field of Political Science through a survey of the major issues, questions, and ideas of politics from a comparative and international perspective. The class provides an overview of the discipline and its subfields. Key concepts and topics include: power, the state, and the nation; political change, resistance, violence (including terrorism), and human rights; ideologies of liberalism, conservatism, nationalism, feminism, and environmentalism; the organization of major political systems; institutions of governance: executives, legislatures, and courts; and the international dimensions of politics and economics from the global to the local level. These themes provide frameworks to both interpret current events and evaluate the proper nature of domestic and international society.

Parallel goals of this course include developing effective research, analysis, and writing skills. The class also aims to foster a global understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity, difference, and inequality through critical thinking. Together, these objectives help form the basis for future coursework in and out of the discipline and should help students make informed judgments about the political world around them.

Text and Materials: One required book: Grigsby, Ellen. (2009) *Analyzing Politics*. 4th ed. California: Wadsworth.

All students must have access to Blackboard (Online@UT) and UT email for communication, assignments, readings, and other class information. We will also be discussing current events daily, and so you should have regular access to news sources in order to participate effectively. Here are a few useful sites to help you get started:

BBC World News

www.bbcnews.com

NPR News

<http://www.npr.org/>

The Washington Post

www.washingtonpost.com

The New York Times

www.nytimes.com

The Economist

www.economist.com

A List of All Newspapers

<http://www.world-newspapers.com/>

Grading Scale: A = 93-100; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 83-86; B- = 80-82;

C+ = 77-79; C = 73-76; C- = 70-72; D+ = 67-69; D = 63-66; D- = 60-62; F = 0-59
 (*Please note the university's new grading scale, which includes minuses.)

Grading Policy: The total number of possible points that may be earned is 500. The following is a breakdown of this total. *Any extra credit earned will be added to this point total before it is divided by 500.*

3 exams, 100 pts. each	300
attendance	100
<u>participation</u>	<u>100</u>
Total	500

Exams will consist of multiple choice questions. Students are expected to take exams during scheduled class times. **Make-ups will be permitted only in cases of pre-arranged school related activities (athletes), documented illness, or other documented extenuating circumstances.** There will be only one make-up exam session for those who qualify. This session will be immediately following this class's scheduled final exam.

The participation grade will be based on a number of activities assigned throughout the semester. Activities may include in-class group work, homework assignments, in-class videos, and Internet activities. Most of these assignments may not be made up if the student is absent. (For example, an in-class group discussion may not be made up.)

Attendance Policy: Attendance is mandatory for this class, and makes-up 1/5 of the final grade (see above). Attendance will be recorded each day class meets. Students may miss up to 3 days (equivalent to one week of class) without penalty. Each absence above 3 will result in a 10 point deduction from the beginning attendance grade of 100%. For example, a student who misses 4 days of class will have a grade of 90%. If you miss more than 20 minutes of class, either because you are tardy or leave early, you will be marked absent for the day.

Readings: Weekly reading assignments will be specified in class. A general schedule of topics/readings is provided below. This course schedule is designed to be flexible in order to accommodate discussion and debate. Reading in addition to the text may also be assigned, and will be posted on Blackboard, emailed to UT accounts, or assigned in class. **LECTURES WILL OVERLAP AS WELL AS SUPPLEMENT THE TEXT. STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL LECTURE NOTES AS WELL AS ASSIGNED READINGS.** This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

I. Weeks 1-5 Introduction

- A. What is political science? (Ch 1)
- B. Scientific method and political science (Ch 2)
- C. The basics: Key concepts (Ch 3)
- D. Political theory (Ch 4)

*******Exam #1: Monday, Feb. 16**

II. Weeks 6-11 Ideologies

- A. Liberalism, Conservatism, and Socialism (Ch 5)
- B. Fascism (Ch 6)
- C. Feminism, Environmentalism, Postmodernism (Ch 7)

Comparative Politics

- D. Democratic and non-democratic systems (Ch 8)

*******Exam #2: Monday, March 30**

III. Weeks 12-15 Comparative Politics (continued)

- A. Interest groups, political parties, and elections (Ch 9)
- B. The political institutions of democracies (Ch 10)

International Relations

C. Introduction to IR (Ch 11)

D. Contemporary issues (Ch 12)

*******Final exam:** **8:00 am class: Monday, May 4, 8:00 am-10:00 am**
 1:25 pm class: Wednesday, April 29, 12:30 pm-2:30 pm

Standards of Conduct: Students are expected to abide by all *Hilltopics* standards of conduct. The guide may be accessed at <http://web.utk.edu/~homepage/hilltopics>

Students must be respectful toward one another and the instructor at all times. Debates and discussions should be based on reasoned analysis and course materials rather than emotion.

Please do not: allow cell phones to ring during class; text-message during class; arrive late or leave early; talk while the instructor is talking; read the newspaper during class; surf the Internet during class; use smokeless tobacco during class; or pack-up while the instructor is talking.

Misbehavior or disruption of the college classroom is totally unacceptable and therefore will not be tolerated. Any student who disrupts class may be asked to leave.

Statement of Plagiarism: Plagiarism (cheating) will not be tolerated. Plagiarism is the use of ideas, facts, opinions, illustrative material, data, direct or indirect wording of another scholar and/or writer—professional or student—without giving proper credit. Expulsion, suspension, or any lesser penalty may be imposed for plagiarism.

The university requires each student to commit to the following honor code, which can be found at <http://www.lib.utk.edu/instruction/plagairism/honor>

“As a student of the university, I pledge that I will neither knowingly give nor receive any inappropriate assistance in academic work, thus affirming my own personal commitment to honor and integrity.”

Email: Due to privacy concerns, students are required to communicate with their instructor using their official UT email address.

Withdrawal Policy: The deadline for withdrawing from a course with a “W” has been extended to the *63rd day of the semester* (formerly 42nd day). Please note, however, that students may benefit from consulting their instructor prior to withdrawing from a course. Often the instructor can assist with challenges that arise during the semester so that withdrawal may be avoided. Students may be eligible for support services the university provides, including tutoring and other academic support, as well as assistance with personal problems.

Disability Statement: Students who have a disability that requires accommodation(s) should make an appointment with the Office of Disability Services (974-6087) to discuss their specific needs.