PSC 202

SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY

INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW TODAY

- What is this class about?
- How is this class useful?
- What are the class policies?

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WHAT IS THIS CLASS ABOUT?

- Goal of political science: We want to understand the (political) world around us
  - What is happening?
  - Why are things happening the way they do?
- What are some examples of questions you have about how the political world works and why it works the way it does?

WHAT IS THIS CLASS ABOUT?

- Ok, but lots of people try to explain what is happening (and why) in politics
- What is different about the way political scientists do it?

WHAT IS THIS CLASS ABOUT?

- Ok, but lots of people try to explain what is happening (and why) in politics
- What is different about the way political scientists do it?
- Political scientists use a scientific approach to study politics
  - They follow a research process

THIS CLASS

- A deep dive into the research process
  - How do we find answers to the research questions we have?
- Step-by-step walk through research process

RESEARCH PROCESS

- Developing a research question, proposing an answer
  - Can we really study politics scientifically?
  - What kinds of research questions do political scientists ask?
  - What is a good research question?
  - What is already known about a research question?
  - How do we propose an answer to the research question?

RESEARCH PROCESS

- Measuring what we need to answer the research question
  - How do we define concepts that we need to answer our research question?
    - e.g. When is a country a democracy?
  - How do we measure these concepts?
    - e.g. How do we measure how democratic a country is?
  - How do we connect our research question to our data?

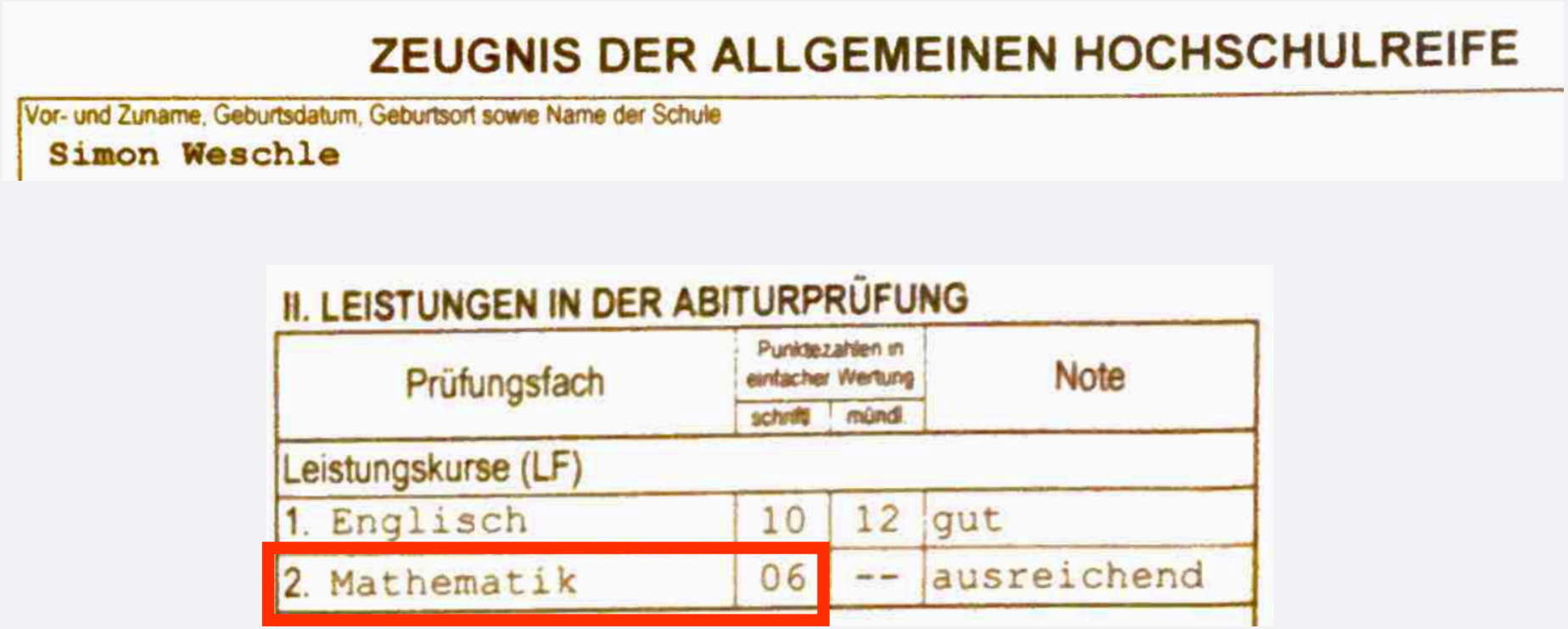
RESEARCH PROCESS

- Answering the research question
  - Develop a research strategy that can help us answer our question
    - Do we study one country? Compare two countries? Do we study all countries?
  - Data analysis
    - Qualitative approaches, statistical data analysis

BUT...

- I'm just not good at math!

NOT VERY GOOD AT MATH



ZEUGNIS DER ALLGEMEINEN HOCHSCHULREIFE

Vor- und Zuname, Geburtsdatum, Geburtsort sowie Name der Schule

Simon Weschle

II. LEISTUNGEN IN DER ABITURPRÜFUNG

Prüfungsfach	Punktezahlen in einfacher Wertung		Note
	schriftl.	mündl.	
Leistungskurse (LF)			
1. Englisch	10	12	gut
2. Mathematik	06	--	ausreichend

- 0-15 points
- Less than 4: fail
- "ausreichend" = just about enough to pass

OVERVIEW TODAY

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DATA ANALYSIS AND LIFE

- Analyzing data correctly is important in life. It can even save lives!
- Example: Vaccine effectiveness

USELESS VACCINES?

> **“Pfizer vaccine now completely worthless in Israel as >80% of all COVID-19 patients were previously vaccinated.”**

Nearly 60% of hospitalized COVID-19 patients in Israel fully vaccinated, data shows

SEVERE CASES IN ISRAEL

- Not vaccinated: 214
- Vaccinated: 301

- 58% of severe cases are vaccinated!

VACCINATION RATE IN ISRAEL

- Not vaccinated: 1,302,912
- Vaccinated: 5,634,634

- 78.7% of people are vaccinated!

SEVERE CASES IN ISRAEL

- Not vaccinated: 214 out of 1,302,912 people
  - 16.42 cases per 100,000
- Vaccinated: 301 out of 5,634,634 people
  - 5.34 cases per 100,000

- Rate of severe cases is 3.1 times higher among unvaccinated (16.42/5.34)

SEVERE CASES IN ISRAEL

- But: We know that Covid has very different consequences depending on age
  - More severe among older people
  - Perhaps as a result, older people were more likely to be vaccinated (90.4%) than younger people (73.0%)
  - We need to look at vaccine efficacy among old and young separately

SEVERE CASES, PEOPLE > 50

- Not vaccinated: 171 out of 186,078 people
  - 91.9 cases per 100,000
- Vaccinated: 290 out of 2,133,516 people
  - 13.6 cases per 100,000

- For those over 50, rate of severe cases is 6.8 times higher among unvaccinated (91.9/13.6)

SEVERE CASES, PEOPLE < 50

- Not vaccinated: 43 out of 1,116,834 people
  - 3.85 cases per 100,000
- Vaccinated: 11 out of 3,501,118 people
  - 0.3 cases per 100,000

- For those under 50, rate of severe cases is 12.8 times higher among unvaccinated (3.85/0.3)

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

- Helps you pick apart bad arguments that are not backed up by empirical evidence
- And make good arguments backed up by evidence

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

Biden beats Trump, marginally trails DeSantis in new GOP poll

Florida Gov. DeSantis is emerging as a bigger potential threat to President Biden than former President Trump, polls indicate.

The poll shows Trump losing to Biden 41-48% – an 8-percentage point disadvantage for the Republican that's outside the poll's 3-point error margin. But in a head-to-head matchup against DeSantis, Biden gets 42% of the theoretical vote compared to 45% for the Florida governor, which is essentially a statistical tie, the online survey of 1,035 voters from WPA Intelligence shows.

- **Helps you understand everyday debates better**

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

Table 1
Dependent variable: average corruption in 1994–1998

	(1) OLS	(2) OLS (LDCs only)	(3) TSLS	(4) OLS	(5) OLS (LDCs only)	(6) OLS	(7) TSLS
Constant	2.560	2.614	3.392	1.945	1.506	2.946	4.139
	(10.508)	(10.516)	(5.003)	(1.721)	(1.260)	(2.180)	(1.867)
PRESS	−0.017	−0.015	−0.028	−0.017	−0.015	−0.020	−0.037
	(−6.350)	(−4.789)	(−3.266)	(−4.023)	(−3.501)	(−4.439)	(−1.926)
BUREAU	0.220	0.254	0.221	0.200	0.128	0.089	0.073
	(2.893)	(2.708)	(2.310)	(2.058)	(1.220)	(0.942)	(0.663)
RULE	0.265	0.146	0.143	0.259	0.068	0.154	0.044
	(3.482)	(1.624)	(1.527)	(2.583)	(0.607)	(1.530)	(0.251)
log(GDP)				0.104	0.226	0.107	0.127
				(0.681)	(1.358)	(0.538)	(0.523)
HUMCAP				−0.043	−0.085	−0.052	−0.064
				(−1.007)	(−1.562)	(−1.058)	(−1.088)
TRADE				0.002	0.004	0.003	0.003
				(1.103)	(2.091)	(1.358)	(1.367)
BLACK				0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001
				(1.882)	(1.288)	(1.350)	(0.730)
ETHNIC				−0.246	−0.053	−0.457	−0.410
				(−0.690)	(−0.154)	(−1.170)	(−1.021)
AFRICA						−0.142	−0.102
						(−0.521)	(−0.252)
LATIN						−0.563	−0.857
						(−2.298)	(−2.530)
OECD						0.419	0.075
						(0.983)	(0.150)
Observations	125	93	104	68	47	68	68
Adjusted R^2	0.67	0.38	0.67	0.74	0.38	0.77	0.72

t Statistics in parentheses; White-corrected standard errors; political rights as instrument in Columns (3) and (7).

- Helps you in other PSC/Maxwell classes

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

- Helps you get a job...

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

ROTC Alumnus Will Join the U.S. Space Force

After commissioning into the U.S. Air Force through Syracuse University's Reserve Officer Training Program, 2nd Lt. Daniel Egert is putting satellites and people into orbit.

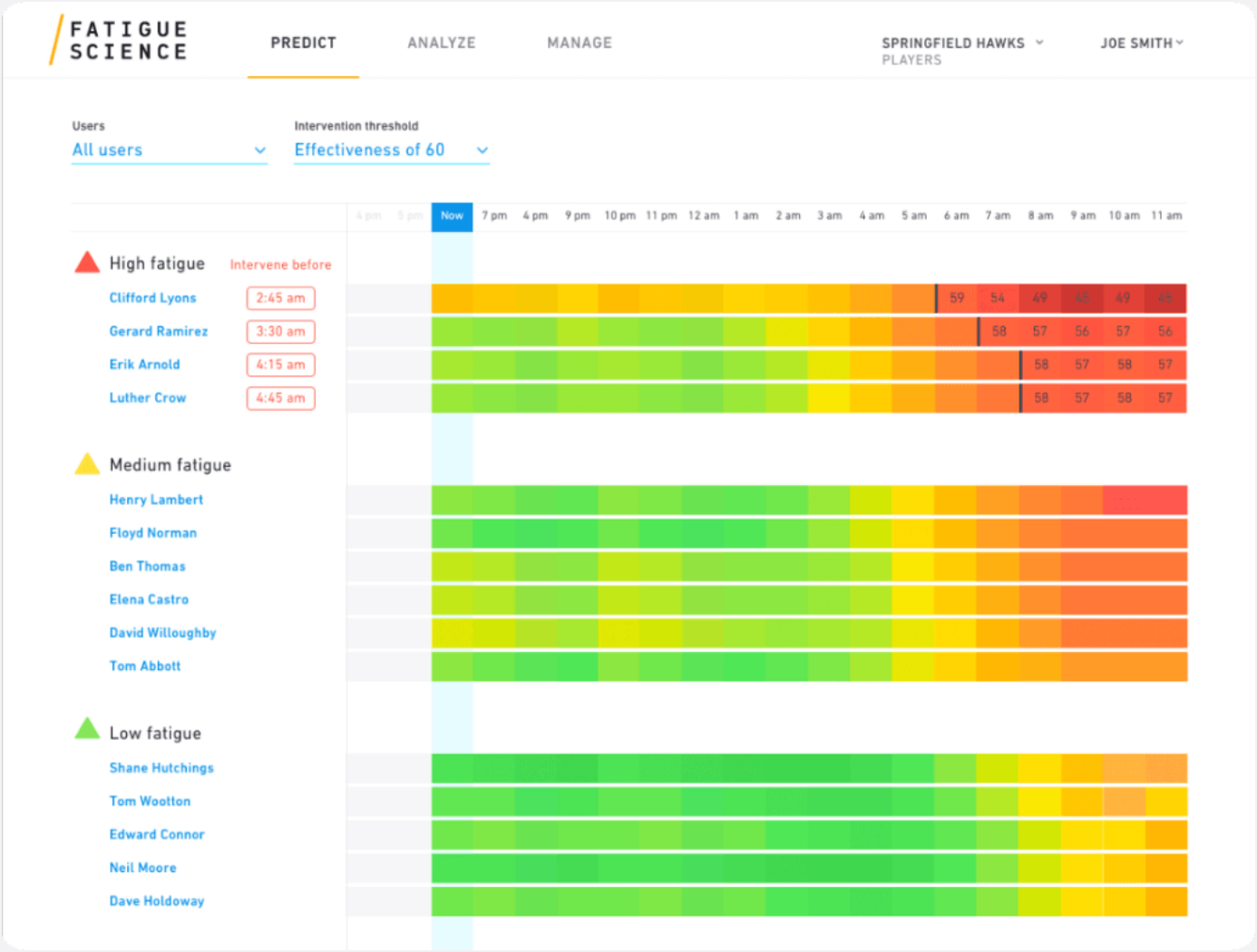
- Research design and data analysis are increasingly important in all kinds of sectors

HOW IS THIS CLASS USEFUL?

Egert is applying analytical and statistical skills he learned as an undergraduate student in political science at Syracuse University. "Pulling in information, looking at what's happening so I can report what people need to know, it has been huge," he says. Before graduating, Egert wasn't sure how he would use what he learned in a course on quantitative methods for the social sciences. "I remember thinking, 'Oh, is this a vocational program? It's kind of silly.' But no, it's been indispensable."

- https://www.syracuse.edu/stories/rotc-alumnus-space-force/

BASKETBALL



- Research design and data analysis are not only important in political science…

NOT IN THIS CLASS...

- Should not be your first political science class
- Not an introduction to political science
  - Instead: How to do political science research

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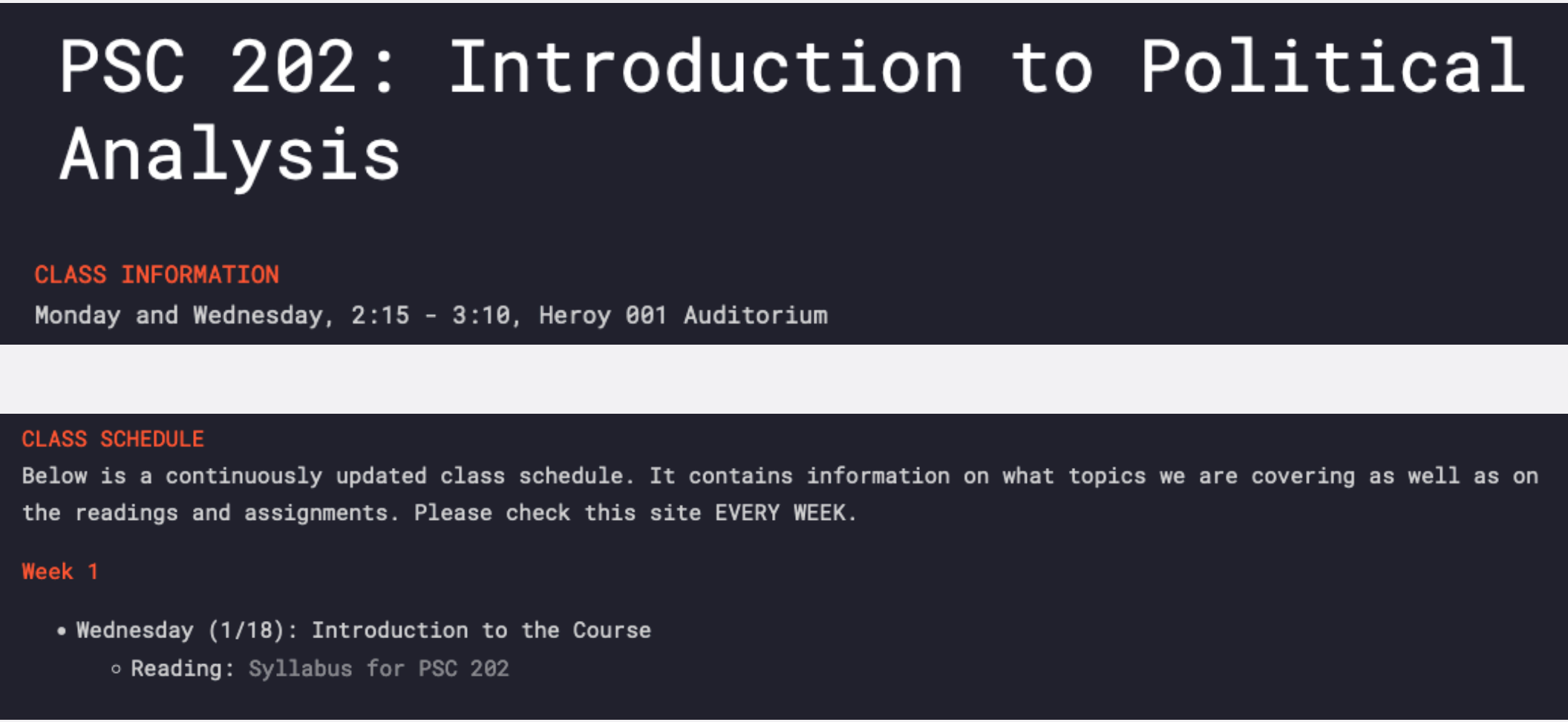
- What is this class about?
- How is this class useful?
- What are the class policies?

CLASS WEBSITE

- http://www.simonweschle.com/psc202
- The website has the continuously updated class schedule
- Lists all readings and assignments
- Pleasecheck the page EVERY WEEK

CLASS WEBSITE



- http://www.simonweschle.com/psc202

COVID

- If you are sick, do not attend in-person. Send me an email to let me know.

STUDENT HOURS

- **Wednesdays 11:00-1:00**
  - **Can chose in person (530 Eggers) or Zoom (info on syllabus)**
  - **Or by appointment (email me)**
  - **Your chance to talk to me about course material, college in general, or just to chat**

STUDENT HOURS

- If you experience any hardship that interferes with your academics, *please* get in touch with me
  - I'll work with you. I can almost always help in some way (or I know someone who can help)
  - You do not have to reveal personal details to me

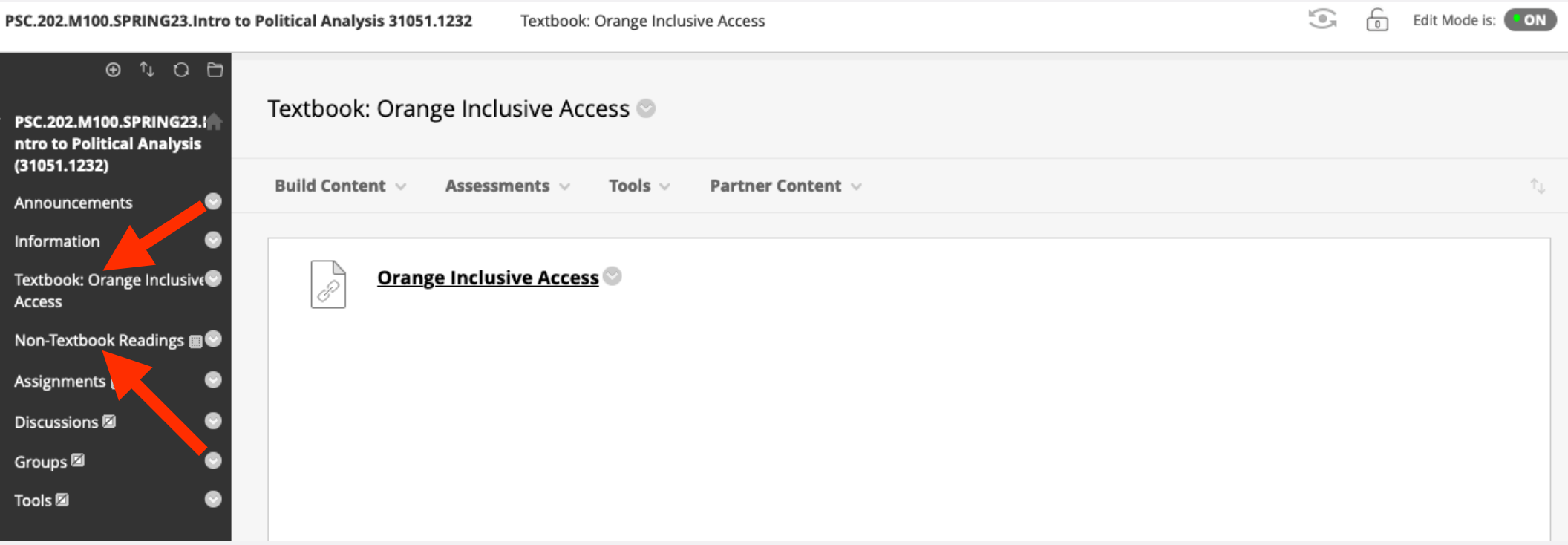
STUDENT HOURS

- *Please* talk to me as early as possible about any issues or questions
  - There's always something that can be done
  - Talk to me as early as possible, harder to do something after the fact
  - If you ask yourself whether you should talk to me, talk to me

TEXTBOOK

- Pollock, Philip H. and Barry C. Edwards. 2020. The Essentials of Political Analysis. 6th Edition. CQ Press.
  - Orange Inclusive Access through Blackboard. Automatically enrolled, costs $42.35 to rent e-book for 180 days
  - Can opt out until January 31, 11.59PM and purchase it elsewhere
- Other readings on Blackboard

TEXTBOOK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Build Content
Assessments
Tools
Partner Content
Orange Inclusive Access

GRADES

- 10%: Class Participation
  - Quizzes (covers lecture and readings). Posted after lecture and due before next lecture
  - Other varied things
- 40%: 3 Exams
  - Feb 20, Mar 27, May 1
- 30%: (Roughly) weekly problem sets
  - Posted Fridays (after section), due Friday week after
  - + final problem set due during finals period
- 20%: Section
  - Attendance and participation

SECTIONS

- Hands-on experience with research process
- TAs
  - Aysenur Deger
  - Xiaoxia Huang
  - Katharine Russell

SYLLABUS

- For all kinds of details, read the syllabus
  - Read the parts “Main Things to Know” and “More Details on Important Things”
  - No really, read them carefully…