Syllabus: POS 480: Political Science Capstone

Course Title: POS 480: Political Science Capstone

Semester: Fall 2024

Instructor: Dr. James Thompson

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Office Hours: Wednesdays 1:00-3:30 PM OR by appointment

Class Time & Place: Monday or Wednesday 2:00-3:15 PM in SANCA 150

Course Description:

This capstone course focuses on applying political science theories and methods to address real-world political issues. Students will work on a research project or advocacy campaign that tackles a contemporary political challenge. The course includes the development of a project proposal, research and analysis, strategy development, and presentation of findings through a report and at the Innovation Showcase.

Course Objectives:

Conduct a research project or advocacy campaign on a political issue.

Develop a strategy to address the political challenge identified.

Produce a final report that critically assesses the project's outcomes.

Present the project at the Innovation Showcase in a professional manner.

Learning Outcomes:

Gain expertise in political science research and advocacy.

Develop practical skills in data collection, analysis, and strategy development.

Enhance communication skills through written reports and presentations.

Work effectively both independently and in teams to address political challenges.

Group Project and Required Subtasks:

The group project for this course will involve the design and execution of a research project or advocacy campaign on a political issue. The project will be divided into the following subtasks:

1. **Project Proposal (Week 3):**

   - Submit a proposal that outlines the political issue being addressed, the research question or advocacy goal, and a detailed timeline. Assign roles and responsibilities within the group.

2. **Research and Data Collection (Weeks 4-6):**

   - Conduct thorough research and data collection on the political issue, including literature reviews, surveys, interviews, or case studies.

3. **Analysis and Strategy Development (Weeks 7-10):**

   - Analyze the data collected to identify key insights and trends. Develop a strategy for addressing the political issue, whether through policy recommendations, public awareness campaigns, or other advocacy methods.

4. **Implementation and Outreach (Weeks 11-12):**

   - Implement the strategy developed, including outreach efforts to stakeholders, policymakers, or the public. Monitor the impact of the outreach.

5. **Final Report and Presentation (Weeks 13-15):**

   - Document the research process, analysis, and outcomes in a final report.

   - Prepare a poster and presentation for the Innovation Showcase that effectively communicates the project's findings and recommendations.

Groups will need to collaborate closely and meet regularly to ensure progress. Instructor check-ins

will be provided to offer guidance and address any issues that arise.

Evaluation:

Class meetings (5): 20 points

Individual meetings (3): 12 points

Project Proposal: 10 points

Research and Data Collection: 15 points

Analysis and Strategy Development: 18 points

Implementation and Outreach: 10 points

Final Report: 10 points

Presentation: 5 points

Poster: 10 points

Total: 100 points

Course Policies:

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance and active participation are crucial for success in this course. Students are expected to attend all scheduled class meetings and individual sessions. If a student is unable to attend a class, they should inform the instructor in advance and arrange to complete any missed work.

Academic Integrity: All students must adhere to ASU's academic integrity policy. Any form of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will be reported and may result in severe penalties, including a failing grade for the course.

Accommodations: Students with disabilities or special needs should contact the ASU Disability Resource Center to arrange appropriate accommodations and notify the instructor as soon as possible.

Important Dates:

Class Week 1: Introductions & Project Brainstorming (Aug 26)

Individual Meeting #1: Discuss Ideas and Readings (Sep 4)

Class Week 2: Proposal Presentation & Group Feedback (Sep 18)

Individual Meeting #2: Proposal Feedback & Methods Discussion (Oct 2)

Class Week 3: Revised Proposal Presentation & CERTT Tour (Oct 23)

Individual Meeting #3: Data Analysis & Progress Review (Nov 13)

Class Week 4: Professional Development & Project Discussion (Nov 27)

Innovation Showcase: Final Presentations & Poster Display (Dec 6)