

Oxford College of Emory University
Political Science 101: Introduction to Politics

Dr. Katie Vigilante
 Office Seney 214C
 kvigila@emory.edu
 Office Hours TU & TH 4-5PM
 And By Appointment
 SI: Josh Moscow

Course Overview

This is **THE** introductory course to Political Science offered at Oxford College. We require you to take this course *before* you take any other political science course. If you decide to take more courses after this one, you will find you have been given a very unique experience, for much else in Political Science concerns itself with what can be known *through the scientific method*.

That is, most of what you learn *after this course* is based on an understanding of things political (states, institutions, leaders, laws, political behavior, elections, and even culture) through the gathering of empirical evidence to support theory of the *known* world. This type of inquiry is very important, but the manner in which we inquire in this course is different. Rather than ask how do, we ask how should/ought (for example): political institutions, governments, parties, leaders, and the like operate to bring about the best way to live or the best life for citizens? What is justice?

In Political Science 101, we expose you to these questions because they must be addressed first. They are the beginning questions of our discipline and as it turns out, they keep us interested going forward. We will be reading, analyzing, discussing and writing about some of the greatest political thinkers in the ancient and modern periods. We will intentionally ask questions we know we cannot answer with any concrete certainty. What we seek to train you to do in Political Science 101 is to make cogent and supported arguments (both in oral and written form) based on the material you are exposed.

This course is patterned after the INQ approach (Ways of Inquiry) Oxford is incorporating into our General Education Program (GEP). Students will be introduced to and expected to know the fundamental concepts and theories that are essential to the study of politics but the learning of these concepts and theories will be conducted using an inquiry driven model.

To accomplish this goal, I dedicate part of class to lecture and the other part to discussion. You will be evaluated in terms of your contributions to discussions. Some of you may be more willing to speak up and others more reticent. To encourage more even

handed participation I will use 2 tools: (1) provide discussion questions in advance of class on our blackboard conference and (2) call on students randomly.

The reading load in this class is NOT heavy. We expect you to read what is assigned by the time it is assigned in the Syllabus (for example: All of Sophocles *Antigone* is to be read by August 31). You are also to read the New York Times National Pages. You can do so online but make sure to click the tab for “today’s paper.” To encourage your attendance and preparations for class, I give pop quizzes. I give a minimum of 7 of these throughout the semester. If more are needed, I will add them.

Required Reading

Sophocles: *Three Tragedies*
 Plato: *Apology & Crito*
 Aristotle: *The Politics*
 Lessing: *Nathan the Wise*
 Locke: *The Second Treatise of Government*
 Marx & Engels: *The Communist Manifesto*
 Ibsen: *Four Major Plays*
 Shakespeare: *The Tempest*
 Koran (selected reading on reserve)
 Bible: (selected reading on reserve)
The New York Times, National pages Monday-Friday

Course Grades

2 In-Class Essays (50 Points Each)
 2 In-Class Exams (60 Points Each)
 7 Pop Quizzes (5 Count-10 Points Each)
 Class Discussion (50 Points)
 Cumulative Exam (80 Points)

400 Possible Points

Plus-Minus Grading Scale will be used (described on our blackboard conference)

Honor Code

I do not tolerate violations of the honor code. If you cheat and get caught, I will turn you in without hesitation. If you are found guilty, you will receive an automatic F in the course.

The code can be accessed at:

http://oxford.emory.edu/audiences/current_students/academics/academic_success/honor_code.dot

Attendance

You are not required to come to class. However, there are POP quizzes. If you miss more than 2, you will receive a 0 for that quiz (unless you furnish a recognized dean's excuse for your absence). This class is not one to cram for and take lightly. If this self-monitoring is too difficult for you and you are unsure you can make this commitment, I suggest you think about another course and major.

Class Outline

August 26

OVERVIEW & EXPECTATIONS

I. Political Philosophy: Foundations

August 31 & September 2

Sophocles: "Antigone"

September 7 & 9

Plato: "Apology of Socrates"

September 14

Plato: "Crito"

WRITTEN QUESTIONS POSTED

September 16

Aristotle: The Politics, Book 1

September 21 & 23

Aristotle: The Politics, Book III

September 28

IN-CLASS WRITING ESSAY (1)

September 30

Reserve: *Genesis* (Ch. 1-25)
Exodus (Ch. 1-20)

October 5

Reserve: *The Gospel According to St. Matthew* (Ch. 1-12)

October 7

Reserve: *Koran* (Suras 1-5)

October 12

MIDSEMESTER BREAK OFF

October 14 *Nathan the Wise* (entire play)

October 19 **EXAM 1**

II. Modern Politics: Liberal Democracy, Communism, and Fascism/Nazism

October 21 & 26 Locke "Second Treatise" (esp. pp. 3-56; 68-73; 75-82; 96-99; 119-139)

October 28 & November 2 Marx: The Communist Manifesto

November 4 Reserve: Lenin

November 9 & 11 Reserve: Mussolini (Fascism) & Hitler (Nazism)

November 16 **EXAM 2**
WRITTEN QUESTIONS POSTED

III. Politics: Goals and Limits

November 18 & 23 Ibsen: "An Enemy of the People"

November 25 **OFF TG HOLIDAY**

November 30 **IN-CLASS WRITING ESSAY (2)**

December 2 & 7 Shakespeare: "The Tempest"

December 14 **CUMULATIVE FINAL (7-10 PM)**