

# POLS 4920: Senior Seminar

Dr. Keith E. Lee Jr.

Spring 2018

E-mail: [keith.lee@gcsu.edu](mailto:keith.lee@gcsu.edu)

Office Hours: TR 2:00-4:30pm or by appt.

Office: A & S 2-09

Web: [keithleejr.com](http://keithleejr.com)

Class Hours: TR 11:00am - 12:15pm

Class Room: A & S 2-74

---

## Course Description<sup>1</sup>

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 returns to the original concepts and ideas that you were initially exposed to as a means to bring your journey to an end. The hope is that these terms and concepts will have a richer meaning now than they did semesters ago when you were first exposed to them. Furthermore, 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. However, I have set aside class time for writing and have given you a couple of classes "off" so you can spend time writing. 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.

## Required Readings

- Baglione, Lisa A. 2016. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*.
- Van Belle, Douglas A. 2016. *A Novel Approach to Politics: Introducing Political Science Through Books, Movies, and Popular Culture*. 4th Edition.

---

<sup>1</sup>I 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 30):** 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. 15.

**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.

- Recipe 1: The Research Question (Due February 1)
- Recipe 2: The Annotated Bibliography (Due February 13)
- Recipe 3: The Literature Review (Due March 1)
- Recipe 4: Model & Hypothesis Section (Due March 15)
- Recipe 5: Revising & Editing (Due March 29)
- Recipe 6: Research Design (Due April 12)
- Recipe 7: Analysis & Assessment (Due May 1)
- Recipe 8: Conclusion, Introduction, & Title (Due May 3)

**End of Chapter Exercises (Multiple Due Dates):** The end of chapter exercises are simple assessments to ensure you read and engage with the course material. Exam questions will be taken from these exercises. The due dates for the exercise will be due before our class meeting where the chapter is discussed.

**Exam #1 (March 15):** The first exam will be a one hour in-class exam consisting of short answer and essay questions designed to assess your ability to recall key terms and concepts from Van Belle chapters 1-9.

**Exam #2 (May 3):** The second exam will be a one hour in-class exam consisting of short answer and essay questions designed to assess your ability to recall key terms and concepts from Van Belle chapters 10-15.

**Research Paper (Due May 11):** The paper will be due the Friday of finals week, but if you keep up with the recipe assignments you’ll easily have it finished the last week of classes. The paper must conform to standard formatting (12 point font, 1 inch margins, and double spaced) and follow the [APSA citation style](#).

## Specification Grading

Specification grading is something I am trying for the first time this semester. All of your assignments will be graded as Pass/Fail and you will know exactly what is required for a passing grade. 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. For example, if you complete twelve EOC exercises, the recipe assignments, and the final exam with a “Sat” you will still fail the course. You **MUST** complete the bundle as specified. Finally, 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	Any ten EOC exercises, ALL recipe assignments, Both Exams, & Research Paper
B	Any five EOC exercises, Recipes 2-4, Both Exams, & Research Paper
C	Both Exams & Research Paper
D	Research Paper
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:** Attendance is mandatory for this class. Students completing the A bundle must have no more than 2 absences; B bundle no more than 3 absences; C bundle no more than 4 absences. Five or more absences will result in a “D” for the course as long as the paper is written.
- **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.
- 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](http://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 30, 2018: 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. and various Resume Review Days in which no appointment is required. The following are Spring 2018 Resume Review Days:

- January 29 from 10:00am-4:00pm – 110 Lanier Hall
- January 30 from 10:00am-4:00pm – 110 Lanier Hall
- February 13 from 12:00pm-4:00pm – Health Sciences 3rd Floor Student Commons
- March 5 from 10:00am-4:00pm – 110 Lanier Hall
- April 11 from 10:00am-4:00pm – 110 Lanier Hall

### 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 Schedule

\*Note: I do call on students regularly asking questions from the text. Rather than give quizzes this semester, I will use these opportunities to assess your preparation. If you are not able to answer basic questions, thus indicating you are not prepared, you will be asked to leave and will receive an absence for that day's class.

### Week 01, 01/15 - 01/19: Course Introduction

- Tuesday: Course Syllabus; Baglione Chapter 1
- Thursday: Baglione Chapter 2

### Week 02, 01/22 - 01/26: Foundations in Government

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 1 (EOC 1 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Van Belle Chapter 2 (EOC 2 Due 11am)

### Week 03, 01/29 - 02/02: The Annotated Bibliography

- Tuesday: Baglione 3 (Recipe 1 Due 11am)
- Thursday: In-Class Writing Day

### Week 04, 02/05 - 02/09: Government's Role

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 3 (EOC 3 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Van Belle Chapter 4 (EOC 4 Due 11am)

### Week 05, 02/12 - 02/16: The Literature Review

- Tuesday: Baglione 4 (Recipe 2 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Van Belle Chapter 5 (EOC 5 Due 11am)

### Week 06, 02/19 - 02/23: Structures and Institutions Part I

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 6 (EOC 6 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Van Belle Chapter 7 (EOC 7 Due 11am)

### Week 07, 02/26 - 03/02: The Thesis, Model, and Hypothesis

- Tuesday: Baglione Chapter 5
- Thursday: Career Center Visit (Recipe 3 Due 5pm)

### Week 08, 03/05 - 03/09: Structures and Institutions Part II

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 8 (EOC 8 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Van Belle Chapter 9 (EOC 9 Due 11am)

**Week 09, 03/12 - 03/16: Revising and Editing**

- Tuesday: Exam #1
- Thursday: Baglione 6 (Recipe 4 Due 11am)

**Week 10, 03/19 - 03/23: Spring Break**

**Week 11, 03/26 - 03/30: International Relations**

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 12 (EOC 12 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Baglione 7 (Recipe 5 Due 11am)

**Week 12, 04/02 - 04/06: By the people; for the people**

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 10 (EOC 10 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Van Belle Chapter 11 (EOC 11 Due 11am)

**Week 13, 04/09 - 04/13: Political Culture**

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 14 (EOC 14 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Baglione 8 (Recipe 6 Due 11am)

**Week 14, 04/16 - 04/20: Analysis and Assessment I**

- Tuesday: Van Belle Chapter 15 (EOC 15 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Exam #2

**Week 15, 04/23 - 04/27: Analysis and Assessment II**

- Tuesday: In-Class Writing Day
- Thursday: Independent Writing Day

**Week 16, 04/30 - 05/04: Wrapping Up**

- Tuesday: Baglione 9 (Recipe 7 Due 11am)
- Thursday: Independent Writing Day (Recipe 8 Due 5pm)

**Week 17, 05/07 - 05/11: Final Exam Week**