

University of Toronto
Department of Political Science
POL101
The Real World of Politics
Fall 2020

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Course description

Welcome to POL 101, The Real World of Politics! This course examines politics through the major themes, issues, and questions that have defined the 21st Century. Students will engage the concepts and debates that anchor the field of political science through lectures and discussions that directly address contemporary political problems and issues such as climate change, coronavirus, elections and electoral systems, liberalism, race and racism, terrorism, democracy, social movements, political participation, and empire. Students will also learn important academic skills in this course, including how to take notes, how to read and think critically, and how to write. This is a terrific course to take in first year because our TAs are specially trained to teach writing, and the course assignments are also designed to teach critical thinking and writing.

How it will work

This class will be conducted entirely online. Except for office hours, the entire course will be asynchronous. However, the course will require consistent engagement each week.

Each week, students will 1) complete the assigned readings, 2) watch a lecture from Professor Jung, 3) submit a short assignment, and 4) participate in tutorial group discussion boards.

You are free to do these activities at whatever moment during the week suits you, but a typical student schedule might be:

Monday – Read assigned readings and watch lecture

Tuesday & Wednesday – Complete and submit weekly assignment (Due Wednesdays at 5PM EST)

Thursday & Friday – Discuss weekly topic on discussion board with tutorial group and TA. (Discussion boards close for the week on Friday at 5PM EST.)

Weekly Course Schedule:

Day	Activity
Friday	• Lecture and assignments posted in advance for the following week
Monday	• Week officially begins • Most students expected to watch lecture and complete readings • Discussion boards open for questions and conversations about the week's reading and lecture
Wednesday	• Weekly assignment is due by 5PM EST (submitted via Quercus) • Weekly assignment answer key is posted on Quercus (after deadline)
Thursday	• TA posts discussion question in tutorial group discussion board (Some TAs may post Wednesday night) • Most TAs hold office hours
Friday	• Last day to post in discussion board for the week. <i>Posts after 5pm EST will not count toward weekly participation grades.</i> • (Next week's lecture and assignments posted)
Monday	• TA returns last week's assignment • New week begins, discussion boards open

How it will be organized

Tutorial Groups

Students in the course are divided into tutorial groups. Each tutorial group is assigned a TA, who will grade your weekly assignments, moderate discussion boards, and make themselves available to you for office hours.

TA Office hours

Each TA will host drop-in office hours using [BbCollaborate](#) for one hour each week. Office hours are student-led – you should come with a question, regarding the readings, lectures, or assignments in the course. Office hours are open; if you prefer to speak to a TA privately, you should contact them by email.

Your TA will also be available to answer questions via your tutorial discussion board. You are encouraged to use the discussion board to ask questions and share ideas with the other students in your tutorial.

If you would like more information about using Bb Collaborate, you can view this page: <https://qstudents.utoronto.ca/blackboard-collaborate-ultra-student-use/>

Contacting your TA

In addition to attending weekly office hours, you can get help from your TA by either 1) asking them questions on the tutorial discussion board, 2) sending them a private message on Quercus, or 3) sending them an email.

In general, you should ask questions about the course material on the discussion board so that the rest of the tutorial can benefit from your question and the TA's response.

GRADING SCHEME

Assignment	Percentage	Due date
Weekly Notes Assignment	90% (10% x 9 assignments)	Wednesdays by 5PM EST (Submissions after 5PM EST will not be accepted.)
Discussion Board Posts	10%	In order to count as having posted in a given week, students must make at least one substantive post <i>before</i> Friday at 5PM EST.

Weekly notes assignment - 90% (10% x 9 assignments)

The largest portion of your grade in POL 101 will come from completing nine 'notes' assignments. There will be eleven (11) weekly notes assignments. You must only complete nine (9). If you write more than nine, the tenth and eleventh *will not be graded*.

You will not be excused from completing the weekly assignment except for medical or family emergencies. You should plan your calendar for the semester accordingly.

Each weekly assignment will be worth 10% of your final grade.

Assignments will be made available on Friday evenings, and due on Wednesdays at 5PM EST. Notes submitted after Wednesday at 5PM EST will not be accepted.

Assignments can be submitted using the 'assignments' function on Quercus. A detailed rubric will be distributed with each assignment.

Discussion Board – 10%

Discussion Boards are hosted on Quercus. The tutorial discussion board is a place to share ideas, ask for help, and discuss the course with your fellow students.

There will be 11 weekly discussion boards. You must post on the discussion board during at least six (6) different weeks. A post can be a response to a TA's discussion question, a thoughtful question of your own about the course material, or a response to another student's question or comment.

Participation will be evaluated as follows:

- Posts in 0-5 different weeks = 0/10
- Posts in 6+ different weeks = 7/10
- Higher grades will be assigned at the TA's discretion based on both the quality and frequency of posts.

For more information on discussion board expectations, please refer to the [POL 101 Discussion Board Guidelines](#), posted on Quercus.

Grade Appeals

If you believe that an error has been made in one of your assignment grades, you should send an email or private Quercus message to your TA explaining the error, with clear reference to the answer key or rubric for the assignment. It is your responsibility to demonstrate that your work merits a higher grade.

Grade appeals must be raised within seven (7) days of the assignment being returned to you.

If you are unable to resolve the issue with the grading TA, you may appeal to the Head TA. He can be reached at Daniel.Sherwin@mail.utoronto.ca. Your appeal should clearly explain why the work you submitted warrants a higher grade than it received, with clear and explicit reference to the answer key and/or rubric.

If you believe an error has been made with your participation grade, you may appeal to your tutorial TA. Tutorial TAs have total discretion over participation grades; you may not appeal to

the Head TA or Course instructor to overturn a TAs decision. The only exception is if the student can provide evidence of meeting the minimum requirements for posting on the discussion board.

Readings

All the readings for the course are available online or posted on Quercus. The reading load for this course is not heavy, but some of it will be written in a style that is not familiar.

Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offences. University policy requires that course instructors refer suspected plagiarism cases to the Office of Academic Integrity for resolution. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto's policy on plagiarism at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

Resources

Accessibility Services: The course is fully committed to providing students with fair access to their courses. Students with special needs or disabilities are strongly encouraged to register with Accessibility Services to arrange for needed accommodations.

Writing Support: Students can attend workshops and arrange one-on-one appointments for feedback on their written work. Students can visit www.writing.utoronto.ca for information and advice on all aspects of academic writing. Students are encouraged to make use of the college writing centers for individualized consultations on their written assignments. Interested students should book their appointments with the writing centers early, as they fill up fast. Information about the writing centers is available at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and-science>. Students can also take advantage of the Library's free "Writing Plus" academic skills workshop series, described at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus>. International students can find information about the English Language Learning program (ELL), which includes practice opportunities for improving oral communication and critical reading skills, at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>.

Registrar Support: Students are encouraged to contact their registrar promptly if they experience unexpected challenges during the course that may require accommodations.

Health and Wellness: Students can access a wide range of programs and services to support their health and wellbeing. Many of these programs are listed at: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/departments/health-wellness/> 6

Crisis Support: Students in distress can access a range of free crisis lines available from the University of Toronto and the City of Toronto, as listed below:

- University of Toronto: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/support-when-you-feel-distressed/>

- City of Toronto: <https://www.toronto.ca/311/knowledgebase/kb/docs/articles/311-toronto/information-and-business-development/crisis-lines-suicide-depression-telephone-support-lines-non-crisis-mental-health-services.html>

Most of these crisis lines are available 24 hours a day and some address specific problems that students may be experiencing. Immediate assistance is available as follows:

- • My SSP for University of Toronto Students: 1-844-451-9700.
- • Good 2 Talk Student Helpline: 1-866-925-5454
- • Gerstein Crisis Centre: 416-929-5200
- • Distress Centres of Greater Toronto: 416-408-HELP (4357)
- • The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): 250 College Street (walk-in)

You are not alone: please get help if you're experiencing difficulties or are in distress.

Course Outline

Introduction and Orientation (9/10)

Democracy (9/14)

Robert Kaplan, "Was Democracy Just a Moment?" *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1997 online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1997/12/was-democracy-just-a-moment/6022/>

Francis Fukuyama and The End of History <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YM6p-15fjBg>

Political Participation (9/21)

Schlozman, Verba, and Brady, "Participation is not a Paradox: The View from American Activists" *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No.1 (Jan., 1995) pp1-36

Watch: Hahrie Han, "Practicing Democracy," <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzDXXZHQaJc>

Social movements (9/28)

Watch: Deva Woodly, "Changing Politics," <https://www.ias.edu/ideas/2013/woodly-change>

“Have Americans Warmed to Calls to Defund the Police?”

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/03/us/politics/polling-defund-the-police.html>

Liberalism (10/5)

Alan Ryan, “Liberalism” from *Blackwell Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*.

“Stop the knee jerk liberalism that hurts its own cause” *New York Times*

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/29/opinion/sunday/liberalism-united-states.html?searchResultPosition=1>

Thanksgiving, no class (10/12)

Race, Gender, and Politics (10/19)

Reading to be assigned closer to the date

Indigenous politics and reconciliation (10/26)

Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada

available as a book at amazon.ca, and also online at

[http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Honouring the Truth Reconciling for the Future July 23 2015.pdf](http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Honouring%20the%20Truth%20Reconciling%20for%20the%20Future%20July%2023%202015.pdf)

Courtney Jung, Reconciliation: Eight Reasons to Worry

Electoral systems and the US election (11/2)

Pippa Norris, “Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems”

International Political Science Review Vol. 18, No. 3

Other reading to be assigned closer to the date

Fall reading week, no class. (11/9)

The politics of the pandemic (11/16)

Reading to be assigned closer to the date

Terrorism (11/23)

Eric Patterson, “Just War in the 21st Century: Reconceptualizing Just War Theory after September 11,” *International Politics*, 2005, 42 (116-134)

Carrol Doherty, “Balancing Act: National Security and Civil Liberties in Post-9/11 Era,” *Pew Research Center*, 2013 online at: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2013/06/07/balancing-act-national-security-and-civil-liberties-in-post-911-era/>

Charles Lewis, “Did the 9/11 attacks irrevocably shatter American civil liberties,” <http://news.nationalpost.com/full-comment/charles-lewis-did-the-911-attacks-irrevocably-shatter-american-civil-liberties>

Climate change (11/30)

Steven Bernstein and Matthew Hoffman, “Why action on climate change gets stuck and what to do about it,” (<https://theconversation.com/why-action-on-climate-change-gets-stuck-and-what-to-do-about-it-128287>)

The end of empire (12/7)

Wade Davis, “The unraveling of America,” online at <https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/political-commentary/covid-19-end-of-american-era-wade-davis-1038206/>