

Political Science 101.03  
Introduction to Political Science  
Spring 2008  
Ms. Barbara Trish

Phone: 3149  
312 Carnegie  
Office Hours  
M 2-3  
TU 11-12  
F 12-1

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

Political Science 101 encourages you to analyze politics by using the conceptual and methodological tools generated by political science. You will apply these to the realm of the political world in general and to U.S. politics in particular.

Come to each class fully prepared, having read and considered the designated material and having completed any exercises assigned. Be ready to answer and ask questions about the material and to, perhaps, consider it in a slightly different context than the one in which you read it. Advance preparation and attendance are essential.

In addition to reading the body of material detailed on this syllabus, you should do what it takes to become informed about contemporary politics. This is not for the purpose of introducing a "current events" component to the course. Rather, contemporary politics will at times be the fuel for our analysis of politics, for our application of concepts and methodologies. You will need to be conversant with political developments in order to do this. Take this as a good excuse to read, watch and listen to the variety of news sources – national, local and even international – available to you. For example, *The New York Times* is available on the web (<http://www.nytimes.com>). As you follow political developments, deliberately integrate these with the other material for the course.

There will be a variety of small-scale assignments this semester, all aimed at refining your skills of analysis and communication. There will also be two formal paper assignments. Each is a short (likely 2-3 page) paper that will have an editing/rewrite component to it. We will work on writing throughout the entire semester.

Each of the three exams will be administered in-class. In these I will be looking for evidence that you control the substance of the material that we have considered in the course and can apply the analytical skills that the course seeks to develop and refine. Check the "Important Dates" section at the end of this syllabus to see the timetable for the exams.

Your grade for the course will be based on the strategy listed below.

Papers	30%
Exams	45%
Assignments	15%
Contribution	10%
preparation and punctual attendance	

Be aware that I may adjust final grades to reflect patterns of improvement and decline over the course of the semester.

You are required to read the following three books. They are available for purchase at the College Bookstore. One copy of Shively will also be available on two-hour reserve at Burling for use by students in all of the sections of Intro.

Shively, W. Phillips. 2008. *Power and Choice: An Introduction to Political Science*. 11<sup>th</sup> Edition. McGraw-Hill.

Bianco, William T. 2001. *American Politics: Strategy and Choice*. W.W. Norton.

Fiorina, Morris P. 2006 *Culture War?: The Myth of a Polarized America*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition. Longman.

Though the schedule shown below lists particular chapters from Shively, I will at times edit out some of the material. With this in mind, be sure to bring your syllabus to class every day and record the refined reading assignments. Likewise, keep track of the short readings that I distribute in class, which are not necessarily included in the class schedule.

The additional items on the syllabus will be available through a variety of mechanisms, including handouts, library reserve and electronic holdings.

Be open to modifications of the schedule of the course to accommodate political developments, visiting scholars/practitioners of politics, as well as our progress.

### SCHEDULE and COURSE LOGIC

This first section introduces you to the fundamental framework of *power* and *choice* that structures the Shively text; it is followed by a discussion of political ideologies. These provide a common framework – and language – for our examination of politics throughout the semester. The course then turns to focus on the state, particularly its development and its products in the U.S. context. Having done this, it considers the state and ideology as they relate to two issues regarding education policy. In this section – indeed for most of the first half of the course – I will integrate material that emphasizes an empirical approach to the study of politics.

Bachrach/Baratz, "The Two Faces of Power" in *The American Political Science Review*, 1962, pp. 947-952

Excerpts, Dahl and Lukes

Shively, *Power and Choice*, Chapter 1, "Politics: Setting the Stage"

Greider, "Mock Democracy"

Shively, Chapter 2, "Modern Ideologies"

Shively, Chapter 3, "The Modern State"

Greider, "The Global Marketplace"

Krugman, "In Praise of Cheap Labor"

Friedman, Thomas L. *The Lexus and the Olive Tree* (excerpt)

Shively, Chapter 4, "Policies of the State"

Siobham Gorman, "The Road Ahead for School Vouchers", *The National Journal*, December 23, 2000.

Jonathan Rauch, "A Vouchers: A Liberal Plot to Destroy Private Schools", *The National Journal*, December 23, 2000.

Robert G. Reich, opinion piece in *The Wall Street Journal*

"The Supreme Court: Excerpts from the Decision Sanctioning Vouchers for Private Schools." *The New York Times*, June 27, 2002.

Elizabeth Weil. 2007. "When Should a Kid Start Kindergarten?" *The New York Times*. June 3, 2007.

The second section, picking up a thread from the prior material, pulls your attention to the citizens who constitute the mass level in politics. It addresses society and political culture as potentially distinct political forces, then moves into an examination of how the citizens think about politics, by means of the textbook coverage and through exercises in data analysis. Finally, the section considers how the masses can bestow the system with conditions to sustain democratic states.

Tocqueville, excerpts from *Democracy in America*  
Putnam, "Bowling Alone", *Journal of Democracy*, 1995, pp. 65-78.

Shively, Chapter 7, "Authority and Legitimacy"  
Rosen, "The Social Police", *The New Yorker*, October 20 and 27, 1997, pp. 170-181

Shively, Chapter 6, "What Lie Behind Policy"  
Hochschild, *What's Fair?* (excerpt)

Next we will move to two political analyses. The first we will undertake as a class, looking at some empirical findings about parties in the U.S. The second will be based on *Culture Wars?*, a book that offers an empirical examination of a prominent journalistic observation about contemporary U.S. politics: that mass attitudes are markedly polarized. These explorations will permit us to highlight and even expand some of the issues relating to empirical analysis that have occupied our attention – at various times – the first half of the course.

Shively, Chapter 11, "Parties"  
Fiorina, stop at Chapter 7 (detailed schedule forthcoming)

The fourth section adds a new layer to the analysis of politics: the governing apparatus. It considers the institutional structure of the state, with a particular emphasis on electoral politics woven through this section. This is an important vehicle by which power and choice are played out in the U.S. system. The Bianco text serves a crucial function in this section, offering explicit instruction in rational choice analysis as it applies to the substance covered by Shively.

Shively, Chapter 9, "Constitutions and the Design of Government"

Bianco, Chapters 1, "Introduction"  
Bianco, Chapter 2, "Deciding How to Decide"

Shively, Chapter 10, "Elections"  
Bianco, Chapter 4, "Voters and Vote Decisions"  
Lijphart, "Unequal Participation: Democracy's Unresolved Dilemma", *American Political Science Review*, 1997, pp. 1-14  
Popkin, Samuel L. and Michael P. McDonald, "Turnout's Not as Bad as You Think", in the *Washington Post*, November 5, 2000

Shively, Chapter 12, "Structured Conflict: Interest Groups and Politics"  
Bianco, Chapter 3, "Cooperation in Politics"

Bianco, Chapter 5, "Winning and Holding Elective Office"  
Fiornia, Chapter 7, "Reconciling Micro and Macro"

Shively, Chapter 14, "National Decision-Making Institutions: Parliamentary Government"  
Shively, Chapter 15, "National Decision-Making Institutions: Presidential Government"  
Bianco, Chapter 6, "Strategic Behavior in Congress"  
Bianco, Chapter 7, "The Separation of Powers and the Executive Branch"

(If time permits)

Shively, Chapter 17, "Law and the Courts"  
Bianco, Chapter 8, "Strategy on the Supreme Court"

Finally, we will return to Fiorina, who ends his book with commentary on the prospects for politics in the U.S.

Fiorina, Chapter 8, "How Did It Come to This and Where Do We Go from Here?"

**IMPORTANT DATES** (known at this point)

September 26	Bill Stowe, Des Moines, IA Director of Public Works
September 29	1st exam
October 8 (tentative)	1 <sup>st</sup> paper (1 <sup>st</sup> version)
November 7	2 <sup>nd</sup> exam
November 26	2 <sup>nd</sup> paper (1 <sup>st</sup> version)/No class
December 10	2 <sup>nd</sup> paper (final version)
December 17, 9:00 a.m.	3 <sup>rd</sup> exam