

**PSPA 1000-001: INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE**  
**Spring 2012—Oxendine 3235**

**Instructor:** Dr. Kevin S. Freeman  
**Office:** Oxendine 1309  
**Phone:** 521-6447

**Class Hours:** MWF 8:00-8:50 am  
**Office Hours:** MWF 1:30-3:30 pm or by appointment  
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**Course Description:** This course is designed to provide students with an overview and basic understanding of the modern academic discipline of political science. The course reviews different scholarly methods and the major intellectual controversies among scholars of political science. Students will develop a practical working knowledge of facts and ideas that can be applied to political problems in our time. For instance, we will explore the concept of democracy and review and compare the various approaches to representation used in the democratic nations of the world. This is an ideal course for students wanting a general overview of the various specialties in political science.

The format for class meetings will consist of lectures and opportunities for discussion and debate. The instructor will make every effort to relate course concepts to developments taking place in the United States and around the world.

**Course Objectives:**

1. To define the boundaries of the field of Political Science
2. To describe the four main subfields of the discipline
3. To describe the central questions that political scientists investigate related to these fields
4. To define the basic vocabulary and concepts used by political scientists

**Text:** There is one required text for this course: *A Novel Approach to Politics (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition)* by Douglas A. Van Belle and Kenneth M. Mash. It takes a humorous look at politics, and is an easy and enjoyable text to read. I reserve the right to assign additional readings as necessary, and you will be notified with ample warning in the event that this happens. This course will be much more enjoyable (and informative) for both you and your instructor if you are prepared for class discussion. (Remember: a happy instructor is a nice instructor!) I also reserve the right to assign additional readings should the necessity arise.

I will keep ONE copy of the textbook on reserve in the Political Science Student Resource Room in Oxendine 1320-D. Please do NOT take this copy from the room.

**Attendance:** Attendance is expected in this class. It will be very difficult to make a decent grade in this class without regular attendance--many of the test questions will be directly from lecture material and may not necessarily be found in your text. Clicker questions given each day will keep track of attendance and participation.

Students are allowed two absences per semester as religious holidays. If you are observing a religious holiday that falls on an examination day, please notify me **ahead of time** so we can make arrangements. Posthumous notification of absence due to religious observance will result in a grade of zero on said exam.

**Tardiness:** Do not make it a habit of arriving into my class late. While it happens to everyone on occasion, systematic tardiness is unprofessional and, frankly, disrespectful. I will give clicker

questions at the very beginning of most classes—tardy students will lose participation points as a result.

**Classroom Etiquette:** While as a whole I have minimal in-classroom requirements, I do expect some degree of respect to be shown in the classroom environment. This includes having your cell phone OFF or on VIBRATE when in class, not bringing your breakfast or lunch into class, not studying for another test while in my class, and not talking when others are. Systematic violations of this can result in a reduction of grade and/or a dismissal from the classroom. This is a university-level class, and you will be treated as adults. As such, you will be expected to act like adults.

**Laptops:** Laptops are allowed and encouraged in this class. However, I expect you to use them for class-related activities as opposed to checking your Facebook page or tweeting about how cool an instructor I am.

**Office Visits:** You are more than welcome to meet with me at any time that is mutually convenient. My office hours are listed at the top of this syllabus. If these times are not convenient to you, we can easily arrange some other time. Do not assume that office visits are only to address problems you might be having in class. I'm happy to talk about whatever you like, including any difficulties you may be having in class.

**Students with Disabilities:** Any student with a documented disability needing academic adjustments is requested to speak directly to Disability Support Services and the instructor, as early in the semester as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Please contact DSS at **521-6695**. This syllabus is also available in alternative formats upon request. Please call the aforementioned number if you desire this. Do not spring this on me on the day of a test, as you will take the test with the same rules as everyone else.

**Grading:** There will be non-cumulative three examinations—two midterms and a final exam—during the semester. The tests will be a combination of multiple choice questions, true-false, short-answer essays and other methods as I deem fit. The final exam is scheduled for **Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am!**

There will also be ten take-home quizzes scheduled randomly throughout the semester that will keep you honest regarding your readings and may cover material we do not discuss in class. I will drop your **lowest two** of these quiz grades. Due dates for these quizzes will be clearly listed at the top of each quiz, but generally will be due within two classes of them being passed out. Finally, there will be a syllabus quiz that tests you on the course requirements.

Syllabus Quiz.....	25 points
8 Take-Home Book Quizzes (20 points each).....	160 points
Midterm 1 .....	100 points
Midterm 2 .....	100 points
Final Exam.....	100 points
Clicker Questions.....	115 points
<b>TOTAL .....</b>	<b>600 points</b>

**Grading Scale:** 558-600=A; 540-557=A-; 522-539=B+; 498-521=B; 480-497=B-; 462-479=C+; 438-461=C; 420-437=C-; 402-419=D+; 378-401=D; 360-377=D-; < 360=F

The Syllabus Quiz is due on **Friday, January 13<sup>th</sup>**. I hope you are not superstitious.

**Extra Credit:** I do give opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester. However, these opportunities are planned and given by me. Please do not ask for extra credit outside of what I offer to the course as a whole. I may also offer other opportunities as they present themselves.

<b>Date</b>	<b>Event</b>	<b>Extra Credit Points</b>
February 7th, 7:30PM	Distinguished Speaker: <i>Frank Warren</i>	10
Various	Attendance at 3 PLS movie nights	10

**Make-up Policy:** All graded assignment dates are clearly indicated on this syllabus. If these dates do not fit into your schedule, you should consider dropping this course or taking a different section. **As such, no make-up exams will be given except in cases of serious, documented emergencies or official university-sanctioned events.** The documentation must have contact information that allows me to call and verify your story. Vacations, birthdays, oversleeping, eye doctor appointments, and/or hangovers do not qualify as emergencies. Note that what qualifies as a valid excuse is at the discretion of the instructor.

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty of any variety will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to, cheating on an exam, unauthorized collaboration on an assignment, and plagiarism. Any instance coming to the attention of the instructor will result in the assignment of an "F" grade for the course, and notification of appropriate Deans. In order to ensure that you understand what constitutes plagiarism and academic dishonesty, please read the complete description of the UNCP policy on academic dishonesty, which is available in the student handbook and online at <http://www.uncp.edu/studentconduct/honor/>.

**Clickers:** You will be assigned a clicker on the first or second day of class. Be sure to note the number on your clicker, and **use the same one each day!** Clickers will be left in the classroom at the end of each day.

**Disclaimer:** We all know how boring long, droning lectures can be. Teachers can learn a few things from class discussion, too. But above all, I want this class to be both FUN and INTERESTING for all of us!

**It is your responsibility to keep up with when assignments are due and when tests and quizzes might be given. Just because I don't announce a test or quiz ahead of time does not mean that I am going to push it back. To be safe, check your syllabus regularly.**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Readings</b>
Jan 9	Course Introduction and Syllabus Review	---
Jan 11	An Introduction to Political Science	---
Jan 13	Political Science Theory and Ideology	Chapter 1
<b>Jan 16</b>	<b>No Class: MLK, Jr. Holiday</b>	---
Jan 18-20	Political Science Theory and Ideology	Chapter 1
Jan 23-25	Why Government?	Chapter 2
Jan 27-30	Governing Society	Chapter 3
Feb 1-6	Economics and Politics	Chapter 4
Feb 8-10	Government Institution and Structure	Chapter 5
<b>Feb 13</b>	<b>Midterm Examination #1</b>	---
Feb 15-20	Executives	Chapter 6
Feb 22-27	Legislatures and Political Parties	Chapter 7
Feb 29-Mar 2	Bureaucracies	Chapter 8
<b>Mar 5-9</b>	<b>No Class! Spring Break!</b>	---
Mar 12-14	Judiciaries	Chapter 9
<b>Mar 16</b>	<b>No Class! Instructor Out of Town!</b>	---
Mar 19-23	Public Opinion and Interest Groups	Lectures
<b>Mar 26</b>	<b>Midterm Examination #2</b>	---
Mar 28-30	The Democratic Ideal: Elections and Voting	Chapter 10
Apr 2-4	The Role of the Media in Politics	Chapter 11
<b>Apr 6</b>	<b>No Class: Good Friday!</b>	---
Apr 9-13	Political Culture	Chapter 13
Apr 16-20	International Politics	Chapter 12
Apr 23-27	The Study of Politics	Chapter 15

### Important Dates

**Syllabus Quiz: Due January 13th**  
**Final Exam: Monday, April 30<sup>th</sup> at 8:00 am!**