

POLI 201 L01 (Introduction to Government and Politics)

Instructor: Dr. Pablo Policzer	Lecture Location: ENC 70
Phone: 403-220-5923	Lecture Days/Time: MWF 1:00 – 1:50pm
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Office: SS 710	
Office Hours: Mondays 2:00 – 3:00pm	

Description

POLI 201 introduces the basic concepts, theories, language, and scope of political science. In doing so, it connects these to the principles and institutions that make up what we conventionally call “government” as well as to politics in a broader sense. Its core message is that government is but one manifestation of politics, that in some fundamental ways it’s *all* politics. We will explore this notion through how the discipline’s different subfields approach critical, controversial, and often long-standing conflicts, in Canada and beyond. Those subfields include political philosophy, comparative politics (including the study of Canada), and international relations, which also link to a diverse range of other subfields such as security studies, international political economy, environmental politics, and Indigenous politics.

Objectives

This course aims to help students develop important skills towards becoming informed and critically engaged citizens and political observers in a complex and rapidly changing world. Upon completion, students will have begun to develop several key conceptual, analytical, and communicational skills:

- *Understanding* how politics matters across different dimensions: from the local to the international, and from the personal to the environmental.
- Learning a *disciplined conceptual vocabulary* and a set of sharp *analytical tools* about politics broadly understood.
- Because *research* is critical to our discipline, you will also have the option of developing research skills including by carefully documenting your written work (though citations and referencing).
- Because you don’t know what you think until you write it down, this course will give you the option to improve your *writing* skills. A thinking person needs not only listening, observation, analysis, and research skills, but also the ability to communicate their ideas clearly and concisely. An optional writing assignment will ask students to use research and analytical skills within strict space constraints. Such assignments encourage students to consider how best to apply concepts to a particular problem, and how to communicate this relationship clearly and succinctly in a limited space.

Required textbook

- Robert Garner, Peter Ferdinand, Stephanie Lawson, and David B. MacDonald, *Introduction to Politics*, 3rd Canadian Edition (Oxford University Press, 2022)

Other required readings are available as links in this syllabus and for download from D2L, either directly from the course site or as external links to other sites.

We will also be using Piazza, which allows free-form Q&A and discussion about any aspect of the course, from logistical details ("Where will the final exam be held?") to class content. In a class about politics, there will be a *lot* of stuff to discuss in more depth. The system is highly catered to getting you wiki-style help fast and efficiently from classmates, the TAs, and myself. Instead of emailing questions to the teaching staff, you are encouraged to post your questions on Piazza. If you have any problems or feedback for the developers, email team@piazza.com.

Find our class page at: <https://piazza.com/ucalgary.ca/fall2022/poli201/home>

Grading

All students will write two (2) in-class unit exams as well as a registrar-scheduled final exam (which will emphasize the last unit but also cover the entire term) and be assessed on participation through TopHat. (Discussion in Piazza will *not* count towards participation.) This means that students *must* bring appropriate technology to class, such as a smartphone, tablet, or laptop. In addition, students have the *option* of completing a writing assignment, worth 20% of the final grade. Students who do not complete the writing assignment can earn a top grade of B+. Completing a writing assignment is a *necessary* but not a *sufficient* condition for obtaining the requisite grade. It's possible to complete an assignment and still fall short of the mark.

Item	Date	Weight
Unit exams (x2) @20% ea.	October 3 and 28	40%
Final exam	During exam period, December 10-21	30%
Participation (assessed through TopHat)	Throughout term	10%
Optional writing assignment	Anytime up to December 7	20%
		100%

Although the writing assignment is the only official optional requirement, unofficially you could also opt out of one or more components, for which you will receive a grade of 0%. For example, you could choose not to complete one of the unit exams and still pass the course, if you do well enough in the other components.

Optional writing assignment

Write a brief paper in answer to one (1) of the following questions:

1. Should voting be mandatory?
2. Is it better to have competitive elections or to have political representatives be selected to serve at random, as they do in jury duty?
3. Should Canada abandon first-past-the-post voting in favour of proportional representation?
4. Should the nation-state continue to be the fundamental political unit?
5. Can the United Nations reconcile both respect for international human rights and for state sovereignty?
6. Can a country be democratic without a strong state?
7. Should Canada promote democracy abroad, or should other countries be left to make their own choices regarding what regime to pursue?
8. Is it better for a country to be democratic or for it to be rich?

This **4-paragraph** assignment *must* include:

1. **One** introductory paragraph, which articulates a clear thesis statement in one complete sentence. The thesis is the essay's central claim or argument. The more this goes beyond mere description and offers sharp analytical clarity and original insight, the better.
2. **Two** body paragraphs that offer different, but related points supporting your thesis. A good way to support your thesis is to discuss – to give specific reasons – *why* it may or may not be true.
3. Connective sentences that clearly link one body paragraph to the next.
4. **One** concluding paragraph that summarizes the core argument. This needs to clearly connect to the central thesis. A
5. Conform to the formatting requirements listed below.
6. Be **no more** than 800 words, formatted into double spaced pages, with 1-inch margins in 12-point font.
7. Cite at least three (3) scholarly sources that are *not* the textbook (but which may include suggestions found *in* the textbook, or other sources in this syllabus outside the textbook). Citations must be in Chicago Style:
https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html

The assignment will be assessed according to the **REST** rubric:

1. **Research:** 20 – Meets research requirements and uses appropriate, consistent citations.
 2. **Execution:** 20 – Style, spelling, grammar, punctuation, and attention to detail
 3. **Structure:** 30 – Good introduction and conclusion, clear flow of ideas and paragraphs
 4. **Thinking:** 30 – How well you make your argument through reasoned logic and evidence
- Total: /100

... and according to these criteria:

A- (80-84%) → A (85-89%) → A+ (90% +)

Exceptional performance: strong evidence of original thinking; excellent organization; strong capacity to analyze and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter with sound critical evaluations; evidence of extensive knowledge base. Work at this level is clearly written, with no spelling or grammar faults.

B- (70-73%) → B (74-76%) → B+ (77-79%)

Competent performance: evidence of grasp of subject matter; some evidence of critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; evidence of familiarity with the literature. Work at this level is generally clearly written, containing at most a few, if any, spelling or grammar faults.

D (50-54%) → D+ (55-59%) → C- (60-62%) → C (63-66%) → C+ (67-69%)

Adequate performance: understanding of the subject matter; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material; acceptable but uninspired work, not seriously faulty but lacking style and vigour. Work at this level is sometimes or often unclear and contains from some to many spelling and/or grammar problems.

F (0-49%)

Inadequate performance: little or no evidence of understanding of the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytic skills; limited or irrelevant use of the literature. Work at this level is usually poorly written, with numerous spelling and grammar problems.

You can submit the writing assignment anytime until the last day of class (December 7). No papers will be accepted after that date. Some of the topics bear on material earlier in the term, others on later material. If you are planning on writing a paper, you would be well advised to write it close to the time the material is covered. The fresher the material is in your head, the better the result is likely to be.

Reading and writing skills¹

An academic discipline such as political science requires immersing yourself in and critically engaging a substantial body of work. This course is merely an introduction to a discipline, which, like many others, involves quite a bit of reading and writing.

As you manage the reading for this and more advanced courses in the discipline, you are likely to find that there is little correlation between effort and outcome. It's possible to spend many hours reading something without "getting it,"

and equally possible to spend very little time reading something else and getting quickly to the heart of it. Reading is not an ability that either comes naturally or does not—it's a skill that must be learned. *Figure out the heart of the argument before you read deeply.* When you know the article's centre of gravity, you read more efficiently. *Read actively.* Be skeptical, approach the text with questions, and try to answer these for yourself as you make your way through it. The more actively you read, the more you will retain, and the easier it will be to write about it.

As noted previously, it's not only *what* you write that matters in how you will be evaluated, but also *how* you write it. Crisp, clear, effective writing counts. That includes such things as grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, clarity, citation, and organization. As George Orwell noted, "the slovenliness of our language makes it easier for us to have foolish thoughts."² The advice in these articles should help you avoid slovenly writing, at least:

- William Zinsser, "Writing English as a Second Language": <https://theamericanscholar.org/writing-english-as-a-second-language/>
- Steven Pinker, "Why Academics Stink at Writing": <http://chronicle.com/article/Why-Academics-Writing-Stinks/148989/>
- And beyond Pinker's article, I would very strongly recommend his book *The Sense of Style*: <http://stevenpinker.com/publications/sense-style-thinking-persons-guide-writing-21st-century>

If you need it, further help with writing is available through Writing Support Services in the Student Success Centre: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/ssc/writing-support>.



<http://www.cartoonstock.com/>



(Image Copyright Unknown)

¹ Adapted from K. Chandra and D. Woodruff, MIT.

² George Orwell, "Politics and the English Language" (1946): http://www.orwell.ru/library/essays/politics/english/e_polit/

In this as in other university courses, the lectures, discussions, and readings are connected but distinct streams. Unlike high school, the lectures will comment and frame the core topics and the readings but will not necessarily follow them precisely: listening to the lectures is *not* a substitute for doing the readings. All course material—including lectures and readings—is fair game for the exams. If you listen to the lectures, do the assigned readings carefully, understand the main ideas, and can demonstrate this understanding in the exams (and the optional writing assignments), you will be well on your way to succeeding in the course.

The TA's and I will be available for consultation by email, during office hours, or by appointment.

Schedule

DATE	THEMES	READINGS
Sep 7-9	<i>Course overview</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is politics and how should we study it? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Introduction
Sep 12-16	<i>Political concepts and ideas</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyzing politics • Power, authority, the state 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapters 1-2
Sep 19-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democracy, freedom, and autocracy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapters 3-4 • Robert Dahl, <i>Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition</i> (Yale, 1971), Chapter 1, pp. 1-16 (in D2L.)
Sep 26-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The scope of political ideas 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapters 5-6 • Taiaiake Alfred, <i>Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto</i> (Oxford, 2009), "Native American Political Traditions," pp. 25-30, and "Sovereignty: An Inappropriate Concept," pp. 79-84 (in D2L).
Sep 30	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation (no class)	
October 3	<i>Unit quiz (in class)</i>	
Oct 3-7	<i>Comparative Politics</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutions and states 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapters 7-8 • Charles Tilly, "State Making and War Making as Organized Crime," in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschmeyer and Theda Skocpol, eds. <i>Bringing the State Back In</i> (Cambridge, 1986), pp. 169-191 (in D2L).
Oct 10-12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting, legislating, and governing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapters 9-11

Oct 14-19	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-democratic politics 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IEP, Plato: <i>The Republic</i>, Synopsis of Books V-VIII: https://iep.utm.edu/republic/#SH1a • Erica Frantz (2020). <i>Authoritarianism: what everyone needs to know</i> (Oxford University Press, 2020), Chapter 1 “Introduction” and Chapter 2 “Understanding Authoritarian Politics”, pp. 1-30; https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/detail.action?docID=5457393 ³
Oct 21-26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • From protest to revolution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Karl Marx & Friedrich Engels, <i>Communist Manifesto</i>, Part I Bourgeois and Proletarians; https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=5444456&ppg=7 • James C. Scott, <i>Weapons of the Weak</i> (Yale, 1987), Chapter 1 “Small Arms Fire in the Class War,” pp. 1-27; https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/lib/ucalgary-ebooks/reader.action?docID=3420902&ppg=24
Oct 28	<i>Unit quiz (in class)</i>	
Oct 31-Nov 4	<i>International Relations</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapter 14
Nov 7-11	Reading week (no classes)	
Nov 14-16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IR theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapters 15-16
Nov 18-23	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security and insecurity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapter 17 • Thucydides, <i>The Peloponnesian War</i>, Summary of Melian Dialogue: https://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/intrel/melian.htm
Nov 25-28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International political economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Garner et al., Chapter 20
Nov 30-Dec 5	<i>Political challenges ahead</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Humanity faces ‘collective suicide’ over climate crisis, warns UN chief,” <i>The Guardian</i>, 18 July 2022; https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jul/18/humanity-faces-collective-suicide-over-climate-crisis-warns-un-chief

³ Please note that our library licence permits only **three (3)** simultaneous online users. Each user is permitted to download and print to PDF up to 51 pages per day. You are advised to download and print these chapters as early as possible, to avoid access issues.

- Roberto Stefan Foa and Yasha Mounk, "The Signs of Deconsolidation," *Journal of Democracy*, 28:1 (January 2017), pp. 5-15; <https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.lib.ucalgary.ca/article/645532>

Dec 7 *Conclusion*

Exam period *Final exam (2.5 hours)*

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND INFORMATION

Absence From a Mid-term Examination

Students who are absent from a scheduled term test or quiz for legitimate reasons are responsible for contacting the instructor via email within 48 hours of the missed test to discuss alternative arrangements. A copy of this email may be requested as proof of the attempt to contact the instructor. Any student who fails to do so forfeits the right to a makeup test.

Deferred Term Work Form: Deferral of term work past the end of a term requires a form to be filled out by the student and submitted, along with any supporting documentation, to the instructor. The form is available at: https://live-ucalgary.ucalgary.ca/sites/default/files/teams/14/P22_deferral-of-term-work_lapseGrade.pdf

Once an extension date has been agreed between instructor and student, the instructor will email the form to the Faculty of Arts Program Information Centre (ascarts@ucalgary.ca) for approval by the Associate Dean.

Deferral of a Final Examination

Deferral of a final examination can be granted for reasons of illness, domestic affliction, and unforeseen circumstances, as well as to those with three (3) final exams scheduled within a 24-hour period. Deferred final exams will not be granted to those who sit the exam, who have made travel arrangements that conflict with their exam, or who have misread the examination timetable. The decision to allow a deferred final exam rests not with the instructor but with Enrolment Services. Instructors should, however, be notified if you will be absent during the examination. The Application for Deferred Final Exam, deadlines, requirements and submission instructions can be found on the Enrolment Services website at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/exams/deferred-exams>.

Reappraisal of Grades:

For Reappraisal of Graded Term Work, see Calendar I.2

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-2.html>

For Reappraisal of Final Grade, see Calendar I.3

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/i-3.html>

Academic Misconduct:

Academic Misconduct refers to student behavior that compromises proper assessment of students' academic activities and includes: cheating; fabrication; falsification; plagiarism; unauthorized assistance; failure to comply with an instructor's expectations regarding conduct required of students completing academic assessments in their courses; and failure to comply with exam regulations applied by the Registrar.

Student committing academic misconduct during the final exam will not receive a passing grade for the course.

For information on the Student Academic Misconduct Policy, Procedure and Academic Integrity, please visit: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k-3.html>

Plagiarism And Other Forms Of Academic Misconduct

Academic misconduct in any form (e.g. cheating, plagiarism) is a serious academic offence that can lead to disciplinary probation, suspension or expulsion from the University. Students are expected to be familiar with the standards surrounding academic honesty; these can be found in the University of Calgary calendar at <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>. Such offences will be taken seriously and reported immediately, as required by Faculty of Arts policy.

Recording of Lectures:

Recording of lectures is prohibited, except for audio recordings authorized as an accommodation by SAS or an audio recording for individual private study and only with the written permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized electronic or mechanical recording of lectures, their transcription, copying, or distribution, constitutes academic misconduct. See <https://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/e-6.html>.

Academic Accommodations:

Students seeking an accommodation based on disability or medical concerns should contact Student Accessibility Services. SAS will process the request and issue letters of accommodation to instructors. Students who require an accommodation in relation to their coursework based on a protected ground other than disability should communicate this need in writing to their instructor. The full policy on Student Accommodations is available at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/accommodation-students-disabilities-procedure>

Research Ethics

Students are advised that any research with human subjects – including any interviewing (even with friends and family), opinion polling, or unobtrusive observation – must have the approval of the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board. In completing course requirements, students must not undertake any human subject research without discussing their plans with the instructor, to determine if ethics approval is required.

Instructor Intellectual Property

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy (FOIP) Act:

Personal information is collected in accordance with FOIP. Assignments can only be returned to the student and will be accessible only to authorized faculty and staff. For more information, see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/access-information-privacy>

Copyright Legislation:

See the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legal-services/university-policies-procedures/acceptable-use-material-protected-copyright-policy> Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may NOT be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. The posting of course materials to third party websites such as note-sharing sites without permission is prohibited. Sharing of extracts of these course materials with other students enrolled in the course at the same time may be allowed under fair dealing.

Evacuation Assembly Points

In the event of an emergency evacuation from class, students are required to gather in designated assembly points. Please check the list found at <https://www.ucalgary.ca/risk/emergency-management/evac-drills-assembly-points/assembly-points> and note the assembly point nearest to your classroom.

Important Dates:

Please check: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/academic-schedule.html>.

Faculty of Arts Program Advising and Student Information Resources

- Have a question, but not sure where to start? The Arts Students' Centre is your information resource for everything in Arts! Drop in at SS102, call them at 403-220-3580, or email them at artsads@ucalgary.ca. You can also visit the Faculty of Arts website at <http://arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate>, which has detailed information on common academic concerns, including program planning and advice.
- For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them in the MacKimmie Tower.

Important Contact Information

Campus Security and Safewalk (24 hours a day/7 days a week/365 days a year)
Phone: 403-220-5333

Faculty of Arts Undergraduate Students' Union Representatives
Phone: 403-220-6551
Email: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca,
arts4@su.ucalgary.ca
Students' Union URL: www.su.ucalgary.ca

Graduate Students' Association
Phone: 403-220-5997
Email: askgsa@ucalgary.ca
URL: www.ucalgary.ca/gsa

Student Ombudsman
Phone: 403-220-6420
Email: ombuds@ucalgary.ca

Campus Mental Health Resources

The University of Calgary recognizes the pivotal role that student mental health plays in physical health, social connectedness and academic success, and aspires to create a caring and supportive campus community where individuals can freely talk about mental health and receive supports when needed. We encourage you to explore the excellent mental health resources available throughout the university community, such as counselling, self-help resources, peer support or skills-building available through the following resources:

SU Wellness Centre: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/wellnesscentre/>

Student Wellness Services:

<https://www.ucalgary.ca/wellness-services/services/mental-health-services>

Campus Mental Health Strategy website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/mentalhealth/>.