

POLS 4920: Senior Seminar

Dr. Keith E. Lee Jr.

Spring 2019

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Office Hours: MW 2:00-3:15, TR 11:00-12:15, or by appt.

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Class Hours: MWF 11:00-11:50

Class Room: A & S 2-39

Course Description¹

This class is designed to be a capstone to your political science journey at Georgia College. All of you completed *POLS 2101: Introduction to Political Science* early in your course work and you were exposed to a variety of ideas and subfields within the discipline. However, along the way you likely chose a path (e.g., pre-law, international relations, American politics, or public administration) and took courses focused on that area. This course aims to it all together by exposing you to the various ways political scientists analyze politics by going to the core of the discipline: the science of politics. As your journey ends it is my hope that you leave Georgia College with a deeper understanding of what the field of political science has to offer.

This class is also designed to let you explore a topic of your choice. Ideally, you will have found throughout your course work a topic or subfield that interests you enough to devote a large amount of time. This being the case, you will need to identify a topic and a research question by the third week of class and you will spend the remainder of the course answering the question empirically. We will complete this assignment as a group working through the writing process step-by-step. This will be an intensive exercise and you will be expected to devote an appreciable amount of your time to this project. This research can then be submitted to a conference for presentation (I recommend the Georgia Political Science Association meeting in November) or to a journal of undergraduate research.

Course Readings

- **Required** Baglione, Lisa A. 2016. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*.
- **Recommended** Marsh, David and Gerry Stoker. 2010. *Theory and Methods in Political Science* 3rd Edition.

¹I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus at any time. Students will be notified when changes are made.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester you will be able to:

- recall key concepts and terms from the field of political science;
- craft a literature review that synthesizes, rather than summarizes, academic research;
- generate an answerable research question and at least one testable hypothesis;
- develop a research design and conduct original, empirical analysis;
- write a final report in the form a research paper.

Course Assignments

Career Planning Milestones (Due April 19): All students wishing to pass the course must complete the milestones outlined below.

Senior Exit Exam: All students must take the senior exit exam in order to pass the class. Students must [register in the testing center](#) by Feb. 14.

Research Paper Recipe Assignments: Baglione has provided eight recipes to assist students with the research writing process. The recipes will help you piece together the research paper that you must submit at the end of the term. You must bring three copies to class on assigned peer review days to get credit for the recipe assignments.

- Recipe 1: The Research Question (Due January 25)
- Recipe 2: The Annotated Bibliography (Due February 15)
- Recipe 3: The Literature Review (Due March 1)
- Recipe 4: Model & Hypothesis Section (Due March 1)
- Recipe 5: Revising & Editing (Due March 15)
- Recipe 6: Research Design (Due March 29)
- Recipe 7: Analysis & Assessment (Due April 12)
- Recipe 8: Conclusion, Introduction, & Title (Due April 19)

Exam (March 4): The exam will be a 50-min in-class exam consisting of short answer and essay questions designed to assess your ability to recall key terms and concepts related to the theories and approaches of political science.

Research Paper (Due April 21): The paper must conform to standard formatting (12 point font, 1 inch margins, and double spaced) and follow the [APSA citation style](#). The final paper should be between 20-25 pages (excluding the cover page, references, and appendices).

Paper Presentation (Multiple Due Dates): You will deliver a presentation to the class on your research paper.

Article Analyses (May 6): I will assign five journal articles for you to analyze and critique.

Specification Grading

All of your assignments will be graded as Sat/Unsat. The purpose for this is to (hopefully) avoid the subjectivity of grading and to save you the urge to email asking why your paper was a 93 instead of a 97 or an 84 instead of a 90. Numerical grading, even with a strong rubric, is challenging and often inconsistent. Therefore, we will use specification grading and you get to determine your final grade in the class by completing one of the following bundles. The bundles must be completed as prescribed, i.e., you do not get to swap assignments. You **MUST** complete the bundle as specified. Note, I will give students the opportunity to revise and resubmit assignments that are borderline (which I realize is subjective, but I am doing my best). Students that receive an “R & R” will be given detailed feedback on how to make their assignment satisfactory and will be given one week to resubmit after the feedback is delivered.

| Bundle | Satisfactory Grade on: |
|--------|---|
| A | Research Paper, Presentation, Exam, Analyze 4 Articles, Recipes 1-8 |
| B | Research Paper, Presentation, Exam, Analyze 2 Articles, Recipes 1, 3, 4, 6, & 7 |
| C | Research Paper, Presentation, Recipes 1, 4, & 6 |
| D | Research Paper, Presentation |
| F | None of the above |

Course Policies:

- **Office Hours and Contact:** Office hours are stated on the front page of the syllabus. I will be in my office to assist students during the times listed UNLESS an emergency arises in which case I will notify students.
- **Late Policy:** No assignments will be accepted after the due date. Every assignment will be posted with ample time to complete them, thus a medical/family emergency on the due date is not an acceptable excuse. Get your work done early and you should not have any issues.
- **Attendance and Absences:** This class does not have an attendance policy.
- **Academic dishonesty:** Cheating, including plagiarism, will not be tolerated and will result in an “F” in the course. This class will use plagiarism detection via GeorgiaView. Furthermore, you are not allowed to use a paper you submitted in another course. You are free to build on an idea explored in another course, but the writing must be original.
- Please read these additional [common syllabus statements](#) provided by Georgia College.

Career Planning Milestones

Georgia College expects undergraduate students to complete the Career Planning Milestones, a four-year plan of career-planning activities to ensure a successful transition to future internships, graduate/professional schools, and careers. For more information about the Career Planning Milestones, visit www.gcsu.edu/career/milestones. You will complete foundational Career Planning Milestones as outside-of-class requirements in this course.

Resume/CV Review with Career Center

Resume/CV Review Completed by April 19, 2019: Schedule a Resume/CV Review appointment or drop-in for a Resume/CV Review with the Career Center. To schedule an appointment, select Career Center under the “Schedule an Appointment” menu in Unify. Under the following options menu, select “Resume/CV Review” service option for Career Center availability. Career Center also offers 15-minute Resume/CV Review Drop-In Hours Monday through Thursday from 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Mock Interview with Career Center

Mock Interview Appointment Completed by April 30, 2018: Schedule a “Mock Interview for Class” Appointment by March 1, 2018. Select Career Center under the “Schedule an Appointment” menu in Unify. Under the following options menu, select “Mock Interview for Class” service option for Career Center availability. The Career Center cannot guarantee availability for mock interview appointments after the scheduling deadline. Student should have an active Career Connection account and can activate their account by clicking the “Career Connection-Student” link in Unify and completing their profile. The Career Center DOES NOT offer a drop-in service for mock interviews – an appointment is required.

How to make an appointment with the Career Center:

Online in Unify, stop by 110 Lanier Hall, or call 478-445-5384

Class Schedule²

M&S refers to Marsh and Stoker. The book is recommended, but not required. I list the chapter for those that choose to read the book.

Week 01, 01/14 - 01/18: Course Introduction

- M: What is Political Science? (M&S Introduction)
- W: Developing a Research Question (Baglione Chs. 1 & 2)

Week 02, 01/21 - 01/25: Theories & Approaches I

- M: **No Class: MLK JR Holiday**
- W: Behavioral Analysis & Rational Choice (M&S Ch. 1 & 2)

Recipe 1 Due 5pm Friday

²The class is scheduled for MWF. However, we will only meet as a class on MW. Fridays will be designated research days and I will be in my office from 11:00-11:50am to assist students. These office hours are outside my normal office and reserved for POLS 4920 students.

Week 03, 01/28 - 02/01: Theories & Approaches II

- M: The Annotated Bibliography (Baglione 3)
- W: Institutionalism, Constructivism, and Interpretive Approaches (M&S Chs. 3 & 4)

Week 04, 02/04 - 02/08: Theories & Approaches III

- M: Political Psychology & Normative Theory (M&S Chs. 5 & 8)
- W: **No Class**

Week 05, 02/11 - 02/15: Theories & Approaches IV

- M: Feminism & Marxism (M&S Chs. 6 & 7)
- W: Recipe 2 Peer Review **Bring 3 Copies to Class**

Recipe 2 Due 5pm Friday

Week 06, 02/18 - 02/22: Developing Your Argument

- M: The Literature Review (Baglione Ch. 4)
- W: The Thesis, Model, & Hypothesis (Baglione Ch. 5)

Week 07, 02/25 - 03/01: Methods & Research Design I

- M: Ontology, Epistemology, & Meta-Theoretical Issues (M&S Chs. 9 & 10)
- W: Recipe 3 & 4 Peer Review **Bring 3 Copies to Class**

Recipes 3 & 4 Due 5pm Friday

Week 08, 03/04 - 03/08: Exam Week

- M: Midterm Exam
- W: Revising & Editing (Baglione Ch. 6)

Week 09, 03/11 - 03/15: Methods & Research Design II

- M: The Research Design (Baglione Ch. 7)
- W: The Challenge of Research Design (M&S Ch. 11)

Recipe 5 Due 5pm Friday

Week 10, 03/18 - 03/22: Spring Break

Week 11, 03/25 - 03/29: Methods & Research Design III

- M: Analysis & Assessment (Baglione Ch. 8)
- W: Recipe 6 Peer Review **Bring 3 Copies to Class**

Recipe 6 Due 5pm Friday

Week 12, 04/01 - 04/05: Methods & Research Design IV

- M: Quant vs. Qual (M&S Chs. 12 & 13)
- W: Comparative and Experimental Methods (M&S Chs. 14 & 15)

Week 13, 04/08 - 04/12: All Good Things

- M: The Relevance of Political Science (M&S Ch. 16)
- W: Recipe 7 Peer Review **Bring 3 Copies**

Recipe 7 Due 5pm Friday

Week 14, 04/15 - 04/19: Must Come to an End

- M: Conclusion, Introduction, and Title (Baglione Ch. 9)
- W: Final Peer Review **Bring 3 Copies of Whole Paper to Class**

Deadline to Complete Career Planning Milestones Recipe 8 Due 5pm Friday Final Paper
Due 9pm Sunday

Week 15, 04/22 - 04/26: Presentations

- M: Presentations
- W: Presentations

Week 16, 04/29 - 05/03: Presentations

- M: Presentations
- W: Presentations

Week 17, 05/06 - 05/10: Presentations

- M: Presentations