

POL SCI 500
POLITICAL SCIENCE CAPSTONE COURSE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN - MILWAUKEE
SPRING 2013
HYBRID COURSE

Instructor: Dr. Erin B. Kaheny

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Office Hours: Thursday, 9:00-10:45 am

Class Time/Location (for weekly face-to-face meetings): Thursday, 11:00 am -12:15 pm, Physics (PHY) 145

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Political science majors are required to complete a capstone course in the major. One of the most important assignments required in this course is the completion of an original research paper (i.e., a capstone paper). Thus, this course will be geared toward assisting students through the various stages of the research process, from the development of research ideas to data analysis. At the end of the course, each student will have completed his or her own original research paper and will have presented this paper at a poster presentation. However, while a central objective of the course is the successful completion of a senior capstone paper, special emphasis will also be placed on fostering each student's ability to substantively and methodologically critique political science research. To this end, students will need to complete a series of homework assignments, discussion posts, and critiques.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK (FOR PURCHASE):

- Pollock, Philip H., III. The Essentials of Political Analysis. Fourth Edition. Los Angeles, CA: Sage (CQ Press).

In addition to articles referenced on our course D2L site, important readings will also be drawn from:

- Ethridge, Marcus E. 2002. The Political Research Experience: Readings and Analysis. Third Edition. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe.
- Gerring, John. 2007. Case Study Research: Principles and Practices. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Kellstedt, Paul M., and Guy D. Whitten. 2009. The Fundamentals of Political Science Research. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

You will not need to purchase the Ethridge, Gerring, or Kellstedt and Whitten books. Excerpts will be placed on e-reserve at the UWM library.

CLASS REQUIREMENTS AND POLICIES:

General Class Conduct

It is imperative that you always maintain a professional tone in all face-to-face meetings and in all online discussions. Online discussion forums (described below) are not venues for personal attacks and non-scholarly commentary. Moreover, some of the work involved in this class will entail peer review. It is essential that you always take the time necessary to convey your ideas in a respectful, thoughtful, and constructive manner.

Because the course entails weekly face-to-face meetings as well as an online component, you will need to regularly attend all class sessions. Regular attendance and active participation in all class sessions and all online discussions is expected. When we are meeting face-to-face, you should not be texting, surfing the Internet, checking e-mail, taking a phone call, reading magazines/newspapers, or talking to your neighbor (with the exception of those times in which we are working as small groups). Please silence the ringer on your cell phone before class begins. You should not arrive late, nor should you leave early (if there is ever a legitimate reason for this, please notify me in advance).

Class Structure

This is a hybrid course. Our weekly face-to-face meetings will take place every Thursday, and there will also be activities/assignments conducted via D2L. This hybrid course will not be easier or require less work than a traditional capstone course. The official time zone utilized to assess whether online assignments are submitted on time is the Central Standard Time Zone. If an assignment is late (even by one minute), it will be subject to a grade deduction (see below). Finally, as this is a hybrid course, you should check our course D2L Web site regularly throughout the week as updates/announcements may be found there. It is your responsibility to ensure that you have a functional computer and secure Internet connection for the purposes of completing all online assignments.

Online Assignments

In addition to the assigned reading and assignments that will be required for our face-to-face sessions (see below), you will also be responsible for submitting online assignments and/or participating in online discussions throughout the semester.

These online assignments will take two forms:

1. First, as noted in the syllabus, there are six homework assignments drawn from the Pollock text. You must complete a minimum of five of these homework assignments. If you complete all six, I will drop your lowest grade for computational purposes. These must be submitted to the appropriate folder of the D2L dropbox no later than Friday, 11:59 pm of the week in which they are assigned.
2. Secondly, as noted in the syllabus, you will need to submit a response to five discussion board questions in select weeks. You must complete all five of these particular assignments (i.e., no grades will be dropped in this category). In order to receive a 100% on a discussion post, you must submit a thoughtful response that thoroughly answers all parts of the question, is free of grammatical and spelling errors, is of a scholarly nature with a highly professional tone, and does not veer from the topic of the question posed. Simple bullet point posts will not suffice for this purpose. Further, your writing should be free of any online lingo, abbreviated words, contractions, and slang. Any reference to assigned or outside materials must be properly cited with in-text parenthetical citations and, if applicable, you should include a references list following the body of

the post. Please do not post your response as an attachment. Your responses to my discussion questions must be posted no later than Friday at 11:59 pm of the relevant week of the discussion. If you submit two responses to the question, the TA will grade your first response.

Written Assignments Submitted in Face-to-Face Sessions (i.e., Research Proposal, Revised Proposal (with Annotated Bibliography), Section Drafts, First/Final Drafts, and Peer Critiques)

Note that I will require hard copies of those assignments to be submitted at our weekly face-to-face sessions (these are denoted in the syllabus). Face-to-face assignments, therefore, will be due on Thursdays (i.e., at our weekly meetings) at the start of class.

Generally, I will not accept drafts of research proposals, capstone paper section drafts, full drafts, final copies of your capstone papers, and peer reviews (see below) via e-mail. If you are not able to submit hard copies of these assignments in class due to an illness, family emergency, or some other University-excused reason, you may contact me and request a waiver of this policy (I will ask for documentation). Please note that I might still require a follow-up hard copy of the assignment even if a waiver is approved.

Please note that feedback on your papers will not be provided via e-mail or on electronic copies of your papers under most circumstances. Please note that when you submit your final capstone paper, I will require that you also submit your first full draft of your paper (marked/evaluated by the instructor). When reviewing your final draft, I will be checking to see that you incorporated feedback from earlier drafts. Finally, if you fail to submit assignments on time, it will likely result in a significant delay on turnaround time for feedback. Thus, if you want timely feedback, you must submit your assignments on time.

Specific guidelines for each component of the capstone paper (e.g., research proposal, revised proposal with annotated bibliography, paper sections, and first/final drafts) will be posted on our D2L site under “content.”

Of course, your **capstone paper topic must be approved by the instructor**. This is secured in the form of a passing grade on a revised research proposal.

You will also be responsible for reviewing a peer’s revised research proposal and part of a peer’s capstone paper – i.e., everything but the analysis and conclusion sections (“peer critiques”). Thus, you will participate in peer review across two stages of the writing process. Guidelines for these two peer critique assignments will be posted on our course D2L page under “content.” You will need to submit two hard copies of these two critiques on their respective due dates.

In addition, on the dates in which these peer critiques are due in class, you will be split into workgroups with multiple students where you will discuss your research ideas, theoretical approaches, challenges, critiques, etc. The TA/instructor will help facilitate these workshop sessions, so your attendance on these days of class is particularly important.

Poster Presentations

You will be required to present your capstone paper in a poster session, which will be held at our departmental headquarters on the fifth floor of the Northwest Quadrant, Building B (NWQB). The requirements of the poster presentation and poster assignment will be discussed in class, and the dates for your presentations will be made soon after the start of classes. You will need to submit a draft of your poster in class on the date noted in the syllabus (“poster draft”). Note that you will also be required to attend at least one other poster session (other than your own). At that session, you will serve as a discussant for one presenter (“discussant role”).

Please note that due to class size and the requirement that student projects be presented, some students will need to present their papers or serve as a discussant on a day other than Thursday, our designated meeting time.

Grade Allocation

Assignment	% of overall grade
Pollock Homework Assignments (1% each)	5
Discussion Board Posts (1 % each)	5
Draft Research Proposal	5
Revised Research Proposal (with Annotated Bibliography)	10
Draft Introduction & Literature Review*	5
Draft Theory, Hypotheses, and Data and Methods Sections*	5
First Draft of Complete Capstone paper	10
Final Draft of Complete Capstone paper	30
Draft of Poster	5
Poster Presentation	10
Peer Critiques (2.5% each)	5
Discussant Role (Poster Presentation)	5

*If you are approved to write a political theory capstone paper, please meet with the instructor/TA to discuss these particular components.

Point Scale

A	93-100	C	73-76
A-	90-92	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	D+	67-69
B	83-86	D	63-66
B-	80-82	D-	60-62
C+	77-79	F	...-59

Time Allocation

This is a three-credit hour class. Students, on average, should expect to spend nine hours a week on activities related to POL SCI 500.

Grading Concerns

If you have questions or concerns regarding the grading of a discussion posting, homework assignment from the Pollock text, or peer review critiques, please contact the TA within one week of receiving the grade. If you are not satisfied with the TA’s response, please contact the instructor. If you have questions or concerns regarding the grading of any stage of your capstone project (i.e., from the original proposal to the final draft), your poster draft/presentation, or the assessment of your discussant role, you should contact the instructor.

Academic Dishonesty

I do not tolerate acts of plagiarism or any forms of cheating on exams or assignments. Students who are caught engaging in academic misconduct will receive an “F” (zero percentage points) for the assignment. It is also possible that a student who is caught engaging in academic misconduct will receive an “F” for the course. If I suspect a case of academic misconduct, I will follow the academic misconduct and reporting policies of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. Please see the following for details:

http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm

As this course entails a significant amount of writing, it is of tremendous importance that you become well versed in the rules of academic citation (if you are not already). All written work submitted for the course (be it for online or face-to-face purposes), must include proper citations and a full works cited list. If you have questions regarding citations, please consult the Web sites listed under the “plagiarism” section of the UWM Writing Center Web site at: <http://www4.uwm.edu/writingcenter/writers-resources.cfm>

You may also ask the instructor and/or TA questions regarding citation requirements, though we will first direct you to the sources referenced by the UWM Writing Center.

For the purposes of this class, I will require that all written work conform to the American Political Science Association (APSA) citation style. I will review this citation style in class.

Dropping the Course & Incompletes

It is the student’s responsibility to become familiar with all relevant drop deadlines (please see the UWM calendar for further details). An incomplete may be given to a student who is unable to complete the course requirements due to extenuating circumstances (e.g., serious illness, injury, family emergency, etc.). Supporting documentation is necessary to receive an incomplete.

Late assignments will be subject to a ten percentage point deduction for each day they are late (including weekends). It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that late assignments are received by the instructor. Please note that if an assignment is due in a face-to-face session but is submitted after class has started (but on the due date), it will be counted as one day late.

Student Accommodations

If you will need accommodations in order to meet any of the requirements of this course, please contact me as soon as possible. Students should also contact a Student Accessibility Center (SAC) counselor on campus (414) 229-6287.

Religious Accommodations

I will follow UWM’s policy regarding the provision of religious accommodations. This policy can be found at: <https://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/S1.5.htm>

COURSE SCHEDULE*

*READING AND ONLINE ASSIGNMENTS ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

F2F: FACE-TO-FACE MEETING DATE

WEEK 1 (F2F JANUARY 24): INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE

No assigned reading this week. We will review the course syllabus, expectations, objectives, and schedule.

WEEK 2 (F2F JANUARY 31): POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH – SOME PRELIMINARIES; APSA CITATIONS

Read: Kellstedt & Whitten pgs. 1-20 (e-reserve) and Ethridge 18 (on e-reserve).

- F2F Assignment: None (other than reading)
- Online Assignment - Discussion Question Response (1): Post a response to this week's discussion question no later than Friday, Feb. 1 at 11:59 pm (see "Discussions" on our course D2L site).

WEEK 3 (F2F FEBRUARY 7): CONCEPTUALIZATION & VARIABLES

Read: Chapter 1 in Pollock

- F2F Assignment: Draft research proposal (hard copy due in class on Feb. 7)
- Online Assignment: Complete exercises 1 and 5 in Pollock, pgs. 23-24. Submit the assignment to the appropriate dropbox on our D2L site no later than February 8 at 11:59 pm.

WEEK 4 (F2F FEBRUARY 14): LEVELS OF MEASUREMENT & DATA ISSUES

Read: Chapter 2 in Pollock

- F2F Assignment: None (other than reading)
- Online Assignment: Complete exercises 1 and 2 in Pollock, pg. 45. Submit the assignment to the appropriate dropbox on our D2L site no later than February 15 at 11:59 pm.

WEEK 5 (F2F FEBRUARY 21): THEORETICAL DEVELOPMENT; PRESENTATION ON POLITICAL THEORY RESEARCH

Read: Chapter 3 in Pollock; Kellstedt & Whitten pgs. 40-42 (on e-reserve)

- F2F Assignment: Revised research proposal with annotated bibliography (2 hard copies due in class on February 21)
- Online Assignment: Complete exercises 1 and 4 in Pollock, pgs. 71-72. Submit the assignment to the appropriate dropbox on our D2L site no later than February 22 at 11:59 pm.

WEEK 6 (F2F FEBRUARY 28): RESEARCH DESIGN & APPROACHES

Read: Chapter 4 in Pollock; Gerring, chapters 4 & 5 (on e-reserve); and Ethridge, pgs. 223-26 (on e-reserve)

- F2F Assignment: Peer critique (1) (2 hard copies due in class on February 28)
- Online Assignment: Complete exercise 2 in Pollock, pg. 97. Submit the assignment to the appropriate dropbox on our D2L site no later than March 1 at 11:59 pm.

WEEK 7 (F2F MARCH 7): DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS, SAMPLING, AND STATISTICAL INFERENCE

Read: Chapters 5 & 6 in Pollock

- F2F Assignment: Draft introduction & literature review (hard copy due in class on March 7)
- Online Assignment: Complete exercise 1a in Pollock, pg. 118 and exercise 1 in Pollock, pg. 152. Submit the assignment to the appropriate dropbox on our D2L site no later than March 8 at 11:59 pm.

WEEK 8 (F2F MARCH 14): HYPOTHESIS TESTING (BASIC RELATIONSHIP ASSESSMENT)

Read: Chapter 7 and pgs. 182-199 in Pollock

- F2F Assignment: None (other than reading)
- Online Assignment: Complete exercise 1 in Pollock, pg. 177. Submit the assignment to the appropriate dropbox on our D2L site no later than March 15 at 11:59 pm.

WEEK 9: SPRING BREAK

WEEK 10 (F2F MARCH 28): EVALUATING POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH I

See discussion board for reading assignment.

- F2F Assignment: Draft theory, hypotheses, and data and methods section (be sure to include your introduction and literature review from March 7) (2 hard copies due in class on March 28)
- Online Assignment – Discussion Question Response (2): Post a response to this week’s discussion question no later than Friday, March 29 at 11:59 pm (see “Discussions” on our course D2L site).

WEEK 11 (F2F APRIL 4): EVALUATING POLITICAL SCIENCE RESEARCH II; PRESENTING RESULTS, CONCLUDING A PAPER

See discussion board for reading assignment.

- F2F Assignment: Peer Critique (2) (2 hard copies due in class on April 4)
- Online Assignment – Discussion Question Response (3): Post a response to this week’s discussion question no later than Friday, April 5 at 11:59 pm (see “Discussions” on our course D2L site).

WEEK 12 (F2F APRIL 11): PRESENTING RESEARCH

Reading TBA

- F2F Assignment: First draft of complete capstone paper (hard copy due in class on April 11)
- Online Assignment – Discussion Question Response (4): Post a response to this week’s discussion question no later than Friday, April 12 at 11:59 pm (see “Discussions” on our course D2L site).

WEEK 13 (F2F APRIL 18): EVALUATING THE CAPSTONE EXPERIENCE

No assigned reading this week.

- F2F Assignment: Draft of poster presentation (due in class on April 18)
- Online Assignment – Discussion Question Response (5): Post a response to this week’s discussion question no later than Friday, April 19 at 11:59 pm (see “Discussions” on our course D2L site).

WEEK 14 (F2F APRIL 25): GROUP 1 POSTER PRESENTATIONS (NWQB, NORMAL CLASS TIME)

WEEK 15 (F2F MAY 2): GROUP 2 POSTER PRESENTATIONS (NWQB, NORMAL CLASS TIME)

WEEK 16 (F2F MAY 7 & 9): GROUP 3 POSTER PRESENTATIONS ON TUESDAY, MAY 7, 11-12:15 AND GROUP 4 POSTER PRESENTATIONS ON THURSDAY, MAY 9 (NWQB, NORMAL CLASS TIME)

WEEK 17: (F2F MAY 14 AT 10:00 AM):

- F2F Assignment: Final paper due at the start of class during the final exam period for the course (Tuesday, May 14 at 10:00 am).