

Political Science Seminar
Political Science 498
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Introduction

Senior Seminar is the capstone course for the political science major. Consequently, we bring together all the different components of your Union education together in this one class. For the past four, maybe more, years, Union's political science department has worked to develop your analytical and research skills so you can engage in a life long pursuit of learning. At the same time, we have striven to prepare you to participate and lead in an effective, efficient, and ethical manner.

Therefore, this class is designed so you can demonstrate your political knowledge, preparation for civic engagement, research skills, communication skills, leadership ability, and potential to be a catalyst for change. Primarily, students will demonstrate this through the completion of a professional political science research paper using political science theories and methods. The skills that you use in this class are the skills that you will use continually throughout your life. If you go to graduate school or become a policy analyst, you will learn to write reports that advance our knowledge of politics or policies. If you go to law school, you need to know how to conduct and examine research (think of each case as an experiment) to effectively represent your client. If you go into business, the skills are important in analyzing data and writing reports. If you teach, you need to understand how to test different teaching methods to more effectively prepare your students.

However, your ability to write a paper is not all that is necessary to be effective leaders. Students need to be able to communicate their positions which you do in the paper and through the oral presentation in December. Students need to demonstrate basic civics competency and political science knowledge to be successful in politics. So students will take the ISI civics test and the Political Science Field test. At Union, we emphasize integrating faith with learning so students will write a paper explaining how one's faith influences one's political views. And we bring all this together with an essay and discussion on principles of effective political leaders.

Finally, even though I am the instructor of record, the political science faculty view Senior Seminar as a joint endeavor. While I will work with each of you, those of you who pursue an American project will probably spend more time with me, those of you pursuing an international relations/comparative politics project with Dr. Ryan, and those of who you pursuing a theory project will rely on Drs. Watson and Baker for the expertise they can provide.

Research Paper. Each student will write a professional political science paper on a topic of his or her own choosing. Each paper should have an intro, lit review, hypothesis/theory/thesis, research design, results, and conclusion section. Of course, if someone writes a political theory paper, there is not a research design per se but rather a more extensive results/analytical section.

To begin, students will write a prospectus that identifies your research topic or question, explain its importance, and explain in as much detail as possible how you plan on pursuing this research.

Second, students will turn in an annotated bibliography with a *minimum* of 25 political science journal articles, book chapters from an edited volume, or books. No journalistic materials are suitable. Most of you will probably pursue topics that I am not completely familiar with. This allows me to have a greater understanding of your topic and the state of the research surrounding it. More information on annotated bibliographies can be found at <http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm>. While this link suggests a 150 word description/evaluation for each entry, I expect yours will be longer as you discuss theory, methods, and results. And while this may seem like a lot of work, remember that you will use most of these works in your paper.

Third, students will take the information from the bibliography and other research to write a lit review. The lit review differs from the bibliography in that it traces the development of the idea and synthesizes previous work so that you can identify a gap in the field that needs further research.

Fourth, the theory/hypothesis section provides an in-depth explanation of what you expect to occur and why. This will include a discussion of your hypothesis and any control variables necessary. Fifth, the research design should explain your method, the sources of your data, define any variables, explain how you measure variables, explain how you analyze the data, etc.

Sixth, the results section should present your results in written form but probably also some visual form (e.g., tables, graphs, etc.) and explain how it supports or does not support your hypothesis. If it does not support your hypothesis, please discuss why it does not. If it does support your hypothesis, what is the significance of this for political science?

Seventh, the rough draft/final paper will include all previous sections plus an introduction and conclusion. The introduction introduces your topic and explains its importance to political science and society at large. The conclusion restates your findings, discusses their significance, and points to further areas of possible research. Each student will also conduct a peer review of another student's paper. The final paper presentations must be made using Powerpoint.

For students writing a theory paper, you will have to turn in a prospectus and annotated bibliography like everyone else. However, you will have different sections though you still have an introduction and conclusion. The political theory paper differs in several ways. First, the lit review examines what previous theorists have written on your topic discussing the strengths and weaknesses of the arguments and how they build on each other. Second, the argument section synthesizes the theorists to make an argument. Third, students will include a section that critiques their argument and rebuts the criticism. Fourth, the student will apply the theory to a policy issue. Please note that this is a basic outline. Theory papers can go in many different directions and so please check with the instructor for the format that best fits your theory topic. The student will still have to meet deadlines and have a rough draft complete at the same time as other students. However since some sections are more difficult than others, you may have more time to turn in your section. Please check with the instructor for your specific deadlines.

Finally, students have a tendency to procrastinate on papers and while I cannot prevent that, I can reward time management. Consequently, all sections of the paper must be electronically submitted by 1pm on the day provided in the syllabus. Any paper received after that time will receive comments but no grade (i.e., 0 points for that assignment). The only

exception will be health or something else like that which prevents you from working on a paper for an extended period of time. Remember that you know when certain parts of the paper are due so start now. And if you have an illness that prevents you from completing your section of the paper on time, please let me know ahead of time. Illnesses the day before do not count. The bright side of these requirements is that the paper will be finished before Thanksgiving.

Leadership paper. Each student will write an essay on effective leadership principles and then discuss these in class. Eventually, we will create a master list of leadership principles for all students. To write the essay, students have two choices. First, they can read and write a critical essay on a book on leadership that comes from an approved list or a student can seek instructor approval for a book of his or her own choosing. Second, students can write an essay on leadership principles learned based on a case study of one's own experience in leading others to accomplish a goal.

Faith and Politics Paper. Students will write a 5-7 page paper on how their faith informs their politics. This paper should be broad in its scope while also making necessary connections between differing concepts in political science. In this paper, it is expected that students will discuss their conceptions of human nature, conflict in society, the role of government, and how your ideas affect your concepts of equality, power, the probability of change, etc. Students should also discuss what they consider the most important Christian political principles and how that relates to specific policy issues.

Grading: Your grade from this class comes from the multiple components mentioned above. While the paper is the largest component, please note that students must do well on all the assignments to pass the class (receive a C).

Annotated Bibliography	5%
Lit Review	5%
Theory Section	5%
Research Design	5%
Results	5%
Peer review	5%
Final paper	30%
Oral Presentation	10%
Leadership paper	10%
Faith and Politics paper	10%
Participation	10%

Expectations: We expect students who write the best papers to present these papers at the TN Political Science Association or Scholarship Symposium this spring.

Extracurricular: Students are expected to attend any special political events this semester.

Cheating: Don't do it. Anyone caught cheating receives an automatic "F" for the course and will be referred to the appropriate authorities for further punishment. The department's policy can be found at www.uu.edu/dept/politicalscience/PlagiarismPolicy.cfm. All students are required to

read, print, and sign a copy of the Department's plagiarism policy and then return it on the next class meeting.

Communication Devices: Please turn off all cell phones and other portable electronic devices while in my class. Your life is not so important that you need to answer the phone or text your friend immediately. If found using any such device, I reserve the right to answer the phone and/or read your text message to the class. Moreover, I will confiscate your communication device until the next class meeting. Therefore, if you have an emergency necessitating having the communication device on, please let me know before the class.

Audio/Video Recording: No audio or video recording of classroom activity is permitted without my prior approval. This prohibition includes cellphone camera functions, laptop audio or video functions, and all other digital or analog recording equipment.

Lap top computers: Students are welcome to use lap top computers in my class as long as they are not a distraction to the user or others (e.g., noise, email, internet use not connected to the course, playing games) and it does not create a hazard to others (e.g., extension cord in the aisle).

Special Needs: Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with the instructor the first week of class.

The Syllabus: I reserve the right and prerogative to modify the syllabus in accordance with student and professorial needs. The syllabus should not be construed as a contract.

Schedule

Aug 24 Introduction

Aug 26 Paper Prospectus and plagiarism signed statement due

Aug. 29-31 Civics (Have students design a civics class for Union – define citizenship and Christian view of politics)

Sept. 7-12 Politics and Religion

Sept. 12 Annotated Bibliography due

Sept. 19 Lit Review due

Sept. 26 Theory Section due

Oct 3 Research Design due

Oct. 10 Results due

Oct. 31 Rough draft due

Nov. 7 Peer review of rough draft due

Nov. 14 Final Draft due

Nov. 21 Politics and Religion paper due

Nov. 28-30 Leadership
Leadership paper due

Dec. 2 & 5 Oral presentations

Leadership Books

Burns, James Macgregor. 1982. *Leadership*. Harper Perennial Classics.

Caro, Robert. 2003. *Master of the Senate: The Years of Lyndon Johnson*. Vintage.

Collins, Jim. 2001. *Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap And Others Don't*. NY: Harper Business.

Fenno, Richard. 1978. *Home Style: House Members in Their Districts*. Boston: Little Brown.

-----, 1989. *The Making of a Senator: Dan Quayle*. DC: CQ Press.

-----, 1989. *The Emergence of a Senate Leader: Pete Domenici and the Reagan Budget*. DC: CQ Press.

Gardner, Howard. 1996. *Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership*. NY: Basic Books.

Goodwin, Doris. 2006. *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. NY: Simon & Schuster.

Kellerman, Barbara. 2004. *Bad Leadership: What It Is, How It Happens, Why It Matters*. Harvard Business School Press.

Kennedy, John F. 1956. *Profiles in Courage*. Harper.

Matthews, Chris. 2007. *Life's a Campaign: What Politics Has Taught Me About Friendship, Rivalry, Reputation, and Success*. NY: Random House.

Maxwell, John. 2007. *21 Irrefutable Laws of Leadership*. Thomas Nelson.

McCulloch, David. 1993. *Truman*. NY: Simon & Schuster.

Skowronek, Stephen. 1997. *The Politics That Presidents Make*. Yale University Press.

Biographies of political leaders with approval of the instructor.