**Introduction to Political Science**

**POLS 1100-001, Fall (2018)**

**MWF 1:25 pm – 2:20 pm**

 **Matthews-Daniel 204**

**Professor:** Ron J. McGauvran

**Office Hours:** D/D time-time,

 (Or by Appointment)

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**Course Description:** Political science is above all the study of power: how it is created, exercised, justified, and challenged. As a social science, political science focuses on group power, the ‘how’ and ‘why’ of collective decision-making. Hence it leads us to consider the ethics of power, which in turn involves conceptions of community, identity, justice and citizenship. This class is a survey of the concepts and methodology of political science. While this class is generally going to take a comparative approach, it will examine concepts that are relevant to all of the various fields of the discipline, such as American politics, comparative politics, international politics, and political theory. This course will survey the different ways in which political scientists study the phenomena of politics and will deepen your understanding of political life as both a thinker and a citizen. The goal of this course is to introduce you to the discipline's concepts, terminology, and methods and to explore instances of applied political science through real world examples.

**Required Text:**

* Garner, Robert, Peter Ferdinand, and Stephanie Lawson. 2016. *Introduction to Politics.* New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

**Learning Objectives:**

* Define the basic terminologies and central concepts of Political Science.
* Explain the role of political culture and political socialization in politics.
* Explore the research methods and tools of political science research.
* Evaluate the significance and influence/impact of non-governmental dimensions of political systems such as public opinion, interest groups, political parties and the media;
* Analyze the basic elements of the political systems of the modern constitutional democracies, modern post-communist states, authoritarian states and developing nations.
* Identify the various forms and functions of modern governments including representative assemblies, executives and administrative bureaucracies.
* Determine the actors who influence public policy decision which face the modern state.
* Evaluate the goals and techniques of foreign policy and international politics since World War II.

**Course Requirements:** Students are responsible for all the material in the readings and discussed in lectures. This includes both readings from the required texts (which will be furthermore referred to as I2P) as well as additional assigned readings. All assigned readings, excluding I2P, will come from either peer-reviewed research articles or textbooks published by university presses. It is extremely important that each student attends class, as some material needed for exams and papers will only be covered during the class periods. Additional materials may be posted as circumstances arise.

In-Class Work (20 Points): You can think of this as “Attendance” points. Many times during the semester there will be in-class work that you will complete on your own, in pairs, or as small groups. This will account for 20% of your final grade. I will not announce prior to the class when we will be doing in-class work that directly affects your in-class grade, as it will be the rule not the exception.

Weekly Quizzes (25 Points): This class will cover roughly one chapter a week in I2P; with a few exceptions. Almost each week you will be responsible for completing a chapter reading quiz (dates indicated on course schedule). The weekly reading quizzes will be available through iLearn and all reading quizzes will be due by 11:59pm on the Thursday of the week assigned. These quizzes will be open resource and you will have unlimited attempts, which means you should be able to get all of these points. No late reading quizzes will be accepted, and each reading quiz will disappear from iLearn after the due date.

Research Lit-Review (25 Points): You are required to write a research literature review paper for this class. The literature review should produce an expected causal relationship between two phenomena, at least one of them political. The main purpose of the literature review is to ground your paper with the existing academic literature. This means looking at existing scholarly work and peer reviewed articles, and how they have addressed the same or similar topics. Sometimes this is easy, as your topic is well studied, while other times this may require looking outside of political science or at projects only tangentially related. Throughout the semester, you should be independently reading the literature on this topic, to help guide your research.

Midterm and Final Exam (15 Points each): There are two exams in this class. You may think of them as a midterm and a final, and they will generally correspond to the first-half, and second-half, of the semester, however they will cover completely different material. These exams will include objective (multiple choice, true false, matching) questions as well as more subjective short answer questions. Dates for the exams are on the course schedule; and all exams will be held online through iLearn. You will receive 2 attempts for the test, and this is in case you experience technical difficulties during the first attempt. Exams may be re-scheduled if you contact the professor prior to the exam date with a university accepted excuse (work, trips to the beach, and midnight opening of movies are not considered reasonable). Make-ups will be given on a case-by-case basis.

**Grading Policy:** Final letter grades will be assigned according to the following schedule: 90points+ is an A, 80-89points is a B, 70-79 points is a C, 60-69 points is a D, and less than 60 points is an F.

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| **Assignment** | **Points** |
| In-Class Work (Attendance) | 20 |
| Weekly Quizzes | 25 |
| Research Paper | Rough Draft | 5 |
| Peer Review | 10 |
| Final Draft | 10 |
| Midterm Exam | 15 |
| Final Exam | 15 |
| **Total:** | **100** |

Grades will neither be rounded up nor will they be rounded down. The policy on late work is specific to the assignment type; please see above for specifics. There will be no work accepted later than 11:59pm on the last Friday of regular classes.

**Extra Credit:** There are bound to be opportunities to receive extra credit throughout the semester. These opportunities will be completely on the whim of the professor and will not be granted upon asking.

**Attendance and Participation:** Attendance will not be taken in this course, but all students are expected to attend. Students who are not present are solely responsible for finding out what material was covered and information about assignments. Not attending is no excuse for making up late work or exams. Make-up assignments and exams may be given on a case-by-case basis determined by the instructor. In order to be eligible to take a make-up exam or to make-up a class assignment, the absence must be a university-sponsored absence or an emergency (with documentation).

**Electronic Devices:** Cellphones, tablets, and laptop computers are ubiquitous on college campuses. Although this is understandably asking a lot, it is strongly advised that students use classroom time for classroom objectives. Please just be respectful citizens and do not let device use distract others.

**Classroom Decorum:** A university setting is a fertile ground for the exchange of ideas. Students are certainly encouraged to express their thoughts relevant to this class. However, students must do so in a respectful manner. If a student is unable to conduct him or herself in a means that is conducive to a learning atmosphere, that student will be removed from class. This includes demonstrating respect for fellow students, as well as for the Professor. For example, it is unacceptable to come to class late, leave class early, sleep during class, or surf the internet during class.

**Email Etiquette:** Email is the preferred means of communication for the Professor. When a student emails the Professor they need to follow some basic rules. First, insert the course title and number into the subject line of the message. Second, plainly identify who the sender is and articulate the content of the message clearly. This means that text message or instant message speak should not be used. Finally, before emailing the professor, the student should review the syllabus. It is very likely that the answers to the students question(s) can be found by simply examining this syllabus. You can prove to me that you have read the syllabus by sending me an email titled, “Escapade.” In that email, copy and paste the lyrics to “Escapade” from *Janet Jackson’s Rhythm Nation 1814* and send me a YouTube link for the music video so that I may enjoy it. You will receive 2 points of extra credit for this exercise if you do this by 9am (my email time) Friday December 7th, 2018. Failure to follow these simple rules will generally result in a non-response from the target of the email communication.

**Academic Integrity:** Maintaining high standards of academic integrity in every class at Tennessee Tech is critical to the reputation of Tennessee Tech, its students, alumni, and the employers of Tennessee Tech graduates. The Student Academic Misconduct Policy describes the definitions of academic misconduct and policies and procedures for addressing Academic Misconduct at Tennessee Tech. For details, view the Tennessee Tech's Policy 217 – Student Academic Misconduct at [Policy Central](https://tntech.policytech.com/?auto=false)

**Disability Accommodations:** Students with a disability requiring accommodations should contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS). An Accommodation Request (AR) should be completed as soon as possible, preferably by the end of the first week of the course. The ODS is located in the Roaden University Center, Room 112; phone 372-6119. For details, view the Tennessee Tech’s Policy 340 – Services for Students with Disabilities at Policy Central.

**Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, & Assault**: TTU is committed to providing an environment free of all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If you (or someone you know) has experienced or experiences any of these acts of aggression, please know that you are not alone. The federal Title IX law makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses. TTU has staff members trained to support you in navigating campus life, accessing health and counseling services, providing academic and housing accommodations, helping with legal protective orders, and more.

**Course Evaluations:** Each student will have an opportunity to evaluate this class at the end of the semester.

**Revision to Syllabus:** The Professor reserve the right to amend, change, discard, or lampoon any or all of this syllabus at any time during the semester as they see fit. Until such point that the professor sees fit to change any section of this syllabus, its word is law, and will remain the guiding document of his class. Any or all spelling, grammatical, logical, or pedagogical mistakes contain within these pages are the sole fault of the public school system of the state of Oregon, from whom the professor received a free education. If a student has any comments or concerns regarding this syllabus, feel free to write them on the back of a mint condition Action Comics #1 and send to Ronald J McGauvran, Department of Sociology and Political Science, Tennessee Tech University, 720 Quadrangle, Cookeville, TN 38505.