

POLSC-AD 130: Introduction to Political Thinking

Lecture: M W 11:50-1:05pm (Location: Comp Res. (A2) 003)
M W 2:40-3:55pm (Location: Soc Sci (A5) 005)

Recitation: Su 10:25-11:40am (Location: Comp Research (A2) 019)
Su 11:50-1:05pm (Location: West Admin (C2) W008)
Su 2:55-4:10pm (Location: Campus Center (C2) E047)
Su 4:20-5:35pm (Location: Campus Center (C2) E052)

New York University Abu Dhabi
Fall 2017

Duration of Course: 14 Weeks

Course Credits: 4

Prerequisites: None

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Course Description:

This course offers students an introduction to some of the main questions that have long engaged political scientists. Why do we organize into nation states? What are the different ways to run a country? How are the preferences of the public turned into policies? Why do conflicts arise? And, why are peaceful settlements so often difficult to achieve? Should countries intervene into other country's domestic politics? What are the challenges to state building? Are great powers likely to make war against one another soon? This course offers students an introduction to the theories and frameworks that political scientists use to approach these, among other questions. The course relies on cases and examples, and incorporates readings from contemporary academic and journalistic sources to illustrate how these approaches can shed light on many of the most vexing questions in our discipline.

Intended Learning Outcomes:

The goal of this course is to introduce students to some of the fundamental questions in political science and the theories that are essential for *political thinking*. The focus of this course will neither be historical nor descriptive. The course is also NOT mathematical, and students will not be required to perform complicated math problems. Rather, the course will focus on the theories and analytical frameworks that help us understand political phenomena.

Course Format:

The primary theories and conceptual frameworks will be introduced during lecture. Readings will be assigned for most lectures, and the subject of the readings will be used to illustrate these concepts. We will discuss the readings in class and you are expected to participate. In particular, there are recitation in which key concepts and readings will be explored in greater depth. There are two tests: Exam 1 covers the material before the Fall Break, and Exam II covers the material after. There will be one problem set and two short response papers assigned.

Course Requirements:

Students will be graded on the basis of the following weighted combination:

Recitation	15%
Response Papers (x2)	15%
Problem Set (x1)	5%
Lecture Attendance	5%
Quizzes	10%
Exam I	25%
Exam II	25%

RESPONSE PAPERS: Each student will need to complete two response papers, each of which corresponds to a particular set of readings. Each response paper should be between 2 and 3 (double-spaced) pages, and should provide a brief critical analysis of the readings. *The due dates and eligible readings for each possible response paper, along with the criteria for completing these papers, are posted on NYU classes. One response paper is due before the midterm and one after. See the guidelines for more information.*

PROBLEM SET: There will be 1 homework assignment, which is due in class on Wednesday, Oct. 4. You will be expected to analytically apply the theories from class.

***Note:** Any late assignment will be automatically deducted by one letter grade (10%) per day it is late. Assignments will be returned one week after it is due, after which time it will not be accepted.*

ATTENDANCE: You can miss two lectures unexcused. Additional absences will result in deduction to this portion of your grade.

Note: *Laptops are banned from class.* If you spend all of lecture on the internet or phone or otherwise unengaged, points will be deducted from your attendance grade.

QUIZZES: Short quizzes will be given at the beginning of many classes. The quizzes will pertain only to that day's readings, and will be either short answer or multiple choice. The only point of the quizzes is to incentivize you to do the readings.

RECITATION: There will be a grade attached to the recitation and assigned by the instructor. The grade will reflect your preparation for and participation in recitation. Recitation will focus mostly on a set of readings, and you are expected to participate in the discussions of the readings.

EXAMS: The course will be split into two sections, each of which will be covered in Exam I and Exam II, respectively. The final will not be (explicitly) cumulative (though concepts learned at the beginning of the semester that are relevant to topics we cover after the Fall Break may be included on the Final Exam).

Grading Scale – No Exceptions

100-93%: A	82.9-80%: B-	69.9-67%: D+
92.9-90%: A-	79.9-77%: C+	66.9-60%: D
89.9-87%: B+	76.9-73%: C	<59.9%: F
86.9-83%: B	72.9-70%: C-	

Course Outline

Monday, September 4th

General Introduction

I. Why States?

Wednesday, September 6th [JJ]

Why Do We Organize at All? Anarchy, Order and Cooperation

- Deaton, Angus. 2015. “Weak States, Poor Countries”. *Project Syndicate*
- Lerner, Daniel. 1958. "The Grocer and the Chief: A Parable." In *The Passing of Traditional: Society Modernizing the Middle East*.

Sunday, September 10th - **Recitation**

Why Do We Organize at All? Anarchy, Order and Cooperation

- Leeson, Peter. 2007. “Anarchy Unbound, or: Why Self-Enforcing Governance Works Better than You Think” *Cato Unbound*
- Rodrik, Dani. 2007. “Response to Leeson: The Limits of Self-Enforcing Agreements” *Cato Unbound*

Monday, September 11th [JJ]

Public Goods and Justice

- Braegger, B. 2013. “Bedouin System of Justice”
- “How Countries Like the Philippines Fall Into Vigilante Violence”. 2016. *New York Times*
- “Taliban Justice Gains Favor as Official Afghan Courts Fail”. *New York Times*. Jan. 31, 2015.

Wednesday, September 13th [JJ]

Authority, the Social Contract and State Formation

- Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, chpts 13-15 and 17-18.
- Pietrucha, Mike. 2016. “Treating the Islamic State as a State,” *War on the Rocks*
- Farrell, Henry. 2015. “Dark Leviathan: The Reluctant King of the Internet.” *Aeon Magazine*
- “Vertical Integration in India’s crime-politics nexus” *Financial Times*, Jan. 2017

Sunday, September 17th - **Recitation**

Authority, the Social Contract and State Formation

- Locke, John. *Second Treatise of Civil Government*, chpts 9-11.
- Olson, Mancur. 1993. “Dictatorship, Democracy, and Development” *American Political Science Review*. 87(3): 567-76

**II. Why are States Organized So Differently from One Another?
Democracy Vs. Authoritarianism**

Monday, September 18th [JJ]

What is Democracy?

- Dahl, Robert. 2005. “What Political Institutions Does Large-Scale Democracy Require?” *Political Science Quarterly* 120(2): 187-197.
- Schmitter, Phillippe and Terry Lynn Karl. 1991. “What Democracy Is . . . and Is Not,” *Journal of Democracy* 2(3): 75-88.

Wednesday, September 20th [JJ]

**Democracy vs. Authoritarianism, and the Importance of
Institutions and Norms.**

- Svobik, Milan. 2012. *The Politics of Authoritarianism*, chapter 1.
- “Xi Jinping May Delay Picking China’s Next Leader, Stoking Speculation”, *NY Times*, Oct. 2016.
- “Checking Democracy’s Pulse” *NY Times*, May 2017.
- “How to Lose a Constitutional Democracy” *Vox.com*, Feb. 2017.
- “Norms Matter”. Brendan Nyhan. *Politico*. September 2017.

Sunday, September 24th - **Recitation**

Regime Type discussion and implications

- Philippe C. Schmitter. 2010. "Twenty-Five Years, Fifteen Findings." *Journal of Democracy* 21(1): 17-28.
- Przeworski, Adam. 2016. "Democracy: A never-ending quest." *Annual Review of Political Science* 19: 1-12.

III. How Should We Select our Leaders? Types of Voting Methods, Electoral Systems and Governments

Monday, September 25th [JJ]

How is Policy Made? The Basics of Group Choice (MVT)

- "How Putin Played the Far Left", *The Daily Beast*, Jan. 2017
- "Why Facts Don't Change Our Minds". Elizabeth Kolbert. *The New Yorker*. Feb., 2017

Wednesday, Sept. 27th [JJ]

Voting Methods

- "The electoral college badly distorts the vote. And it's going to get worse" *The Washington Post - Monkey Cage*. Nov. 2016

Sunday, October 1st - **Recitation**

Group Choice + Voting methods (con't)

- Tsai, Lily. 2007. "Solidary groups, informal accountability, and local public goods provision in rural China." *American Political Science Review* 101(2): 355-372.

Monday, Oct. 2nd [JJ]

Electoral Systems

- Pippa Norris. 2004. "Comparing Electoral Systems," chpt. 2 in *Electoral Engineering: Voting Rules and Political Behavior*. 26pp
- "PR Thresholds – Too Many Parties can spoil politics". 2016. *The Economist*
- "Gerrymandering is the biggest obstacle to genuine democracy in the U.S. So why is no one protesting?" *Monkey Cage*. Feb. 2017
- "The U.S. could be free of gerrymandering. Here's how other countries do redistricting." *Monkey Cage*. Aug. 2017

Wednesday, October 4th [JJ]

What are Different Ways to Run the Country? Parliamentary vs. Presidential Systems

- “How Erdogan’s Anti-Democratic Government Made Turkey Ripe for Unrest”. *Washington Post*. July 16 2016

Sunday, October 8th – **Recitation**

Voting, Electoral Systems and Different Types of Democracies

- Lust, Ellen. 2011. “Missing the Third Wave: Islam, Institutions, and Democracy in the Middle East” *Studies Comparative International Development* 46(2): 163-190
- Hariri, Jacob. 2015. “A Contribution to the Understanding of Middle Eastern and Muslim Exceptionalism”. *Journal of Politics* 77(2): 477-490

IV. Elections and Representation

Monday, October 9 [JJ]

Are Elections Enough to Ensure Representation?

- Achen and Bartels. 2015. *Democracy for Realists*, chapter 1.
- McCubbins and Schwartz. 1984. “Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols vs. Fire Alarms”. *American Journal of Political Science*.

Homework 1 (problem set) – Due: Wednesday, October 9th (in class)

Wednesday, Oct. 11 [JJ]

The Role of Political Parties in Representation

- Fearon, J. 1999. "Electoral Accountability and the Control of Politicians: Selecting Good Types versus Sanctioning Poor Performance." (In *Democracy, Accountability, and Representation*), p.55-70
- Levy, Jacob. 2017. “The Party Declines – Republican Party Failure.”
- “Why Referendums Aren’t as Democratic as They Seem”. *NY Times*. Oct. 2016.

Sunday, Oct. 15 -- **Recitation**

- Corstange, Daniel. 2016. *The Price of a Vote in the Middle East: Clientelism and Communal Politics in Lebanon and Yemen*, chpt. 5.
- “The Lottocracy”. 2014. Alexander Guerrero. *Aeon Magazine*.

Monday, October 16 [JJ]

Political Participation – Why do People Vote?

- Hardin, Russell. 2003. "The Free Rider Problem", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*
- “Bernie Sanders Just Accidentally Explained Why His political revolution failed”. *Vox.com*. April 2016
- “Voting Matters even if your vote doesn’t”

Exam I: Wednesday, October 18th

Sunday, Oct. 22 - Return Graded Exam — **Recitation**

Fall Break (No Class – Mon. Oct. 23rd - Wed., Oct. 25th - Sun., Oct. 29)

V. Why are large-scale Social Movements so rare? Why do they happen at all?

Monday, October 30th [LP]

Protest Dynamics and Collective Action

- Sidney Tarrow. 1994. *Power in Movement*, pp. 1-27.

Wednesday, November 1st [LP]

Con’t – Large-Scale Social Movements

- Chwe, Michael. 2001. *Rational Ritual*, pp. 1-25.
- “Will the anti-Trump protests expand?” *Washington Post*. Feb. 2017
- “African Nations Increasingly Silence Internet to Stem Protest”, *NY Times*.

Sunday, November 5th - **Recitation**

Large-Scale Social Movements – The Arab Spring

- King G., J. Pan and M. Roberts. 2017. “How the Chinese Government Fabricates Social Media Posts for Strategic Distraction, Not Engaged Argument” *American Political Science Review* (p. 1-14)
- “The Secret Rally that Sparked an Uprising”. *The Wall Street Journal*. Feb., 2011.

VI. Why do we have Violent Conflict?

Monday, November 6th [JJ]

Causes of Conflict

- “Assad Has Won in Syria. But Syria Hardly Exists.” 2017
- Fearon, James. 2007. “Iraq’s Civil War”. *Foreign Affairs*. 82(2)

Wednesday, Nov. 8th [JJ]

Identity, Cleavages and Conflict

- Daniel Posner. 2004. “The Political Salience of Cultural Differences”. *American Political Science Review*
- “The Real Roots of the Sunni-Shia Conflict: Beyond the Myths of ‘Ancient Religious Hatreds’”. *Vox.com*. Jan., 2016.

Sun, Nov. 12 - **Recitation**

- Lupu and Peisakhin. Forthcoming. “The Legacy of Political Violence.” *American Journal of Political Science*

VII. What are the Challenges to Building a State?

Monday, November 13th [LP]

Visit by former President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko

- Snyder, Timothy. 2015. “Integration and Disintegration: Europe, Ukraine, and the World.” *Slavic Review* 74(4): 695-707.
- Peisakhin, Leonid. “Why are people protesting in Ukraine? Providing historical context.” *Washington Post*. December 2013.

Wednesday, November 15th [LP]

Challenges to State Building – Social Capital

- Miguel, E. 2004. "Tribe or Nation? Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya vs. Tanzania" *World Politics* 56(3): 328-362.
- Habyarimana, et al. 2008. "Is Ethnic Conflict Inevitable-Parting Ways over Nationalism and Separatism." *Foreign Affairs* 87: 138.

Sunday, November 19th - **Recitation**

- Rodrik, Dani. 2016. "Is Liberal Democracy Feasible in Developing Countries?" *Studies in Comparative International Development* 51(1): 50-59.
- Ferejohn and Rosenbulth. 2017. *Forged Through Fire*, chpt. 1.

Monday November 20th [LP]

Challenges to State Building (con't)

- Herbst, Jeffrey. 1990. "War and States in Africa." *International Studies Quarterly*.
- Acemoglu, Daron and James Robinson. 2014. "What's the Problem with (Spanish) Catalunya?" in *Why Nations Fail*.

VIII. How does Politics Affect Economic Development?

Wednesday November 22nd [LP]

Institutions and Politics (theoretical relationship)

- North, Douglass. 1991. Institutions. *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 5(1): 97-112
- Acemoglu, Daron, Simon Johnson, and James Robinson. 2001. "The Colonial Origins of Comparative Development: An Empirical Investigation." *The American Economic Review* 91(5): 1369-1401.

Sunday November 26th -- **Recitation**

- Ramsay, Kristopher W. 2011. "Revisiting the Resource Curse: Natural Disasters, the Price of Oil, and Democracy." *International Organization* 65 (3):507-29.

Monday, November 27th [LP]

Relationship between Democracy and Development

- Przeworski, Adam and Fernando Limongi. 1997. "Modernization: Theories and Facts." *World Politics* 49(2): 155-183.
- Bueno de Mesquita, Bruce, and George Downs. 2005. "Democracy and Development." *Foreign Affairs* 84(5): 78.

IX. What is the Role of the State in International Politics?

Wednesday, Nov. 29th [LP]

International Security Architecture & Will Great Powers Make War Against Each Other Again?

- Mearsheimer, John. 2014. "Can China Rise Peacefully?" *National Interest* 25: 23-37

Sunday, December 3rd – **Recitation**

- Gratzke, Erik. 2007. "The Capitalist Peace." *American Journal of Political Science* 51(1): 166-191.

Monday, December 4th [LP]

International Economic Architecture (WTO, IMF, EU, etc.)

- Rodrik, Dani. 2012. "Who Needs the Nation State?" *Roepke Lecture in Economic Geography*
- Grygiel, Jakub. 2016. "The Return of Europe's Nation-States: The Upside to the EU's Crisis" *The Majalla*

Wednesday, December 6th [LP]

Politics of Foreign Interventions: Economic Interventions

- Easterly, William. 2008. "Introduction: Can't Take It Any More?" in William Easterly, ed. *Reinventing Foreign Aid*, pp.1-24.
- "Saudis and Extremism: 'Both the Arsonists and the Firefighters'" *New York Times*. 2016.
- Sachs, Jeffrey. "The Case for Aid" *Foreign Policy*. January 21, 2014

Sunday, December 10—**Recitation**

- Peksen, Dursun. 2012. “Does Foreign Military Intervention Help Human Rights?” *Political Research Quarterly* 65(3): 558-571.

Monday, December 11th [LP]

Politics of Foreign Interventions: Military Interventions

- Doyle, Michael and Nicholas Sambanis. 2006. *Making War and Building Peace: United Nations Peace Operations*, “Introduction,” 19pp.
- Suri, Hardeep. 2016. *Perilous Interventions: The Security Council and the Politics of Chaos*, “Introduction,” pp.1-22.

11. Current challenges

Wednesday, December 13th [JJ]

The Future of Democracy: The Rise of Populism in the West and the Halt of Democratization Everywhere Else

- Lieberman, et al. 2017. “Trumpism and American Democracy: History, Comparison, and the Predicament of Liberal Democracy in the United States”
- “How Venezuela Stumbled to the Brink of Collapse” *NY Times*. May 2017

Exam II: Time and Location as Scheduled by the Registrar

(Note: The final exam period is between December 17-21)