Political Science 800: Political Science as a Discipline and Profession
Fall 2018
Professor Nadav Shelef
Thursday 8:30-9:45, 422 North Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3-4:30, and by appointment
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Course Material available at the canvas.wisc.edu site
Classlist: polisci800-1-f18@lists.wisc.edu

Overview

This course introduces political science as a discipline and a profession. For our review of the discipline, we will consider a variety of approaches to the study of policies. For our review of the profession, we will discuss matters both broad (e.g., professional development) and narrow (e.g., obtaining research grants) that are of interest to those building professional careers with a political science Ph.D.

The purpose of the course is to provide an orientation to basic features of scholarly life. We cannot examine all the various dimensions of this life in a one-credit seminar. The goal is, more modestly, to introduce you to some of the issues—and some of our faculty—at an early point in your scholarly career. Through the course readings and discussion, you will begin to form your own perspective on political science as a discipline and profession.

Requirements

Active Participation. The quality of this seminar depends on the active participation of all students. Everyone is expected to digest the required readings before class and to participate actively in discussion. It is essential to have a good understanding of each reading—not only individually, but, where appropriate, how they fit together.

To facilitate this process, prior to each week's class, you will post 1–2 questions or comments related to that week's readings on the class discussion board, available on the course website at Canvas. The deadline for posting questions is 4 pm the day before the seminar. I will share these comments and questions with our guest faculty member before class. Please come to class prepared to discuss your comment/question, plus that of the person who posted just before you on the discussion board (if you posted first, the person who posted last).

Workshops and Colloquia. Much of the work of political science takes place in workshops and colloquia, with visiting speakers and discussion of written work. I want you to get in the habit of attending these. You will already be attending the workshop or colloquium for your primary subfield. I ask you to also attend a) at least one meeting of a workshop or colloquium for some other subfield, and at least one meeting of some other group (MAD, Political Behavior, the seminar series for an area center, etc.). By the last day of class, you should turn in a four page paper, single-spaced, reflecting on the process by which ideas are exchanged and developed in
different corners of the academy and assessing what you find most and least effective. Please upload these to the Canvas website. In addition, I would like you to meet with one outside speaker during the semester. Please also, before the last day of class, write up a statement about the speaker, your meeting, and the presentation. That statement should be one page or less.

**Final Grade.** Your final grade for the seminar will be determined as follows: 50% for class participation and advance comments, 50% for attendance of colloquia and workshops and the related papers.

**Readings and Schedule**

Most readings are available through the Canvas site for this class; a few are instead available at the web addresses below. A general disclaimer: The substantive articles assigned for this course are not necessarily the “great” or “best” works in a given area. Rather, they illustrate a given perspective, issue, or type of research.

**I. Political Science as a Discipline**

**September 6: Introduction**

**September 13: Positivism and Behavioralism**

Guest: Jessica Weeks

**Required**


**Recommended**


**September 20: Rational Choice Theory**

Guest: Andy Kydd

**Required**


Recommended

September 27: Concepts and Cultures
Guest: Erica Simmons

Required

Recommended

October 4: Political Theory
Guest: Dan Kapust

Required

Recommended

II. Political Science as a Profession

October 11: The Dissertation
Guest: Mark Copelovitch

Required

Recommended
Review a few of the recent winners of APSA dissertation awards. (The 8 awards are listed at http://www.apsanet.org/PROGRAMS/APSA-Awards. Follow the navigation for each award to see past winners. Dissertations can be found through the UW library web site.)

**October 18: Professional Development**
Guest: Eleanor Powell

**Required**
Jennifer Benz. 2016. "Reflect, Then Prepare for a Career Outside the Academy," *PS* 49(3).
Explore versatilephd.com (UW-Madison is a member so you should have access)
Individual Development Plans: https://grad.wisc.edu/pd/idp/

**Recommended**

**October 25: Writing Well and Strategies for Publishing**
Guest: Ryan Owens

**Required**

**Recommended**

**November 1: Making the Most of Graduate School**
Guest: Barry Burden:
Required


Wilson, Rick. 2014. "Advice to Graduate Students from a Faculty Member." [https://rkwrice.wordpress.com/2014/06/10/advice-to-graduate-students-from-a-faculty-member/](https://rkwrice.wordpress.com/2014/06/10/advice-to-graduate-students-from-a-faculty-member/)

Advisor-Advisee meeting guidelines

**November 8: Finding Financial Support**

Guest: Aili Tripp

Required

Recommended

UW Research & Sponsored Programs web site. [http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/](http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/)

“Dissertation Proposal Resources.” [http://iis.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop](http://iis.berkeley.edu/DissPropWorkshop)

**November 15: Becoming a Teacher**

Guest: John Zumbrunnen

Required

Edward M. Bumila. 2010. “Graduate Students as Independent Instructors: Seven Things to Know about Teaching Your Own Course while in Graduate School.” *PS* 44: 557-60.

Recommended

Teaching and Learning Excellence at UW: [https://mtle.wisc.edu/](https://mtle.wisc.edu/)
The Discussion Project: [https://discussion.education.wisc.edu/](https://discussion.education.wisc.edu/)

**November 22: No Class for Thanksgiving Holiday**
November 29: Peeking Ahead to the Job Market (and Tenure)
Guest: Yoshiko Herrera

Required
CVs of recent successful ABD candidates, to be provided.

Recommended

December 6: Ethics and Collaboration
Guest: Rikhil Bhavnani

Required

Recommended
Academic Misconduct policies at UW (Student Assistance & Judicial Affairs).
<http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html>

December 13: Bias and Representation in the Discipline
Guest: Lisa Martin

Required
National Center for Faculty Development and Diversity, Mentoring Map

Recommended
<http://www.apsanet.org/imptest/womeninpoliticalscience.pdf>