**Politics 483: Capstone Seminar  
Block 5, 2018-2019  
Aparna Thomas**

***Contact information***

**Office: 305, South Hall**

**Office Hours: T, TH: 11:30- 12:30 and by appointment**

**Email:** [**athomas@cornellcollege.edu**](mailto:athomas@cornellcollege.edu)

**Classroom: South Hall 302**

Consulting librarian: Meghan Yamanishi, Cole Library 308, x4143,   
 [myamanishi@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:myamanishi@cornellcollege.edu)

Writing consultant: Laura Farmer, Cole Library 125, x4509,   
 [lfarmer@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:lfarmer@cornellcollege.edu)  
 Studio hours: Monday-Thursday, 8am-11pm;   
 Friday, 8am-5pm; Sunday, 1-11pm.

Quantitative reasoning consultant: Jessica Johanningmeier, Cole Library 126, x4222,   
 [jjohanningmeier@cornellcollege.edu](mailto:jjohanningmeier@cornellcollege.edu)  
 Studio hours: Monday-Thursday, 8am-5pm and 7-11pm;  
 Friday, 8am-4:30pm; Sunday, 3-5pm and 7-11pm.

***Overview***

In this course each of us will develop a proposal for a substantial independent research project based on past coursework in the Politics major and new research. The point of doing so in a group workshop setting is so that each of us can learn from the things that go well and less well in each other’s projects. We will have some common readings about methodological issues in order to frame our workshop discussions, but the focus throughout the class will be on our own projects and contributing to each other’s projects.

This course is the primary option for the capstone for the Politics major and as such I intend that you should build upon the interests that you’ve developed in other Politics classes. If you would like to start with a paper that you’ve already written and work it into a research proposal for this class, that’s fine. If you want to start something new, I recommend picking an area where you already have some idea of what the relevant theories and literature might be, since we will have no substantive reading in this class (besides what’s contained in each other’s papers).

This class is an opportunity to demonstrate your attainment and integration of Cornell’s Educational Priorities and Outcomes, including especially Knowledge, Inquiry, Reasoning, and Communication, as you explore your topic and craft a plan for learning more about it. Particular projects may involve deepening your Intercultural Literacy or constitute an exercise of Citizenship insofar as your inquiry might have, for example, policy applications. You should of course pursue this research project according to disciplinary and college standards of Ethical Behavior, which we will discuss as they pertain to your proposals. By modeling our research proposals upon professional examples, you’ll learn more about political science as a Vocation. Finally, we’ll take what opportunities we have to discuss how to balance work and life while conducting research.

***Required texts***

Barbara Geddes, *Paradigms and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, Michigan, 2003.

Some other readings will be posted on Moodle.

You will also read your classmates’ papers at each stage of the assignment.

***Disabilities***

If you have a disability that is registered with the college that will require special accommodations, please let me know by Wednesday, September January 16th.

If you have a disability that is not registered with the college that will require special accommodations, please register it and then let me know by Wednesday, January 16th.

***Schedule***

For each class and office session, you should bring and be prepared to discuss the work you have completed on your research proposal, including your drafts, comments, notes on goals, and the literature to which you mean to respond in your proposal. Almost every session of the class will take place in a workshop environment in which you will work with another participant, a small group, or the whole class.

Group sessions will take place in South 302. Individual sessions with me will take place in my office in South 305. Individual sessions with Meghan or Laura will take place at their offices in the library. I will also be available in my office at other times as announced.

While the schedule below totals fewer than 50 contact hours, this class involves substantial independent reading, writing, and consultation with me, the library, and the Center for Teaching and Learning that ensures that you will do more than enough work to earn a full course credit.

***Attendance and Participation*:** You are expected to attend all scheduled classes. Furthermore, you are expected to participate actively in sharing their ideas on various classroom discussions.  I will take attendance throughout the term. Students who fail to maintain a regular attendance cannot expect to score well on classroom participation that will comprise 20% of the final grade. More than 1 unexcused absence will result in lowering the attendance and participation grade by ½ grade. In case of repeated absences, I reserve the right to lower the final grade. Excused absences require documentation from the campus clinic (in case of health emergencies) or other relevant campus officials.

***Assessment***

Attendance 10%

Class participation 10%

Journals 10%

Question and context paper 15%

Literature review 15%

Full proposal 40%

Note: Regardless of the above formula, failure to submit any of the four stages of the proposal project leads to a maximum grade of D+.

While the particular things I’m looking for vary to some degree by assignment, in general an A on an assignment means that your work is outstanding in terms of:

* addressing the assigned question and avoiding digression,
* having a well-structured argument,
* expressing your argument clearly and effectively,
* making appropriate and properly cited use of material on the syllabus and other well-selected sources,
* and demonstrating thoughtful interpretation and integration of the course material and discussions.

Lower grades mean that you have not done all of these things or have done one or more of them less well that you could have. The order of items on the above list should not be taken to indicate their order of importance in determining your grade on an assignment, nor should you suppose that the items will carry equal weight on an assignment or invariant weight across assignments. Moreover, I expect your work to improve during the course and across courses.

I will lower the grade on work submitted late by 1% of the maximum grade per hour late. However, work submitted late *that meets the minimum expectations of the assignment* will receive at least a D regardless of lateness, so you should submit all assignments even if you are extremely late. I will not accept any work after 3pm on the last day of the block.

***Honesty in Academic Work (from the Compass)***The College considers Cornell students to be responsible persons whose maturity will develop in a community that encourages free inquiry. The College expects the highest degree of personal integrity in all relationships. Any form of dishonesty is a violation of this spirit and of College rules.

A student is expected to explicitly acknowledge ideas, claims, observations, or data of others, unless generally known. When a piece of work is submitted for credit, a student is asserting that the submission is her or his work unless there is a citation of a specific source. If there is no appropriate acknowledgement of sources, whether intended or not, this may constitute a violation of the College's requirement for honesty in academic work and may be treated as a case of academic dishonesty.

Dishonesty in academic work includes both cheating and plagiarism.

**Cheating** refers to the use of unauthorized sources of information on examinations or any attempt by students to deceive the evaluator of an examination, paper, or project.

**Plagiarism** is the act of taking the work of another and presenting it as one's own, without acknowledgement of the original source.

There is not one set of rules for the acknowledgement of sources that is appropriate across all disciplines. For this reason, students are always encouraged to consult their professors and guidelines included in their syllabi. However, in general the appropriate acknowledgement of sources involves meeting the following requirements:

**Quotations and Paraphrasing**. All direct quotations, even if mingled with original words and ideas, must be placed within quotation marks and accompanied by a specific citation for the source of the quotation. Unless the information is generally known, all phrases that are not original to the author - even two or three words - must be placed in quotation marks and cited. If an existing idea is used but paraphrased or summarized, both the original author's words and sentence structure must be changed and a specific citation for the source must still be made. It is always the responsibility of the student to provide precise sources for all ideas, information, or data he or she has borrowed or adapted. Simply listing sources in a bibliography is not sufficient. Students who use information from the World Wide Web are expected to follow these same guidelines for the citation of sources.

Failure to cite sources properly constitutes academic dishonesty, whether the omission is intentional or not.

**Ideas and Data**. All students are required to acknowledge the ideas of others. Every student is expected to do her or his own work in the completion of an assignment or an examination unless either (a) the sources for these ideas are explicitly cited, or (b) the instructor explicitly allows such collaboration. In addition, a person giving unauthorized assistance to another on an examination is just as guilty of cheating as the person who accepts or solicits such aid.

Submitting revisions of academic work previously submitted, either in the current course or in previous courses, qualifies as academic dishonesty unless the student obtains the explicit permission of all of the instructors involved.

All data sources must be cited accurately. It is dishonest to fabricate or alter research data included in laboratory reports, projects, or other assignments.

A safe guide is to provide a full citation for every source consulted. Sources may include, but are not limited to, published books, articles, reviews, Internet sites, archival material, visual images, oral presentations, or personal correspondence. In addition, students should always keep previous drafts of their work in order to provide documentation of their original work. Finally, due to disciplinary differences, students should consult their professor, a librarian, and/or the Teaching and Learning Center for specific instructions on properly providing citations for sources.

**Procedures for Dealing with Dishonesty in Academic Work**If an instructor judges that a student has violated the College's policies on academic honesty, the student may be charged with academic dishonesty and assigned an F either for the particular examination, paper, report, or project, or for the course. The instructor shall notify the student in writing of the charge and the penalty and shall include a statement of the circumstances which precipitated the action. A copy of the instructor's letter along with a copy of the paper shall be sent to the Registrar. The Registrar shall then advise the student in writing of the right to appeal. Within ten (10) days of notification, the student may appeal the charge and/or the penalty by submitting a letter to the Dean of the College requesting that he or she appoint an ad hoc committee consisting of three (3) faculty members, one of whom may be nominated by the student. The recommendation of this committee is advisory only and is not binding upon the instructor.

All material and information relative to the charge of academic dishonesty shall be kept by the Registrar in a special file during the period in which the student is enrolled at Cornell College, serving only as a statement of record if the student is charged a second time with academic dishonesty. In the case of an appeal after the first offense, the file shall be destroyed if the committee finds the student not guilty and the instructor concurs; otherwise, the recommendation of the committee shall be inserted into the special file. If there are no further charges, the file will be destroyed at the time of the student's graduation from Cornell.

Should a subsequent charge of academic dishonesty be brought against a student, the Registrar shall again advise the student in writing of the aforementioned right to appeal under the same procedures.  Should the second charge be sustained by the instructor, the Registrar shall notify the Dean of the College who shall convene a committee consisting of the Dean of the College, the Dean of Students, and the Chair of the Academic Standing Committee, who shall determine the status of the student. The normal penalty for a second offense is indefinite suspension from the College.

**Schedule of Classes and Reading Assignments:**

**Note: The contents in this syllabus may be changed during the term to reflect the progress of the course. I will announce the changes in the classroom. All readings should be completed before class**.

Monday, January 14 930a Overview, coming up with a question

Tuesday, January 15 930a Question workshop  
 King, Keohane, & Verba, pp. 3-13  
 Geddes, pp. 27-40

Journal entry due by 7 am (via email)

Wednesday, January 16 Individual appointments with me as scheduled

Thursday, January 17 930a Question and context workshop  
 Sample research designs on Moodle

Friday, January 18 Individual appointments with me as scheduled  
 Individual appointments with Meghan as scheduled

Saturday, January 19 4p Question and context due (via email)

Monday, January 21 Individual appointments with me as scheduled  
 Individual appointments with Meghan as scheduled

Tuesday, January 22 930a Literature review workshop  
 (bring your draft and sources)

Wednesday, January 23 Individual appointments with me as scheduled  
 Individual appointments with Laura as scheduled

Thursday, January 24 930a Hypothesis workshop  
 Geddes, pp. 175-211  
 King, Keohane, & Verba, pp. 99-114

Journal entry due by 7 am (via email)

Friday, January 25 Individual appointments with me as scheduled

Saturday, January 26 4p Question and context revision plus literature   
 review and hypothesis due (via email)

Monday, January 28 930a Data selection workshop Geddes, chs. 3-4  
 King, Keohane, & Verba, pp. 128-149

Journal entry due by 7 am (via email)

Tuesday, January 29 Individual appointments with me as scheduled  
 Individual appointments with Jessica as recommended

Wednesday, January 30 9:30 a Methods selection workshop  
 King, Keohane, & Verba, pp. 34-63 & 75-91

Journal entry due by 7 am (via email)

Thursday, January 31 Individual appointments with me as scheduled  
 Individual appointments with Jessica as recommended

Friday, February 1 930a Full proposal workshop  
 King, Keohane, & Verba, pp. 150-207

Journal entry due by 7 am (via email)

Monday, February 4 930a Full proposal workshop-continued

Tuesday, February 5 Individual appointments with me as scheduled

Wednesday, February 6 12 noon Full proposal due (on Moodle)