

SENIOR SEMINAR IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

Political Science 401
Monmouth University
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Time: Wed, 4:30-7:15,
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Professor: Dr. Joseph Patten
Spring 2004
Office Hours: M 1:00-2:15, T 3:15-4:15
W 1:00-2:15, Th 1:00-2:15 and by appt.
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Course Description and Goals:

The Senior Seminar in Political Science is a capstone experience for Political Science majors. The seminar emphasizes research in political science with particular attention paid to finding sources of research, writing coherently and cogently, and presenting ideas in both a classroom and conference setting. The primary goal of this course is to assist you in writing a comprehensive research paper in political science, which contributes both to the field of political science and your personal growth as a rising scholar. The seminar will be conducted in class and as an independent study.

Each student will formulate a research design, conduct a literature review, collect and assess data and evidence, and present the research paper in class and at a conference. You will be exposed to several methodological strategies and will be asked to exchange your outline and first draft with a colleague for peer review, prior to submitting the work. The research paper should include approximately 25 to 30 pages of text. The structure and format of the paper will be discussed at length in class.

Monmouth will host a First Annual Undergraduate Political Science and Sociology Student Convention on April 9th, 2004 here at Monmouth. This promises to be an exciting conference in that it provides Political Science undergraduate students from New Jersey, New York, and Pennsylvania an opportunity to meet and share research interests. Seminar students are expected to present a draft of their research paper at the conference.

Required Text: There is no assigned text for this class. All necessary readings will be provided.

Grading:

Grades will be determined by evaluating your performance in five areas. They are as follows:

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| 1. Attendance and Participation | 15% |
| 2. Research Proposal | 15% |
| 3. Literature Review | 20% |
| 4. Presentation | 20% |
| 5. Research Paper | 30% |

Grading Scale:

93 – 100	A	71-75	C
90– 92	A-	68-70	C-
86-89	B+	65-67	D+
82-85	B	60-64	D
80-81	B-	55-59	D-
76-79	C+	0-54	F

Attendance and Participation:

As this is a three-credit course held only one afternoon a week, your attendance is mandatory and necessary to the success of the course and will be a critical component of your final grade. Students with more than one unexcused absence will be penalized in the participation grade. In order to qualify as an excused absence, the student must notify me of his/her absence prior to the commencement of that evening's class session. While attending class is a critical component of the participation grade, it is far from the only consideration. Students have a responsibility to contribute to the class and will also be graded according to the degree to which the student's presence in the class contributed to an enriching learning environment.

Research Proposal:

A research proposal worth 15% of your total grade will be due on February 11th. The paper should be five pages in length, typed and double-spaced. Your research proposal should include a discussion on why the topic is important, include a research question and hypothesis, and a clear methodological strategy. Students will also be asked to share research ideas in class.

Literature Review:

To facilitate progress on the research paper, student will be asked to write a five page, typed and double space, review of the literature in your chosen area, which will naturally be incorporated into your research paper. Class discussion will shed light on questions surrounding literature reviews.

Presentation:

Students will be asked to present their research findings both in class and at the First Annual Undergraduate Political Science Research Conference. Students will have the option of presenting their research paper at either a poster fair or from a panel format. Students will also be asked to prepare Power Point presentations of their topic to the class.

Senior Seminar Research Paper:

A final research paper worth 30% of your grade is due on May 5th. The paper should be between 25-30, typed and double spaced, and should include a research question and hypothesis, literature review, theory section, a findings section, and a conclusion and

bibliography. Peer draft exchanges will take place in class on April 21st and will be returned with comments and corrections to the author. Students not submitting the research draft on time will be penalized on the final grade of the research project.

Academic Honesty:

Academic dishonesty in completing any course requirement is grounds for failing the course. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on exams and plagiarism. For all writing assignments, students must make proper citations and properly document all sources of information. If you have a question about what constitutes a violation, please see me.

Special Needs:

Students with special learning needs are strongly encouraged to see me. All appropriate accommodations will be made.

Civility in the Classroom:

Theorizing is a difficult business and requires practice and a thick skin. Everyone should feel free to experiment with their ideas and be prepared to respectfully engage the ideas of others. Discussion can only work if students feel free to investigate ideas critically. Therefore, there can be no doubt about the discussion's dependence on tolerance, listening, and civility. We are certainly not required to agree with any particular perspective, but we do have a responsibility to understand the viewpoint of others (please see Mill's "On Liberty" and Kant's "Perpetual Peace" for a deeper rationale).

Course Outline:

Jan. 21st	Introduction and Syllabus and Research Brain Storming Session
Jan. 28th	Preparing Research Proposals
Feb. 4th	Continue Preparing Research Proposals and Discuss Research Methodology
Feb. 11th	Present Research Proposals and Discuss Methodology
Feb. 18th	Preparing Literature Reviews
Feb. 25 th	Preparing Literature Review
Mar. 3rd	Submit and Present Literature Review
	SPRING BREAK – March 8-March 14
Mar. 17th	Individual Meetings

Mar. 24th Discuss Progress of First Draft

Mar. 30th Practice Presentations

Apr. 7th Practice Presentations

Apr. 9th Conference and Banquet Participation

Apr. 21st Draft of Research Paper Due and Peer Review in Class

Apr. 27th Paper Presentations to class

May 5th – May 11th - Final Exam Week – Paper Presentations to class

Please Note: The class schedule is tentative and subject to change as current events dictate.