
SYLLABUS

POLS 489: Senior Seminar in Political Science

Spring 2012 – North Dakota State University

Instructor: Eric Raile, Ph.D.

Email: Eric.Raile@ndsu.edu

Office: 117 Criminal Justice & Public Policy Building

Office hours: 11:00am-12:00pm (M); 3:30-4:30pm (Tu)

Class: Tu 6:00-8:30pm

Dates: Jan. 10 – May 8, 2012

Class location: CJPP 18

Course Description: This capstone course requires students to apply the knowledge and skills they have acquired during their university studies in political science. The course is structured as a seminar with a mixed format of discussion, lectures, and activities and requires significant self-direction and participation by students.

Official Description: Capstone experience. Emphasis on integrative skills needed to interrelate the concepts of the discipline.

Course Objectives: The primary goal of the course is to facilitate student application of the knowledge and skills acquired during university studies in political science. Relevant skills include analysis, critical thinking, integration of information, synthesis of ideas, presentation, and writing. Additionally, in this edition of the course students will acquire new knowledge and skills in the area of policy analysis.

Readings: Students are required to purchase and read the following books for this course. The books are available at the NDSU bookstore and other outlets.

CQ Press (Ed.). 2012. *Global Issues: Selections from CQ Researcher (2011 Edition)*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Kraft, Michael E., and Scott R. Furlong. 2009. *Public Policy: Politics, Analysis, and Alternatives (3rd Edition)*. Washington, DC: CQ Press.

Please be sure to purchase the appropriate editions of the book listed. Political science textbook revisions are often necessary to reflect current events and pursuant theoretical advancements. Access to the Internet, which is provided to you by the University, is also a requirement of this course. The instructor may post links or documents of interest on the Blackboard website for the course (<https://bb.ndsu.nodak.edu/>). Please contact the instructor if you have difficulties accessing the Blackboard content. The lectures often will incorporate material from outside the textbook. Students are responsible for all material in the textbook readings *and* all material presented in class. Please complete readings *prior* to the class meeting listed on the schedule. Please also note that the course schedule on the following pages may be subject to slight adjustments throughout the semester.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic(s)	Reading(s)	Assignment Due
Jan. 10 (Tu).....	Course overview; public policymaking		
Jan. 17 (Tu).....	Public policymaking and administration	Ch. 1-2 (Kraft & Furlong)	
Jan. 24 (Tu).....	Public policy theories; decision makers	Ch. 3 (K&F)	
Jan. 31 (Tu).....	Public policy theories; economic policy.....	Ch. 7 (K&F)	Project topic
Feb. 7 (Tu).....	Market-based approaches; regulation.....	Ch. 9 (K&F)	
Feb. 14 (Tu).....	Political feasibility/obstacles; economic policy	Ch. 10 (CQ Press); Ch. 12 (CQ)	
Feb. 21 (Tu).....	Communication, symbols, media		Project part 1
Feb. 28 (Tu).....	Public opinion and policies; health care policy	Ch. 8 (K&F)	
Mar. 6 (Tu).....	Policy analysis.....	Ch. 4-5 (K&F)	
Mar. 13 (Tu).....	NO CLASS (SPRING BREAK)		
Mar. 20 (Tu).....	Policy analysis.....	Ch. 6 (K&F).....	Project part 2
Mar. 27 (Tu).....	Democratization policy	Ch. 1 (CQ); Ch. 4 (CQ)	
Apr. 3 (Tu).....	Education policies; press freedom policy	Ch. 10 (K&F); Ch. 15 (CQ)	
Apr. 10 (Tu).....	Foreign, security, and immigration policy.....	Ch. 12 (K&F); Ch. 13 (CQ)	
Apr. 17 (Tu).....	Environmental and energy policy.....	Ch. 11 (K&F).....	Full project
Apr. 24 (Tu).....			Policy project presentations
May 1 (Tu).....			Policy project presentations
May 8 (Tu).....			Policy project presentations

Policies, Expectations, and Student Responsibilities

Assignments and Attendance: After missing a class meeting, students must borrow notes from their classmates. The instructor typically must excuse a student in advance for the student potentially to receive full credit for any graded assignment. Late assignments are subject to a 15% deduction if not submitted by the deadline and an additional 15% deduction for each day thereafter they are late (i.e., 30% total deduction the day after the due date, 45% two days after, etc.). The instructor will only excuse this deduction rule in the case of rare, significant occurrences (e.g., serious illness, death in the family). Papers must be neat and typed (11- or 12-point font) and must be submitted electronically within the Blackboard site for this course.

Students are responsible for knowing all information contained in this syllabus and announced in class. Students are required to check their email regularly and to maintain electronic copies of submitted assignments until the course is completed. Students are expected to observe common courtesies (e.g., no ringing cell phones, no chatting, no reading outside materials during class). The use of laptop computers and other electronic devices (e.g., cellphones, tablets) by students in class is prohibited unless the instructor has explicitly stated that an electronic device may be used for a particular task within a particular class period. Unless otherwise specified, students are to complete all assignments individually.

Students with Disabilities: Any student with a disability or with special needs relevant to this course is encouraged to speak with the instructor as soon as possible. NDSU Disability Services are available to assist students, as well (see <http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/counseling/disability.shtml>).

Academic Honesty: The academic community operates on the basis of honesty, integrity, and fair play. NDSU Policy 335: Code of Academic Responsibility and Conduct applies to cases in which cheating, plagiarism, or other academic misconduct has occurred in an instructional context. Students found guilty of academic misconduct are subject to penalties, up to and possibly including suspension and expulsion. Student academic misconduct records are maintained by the Office of Registration and Records. Informational resources about academic honesty for students are available at: <http://www.ndsu.edu/academichonesty>. Policing for plagiarism and other forms of cheating in this course will be strong and penalties may be severe as such behavior degrades the learning environment for everyone.

Veterans: Veterans and student soldiers with special circumstances or who are activated are encouraged to notify the instructor in advance.

PLAGIARISM: While citing basic factual information that could be found in many different resources is not mandatory, you **MUST** cite the source whenever you are using fairly unique information or statistics or using someone else's ideas. This also applies to tables, graphs, etc. Additionally, anytime you are using someone else's exact words (beyond three or four words) you **MUST** place those words in quotation marks. Alternatively, you may set off direct quotations by indentation if the quotations are long. Failure to abide by these guidelines constitutes plagiarism.

Grading

The instructor does not “give” grades; each student *earns* his or her grade. A student begins the semester with 0 points and must pass the relevant cutoff to earn a particular grade. Students must pose grading questions within 72 hours after receiving graded assignments in order to receive consideration.

The instructor will evaluate submitted assignments and assign grades based on evidence of accuracy, responsiveness, completeness, critical thinking, ability to reflect upon and integrate different sources of information, and writing skills.

Point distribution

Participation.....	50 points
Policy project topic (Jan. 31).....	20 points
Policy project part 1 (Feb. 21).....	50 points
Policy project part 2 (March 20)	40 points
Full policy project (Apr. 17).....	60 points
Project presentation (Apr. 24 – May 8).....	30 points
<i>Total</i>	<i>250 points</i>

Grading cutoffs

250 – 225 pts.	100.0 – 90.0%.....	A
224 – 200 pts.	< 90.0 – 80.0%.....	B
199 – 175 pts.	< 80.0 – 70.0%.....	C
174 – 150 pts.	< 70.0 – 60.0%.....	D
< 150 pts.	< 60.0%	F

In-class activities

We will engage in a number of (typically unannounced) in-class activities throughout the semester, possibly including group discussions, brief response papers, and quizzes. The quizzes will not be difficult if you have completed the required reading prior the class in question. Reading ahead of time is also useful because it reinforces learning and allows you to contribute to class discussions and activities. If you are not present to complete an in-class activity, you will not be able to make up that activity regardless of the reason for your absence. However, your lowest in-class activity score will be dropped at the end of the semester. The remaining scores will count toward the participation portion of your grade.

Formatting References

Students are required to use in-line references in the author-date manner, which is common in the social sciences. The *Chicago Manual of Style* serves as a useful resource for this type of referencing (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html). The student may use the examples below as a guide, though they differ slightly from the manual in some cases. In the author-date system, a summary reference is followed by parentheses that contain the author(s) and date of the publication, while a direct quotation contains that information plus a page number. For example:

This is a summary of the author's argument (Jones 2001).

"This is a direct quotation" (Smith and Jones 2002, 130).

The following are examples of how references may appear in the references section of a paper:

Book Example

Smith, John, and Mike R. Jones. 2003. *Book Name*. Publisher's City: Publisher's Name.

Book Chapter in Edited Volume

Jones, Mike R. 2001. "Chapter Name." In *Book Name*, ed. Mike R. Jones and John Smith. Publisher's City: Publisher's Name.

Conference Paper

Jones, Mike R. "Paper Name." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Organization Name, City, State/Country, Date(s).

Internet Source

Johnson, Bill. Accessed August 24, 2008. "Article or Webpage Name." Available online at <http://www.websitename.com/location/>.

Journal Article

Smith, John, and Mike R. Jones. 2002. "Article Name." *Journal Name* 32 (4): 127-44.

Magazine Article

Smith, John. 2000. "Article Name." *Magazine Name*, Date, Page number(s).

Newspaper Article

Johnson, Bill. 2005. "Article Name." *Newspaper Name*, Date, Newspaper Section.