

ST. LOUIS UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
POLS-1000-01 Intro to Politics  
3 Credit Hours  
Fall 2021

Classroom: DSH 271

Hours: M 9-11 am; Thurs: 1-2 pm

@ **Welcome to the course**

**You can reach me via email [uwalakaen@slu.edu](mailto:uwalakaen@slu.edu) or cell 314, 749-5917.**

**I will endeavor to get back to you within 24 hours.**

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to introduce beginning students in Political Science to the fundamental concepts, data and processes of politics, and selected methods of political analysis. Students will be introduced to the subfields of political science and the political systems of developed and developing countries.

II. REQUIRED BOOK(S) READINGS

Magstadt, Thomas M. Understanding Politics: Ideas, Institutions, and Issues. 13<sup>th</sup> Edition. Cengage Boston, MA 2021.

Daily reading of a major newspaper: The New York Times, The St. Louis Post-Dispatch, etc.

Additional reading assignments will be placed in the reserve collection of the University Library, if the need arises.

This syllabus is subject to revision where necessary.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to achieve the following objectives:

1. To introduce the student to the basic concepts and methods of Political Science as a discipline;
2. To provide the student with the necessary background and skills for a better understanding of the intricacies of government and politics;
3. To discuss the essential elements in the governing process through illustrations from various

#### 1V. LEARNING OUTCOMES

After taking this course, students will be able to:

Explain differences in the normative and scientific approaches to political analysis

Recognize and apply major concepts in the study of political science

Students will be able to identify the structure and operation of political systems in the U.S, across a variety of countries and in multinational organizations

Identify the characteristics of developed and developing nations, and

Students will be able to distinguish among the diversity of traditions in the discipline

#### V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### **Fall 2021 College of Arts & Sciences Policies**

#### **Academic Integrity**

*Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.* The mission of Saint Louis University is “the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity.” Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service through which SLU fulfills its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern. The full University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be found on the Provost’s Office website at: [https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/policy\\_academic-integrity\\_6-26-2015.pdf](https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/academic-and-course/policy_academic-integrity_6-26-2015.pdf).

Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites.

#### **Disability Accommodations**

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course.

Please contact Disability Services to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact Disability Services, located in the Student Success Center and available by email at [Disability\\_services@slu.edu](mailto:Disability_services@slu.edu) or by phone at 314.977.3484. Once approved, information about a student’s eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from Disability Services and within the instructor’s official





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## Absences

In addition to authorized absences, instructors have the authority to excuse absences for other reasons.

Documentation for short-

As previously stated, in the event that several classes have been missed and students are unable to meet course objectives they should consult with the instructor and academic

discussions, questions and answers. Also, you will be expected to make discussion entries on Blackboard. I will prompt the class on a theme, issue, concept, etc. from the readings/lectures. You will be asked to post your comment and respond to at least five of them. Your grade will be based on the quality of your posts that elevate the discussion (more of this in class). There will be three quizzes.

**B. Grading Scale and Distribution of Points**

1. Quizzes « « « « « « « 10 points
2. Mid-Semester Exam . . . . « 40
3. Final Exam . . . . . « 40
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The numerical equivalents of letter grades are:

93-100 = A	83-86 = B	73-76 = C	
90-92 = A-	80-82 = B-	70-72 = C-	
87-89 = B+		77-79 = C+	60-69 = D
Below 60 = F			

NOTE: Final grades will not be changed unless there is an error in computation.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

**Aug. 26** Course Overview  
 WHY STUDY POLITICS? & SUB-FIELDS OF POLITICAL SCIENCE  
 1. Self-interest  
 2. Self-improvement  
 3. Self-knowledge  
Reading: Magstadt, Chap. 1, pp. 3-4, & 18-23

**Aug. 31** 1. Towards a definition of Politics  
Readings: Magstadt, Chap. 1, p. 4

**Sept. 2 & 7** 2. Key Political Science Concepts: Power, Authority, Legitimacy, States, Nations, Political system, etc  
Readings: Magstadt, Chap. 1, 4-13

Study Questions:

1. What is politics?
2. What is political science?
3. What are the classical definitions of politics and who are the key proponents?
4. What are the sources of legitimacy?

**Sept. 9 & 14** THE STUDY OF POLITICS  
 How Politics is studied? Traditionalism, Behavioralism, and Post-Behavioralism  
Readings: Magstadt, Chap. 1, pp. 13-17

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Study Questions:

1. Which is the oldest approach to the study of politics?
2. What was the shortcoming of traditionalism in the study of politics?

3. At which University did the Behavioral approach begin and who was the key leader?
4. The Post-Behavioral approach emphasized what?

**Sept. 16**                      **Quiz 1**

COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS

Models and Theories

**Sept. 21**                      UTOPIAS: MODEL STATES

What are Utopias? Politics, the art of the possible

Readings: Magstadt, Chap. 3, pp. 52-53

**Sept. 23**                      UTOPIA: MODEL STATES (Contd)

1. Plato's Republic

2. Francis Bacon's New Atlantis

Readings: Madstadt, pp. 54-57

**Sept. 28**                      Karl Marx ¶ Classless Society

Readings: Magstadt, 58-61

**Sept. 30**                      B. ) 6NLQQHU¶V : DOGHQ 7ZR 3V\FKRORJ\ LV WKH \$QV

Reading: Magstadt, Chap. 3, pp. 61-6

Study Questions:

1. Why compare?
2. What is political theory?
3. What is an ideology?
4. What are Utopias and what functions do they perform
- 5. What is social-engineering?

**Oct. 5**                      CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY: A POPW\*ñBT/F1 12 Tf1 0 0 1 302.83 570.82 Tm0 G( )JTJET



5. The Human Cost of Totalitarianism
6. The Faces of Totalitarianism
7. The Longevity of Totalitarian Regimes

Reading: Magstadt, Chap. 6

Study Questions:

1. What are the six myths of authoritarian states?
2. What is the difference between an authoritarian state and a totalitarian state?
3. Why are these types of political systems undemocratic?
4. Give examples of undemocratic states in modern times

**Oct. 14 & 19 CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

**FORMS OF DEMOCRACY: THE UNITED STATES AND GREAT BRITAIN**

1. Democratic Institutions: an American Perspective

## POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION: BECOMING A CITIZEN

1. Definition

2. Agents

Reading: Magstadt, Chap. 10

Study Questions:

1. Define an ideal civic culture?

2. Which is the primary agent of