

**The University of Western Ontario
Department of Political Science**

Course:	Political Science 1020E 650–Introduction to Political Science
Session:	Summer 2011
Course Instructor:	Asim Ali
Office:	SSC 4134; Meeting Hours: Tuesday 10-12 noon
Contact details:	Phone: 519.661.2111 x80996
	Email: aali84@uwo.ca

Course Description and Objectives: This introductory course is intended to give students a broad overview of the study of politics. We will study such essential questions as: What is the meaning of such terms as 'nation' and 'state'? Who holds political power, and why? How might groups participate in political activity? Why is conflict so prevalent in the world today? Why does inequality exist, and what factors influence the distribution of wealth in society? How does the role of the state differ across economies? What factors shape political attitudes? What role does media or social media (Twitter and Facebook) play in global politics? This course will introduce the key concepts and theories which give us leverage over these questions, as well as over such issues as democracy and citizenship, electoral politics, sovereignty in the modern world, the sources of foreign policy, and so on. This course will also provide an opportunity to explore some *subfields* in Political Science such as: *political philosophy; international relations; international political economy; comparative politics (of the developing world); and economic development*. At the conclusion of this course students will be familiar with important concepts and methods of analysis within the discipline of politics; become more able to understand and critically evaluate political developments within society; and develop an enhanced theoretical understanding of the ideas and practices that inform politics.

Required Textbooks: There are two required textbooks for this course and they are available for purchase at the bookstore. (*You will be responsible for all weekly-required readings)

George A. MacLean and Duncan R. Wood. *Politics: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2010. (hereafter: ***MW**)

Rand Dyck, (editor). *Studying Politics: An Introduction to Political Science*, 3rd edition. Nelson Education, 2010. (hereafter: ***Dyck**)

Important Notice Re: Prerequisites/Antirequisites: Please Note: You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites, and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as a basis for an appeal. If you are found to be ineligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. This decision cannot be appealed. If you find that you do not have the course prerequisites, it is in your best interest to drop the course well before the end of the add/drop period. Your prompt

attention to this matter will not only help protect your academic record, but will ensure that spaces become available for students who require the course in question for graduation.

Distance Studies Expectations: This course requires that the student and the instructor participate as a class, sharing ideas, concepts, and understanding of course materials. As such, it is expected that students maintain a high level of interaction and discussion via WebCT. Students will be expected to contribute to the weekly discussions. Such participation is necessary for creating and maintaining interest and understanding across the wide array of weekly topics.

Communication: Communication between students and the Professor will generally occur via email (aali84@uwo.ca). Students are encouraged to visit office hours if possible. They occur Tuesdays, from 10-12 noon in the Social Science Centre, room 4134. As well, arrangements to speak with the Professor using the WebCT chat-function can be made upon request.

WebCT: If you experience problems with WebCT please contact the ITS Help Desk at (519) 661-3800. For hours and additional information please visit <http://www.uwo.ca/its/helpdesk/> Troubleshooting information is also available online. A list of common problems and solutions are available at <http://webct.uwo.c/commonProblems.html> Students should also ensure their computer is properly prepared by visiting <http://webct.uwo.ca/> and clicking on the Check My Browser link.

Course Evaluation:

- | | | |
|------------------------------------|-----|----------------------|
| 1. Discussion Board Participation: | 10% | |
| 2. Critical Analysis: | 10% | (Due: June 3, 2011) |
| 3. Mid - Term Exam: | 20% | (Due: June 25, 2011) |
| 4. Essay: | 25% | (Due: July 15,2011) |
| 5. Final Exam: | 35% | |

(Written during the final exam period, between August 2-5, 2011).

1. Discussion Board Participation

As a regular feature of the course the Instructor will pose questions or problems requiring short written answers. These questions will facilitate a form of “classroom discussion” and an exchange of ideas on key issues and topics. The discussion board is worth 10% of your total grade. **You will be expected to contribute a minimum of two discussion board posts each week.**

2. Critical Analysis

Students are required to submit a 3 - 4 page analysis of an assigned reading. Your analysis should not ‘repackage’ or ‘reword’ what the readings state. Rather, it should answer a series of questions that will allow you to further understand the point of the

reading and identify any shortcomings in the presented arguments. Your analysis should also present your own opinion on the topic. Additional details will be posted on WEBCT.

- The assignment must be no longer than 4 pages [excluding title page and bibliography] in length, Times New Roman size 12 font, 1” margins, and double - spaced. Anything exceeding these requirements will be disregarded in the evaluation of your paper.
- Extensions will be granted only for mitigating circumstances or medical reasons (for which written proof of substantial distress must be provided).
- Late assignments will be penalized 10% points if they are not received by 11.30pm on Friday, June 3, 2011. Assignments will be assigned a mark of zero if they are not submitted by 11.30pm on Friday, June 10, 2011.
- Technical problems, such as hard drive crashes, are not grounds for an extension
 - please ensure that you routinely ‘back - up’ your work.

3. Midterm Exam

The midterm exam will be based on material we cover from weeks 1 - 6. Additional details on the format of the midterm exam will be posted to WebCT.

4. Essay

The essay is due on Friday, July 15, 2011. Detailed instructions regarding the essay will be posted on WebCT. **You are required to write a research essay that uses a minimum of five academic sources.** Essays will be graded based on the cogency and coherence of argument and the ability to incorporate and use supporting evidence. Grammatical errors, spelling mistakes, and poor organization affect the professionalism of your essay and will result in a penalty of a maximum of 5 percentage points.

- The essay must be 6 - 8 pages [excluding title page and bibliography] in length, Times New Roman size 12 font, 1” margins, and double - spaced. Anything exceeding these requirements will be disregarded in the evaluation of your paper.
- Extensions will be granted only on humanitarian grounds or on medical grounds (for which written proof of substantial distress must be provided).
- Late essays will be penalized 15 percentage points if they are not received by 11.30pm on Friday, July 15, 2011. Essays will be assigned a mark of zero if they are not submitted by 11.30pm on Friday, July 22, 2011.
- Technical problems, such as hard drive crashes, are not grounds for an extension
 - please ensure that you routinely ‘back - up’ your work

5. Final Exam

The final examination will be held during the Examination Period [August 2-5, 2011]. The final exam will cover material from the assigned readings, the instructor’s posted

notes, and student discussions on WebCT. Additional details on the format of the final exam will be posted to WebCT.

Academic Accommodation: If a situation should arise where you require accommodation because of a medical or personal issue, Social Science Academic Counselling (located at SSC 2105) is available to help you. You can talk to a counsellor, who can then pass along any recommendations for accommodation.

Their contact information is:

Telephone: 519 661-2011

Recorded information: 519 661-2052

Fax: 519 661-3384

Email: ssaco@uwo.ca

Office hours: 9:30am - 4:00pm

This procedure means that you do not have to provide your instructor with any details of your situation, and ensures that the proper documentation is collected when necessary. It is your responsibility to speak with a counsellor as soon as possible after an issue arises. Academic accommodation will only be provided if you speak with an Academic Counsellor and provide them with documentation of your issue, and if the issue is brought to their attention in a timely fashion.

Western Medical Accommodation Policy (Medical Notes): In May, 2008, The University of Western Ontario's Senate approved a new medical note policy, which affects all students. Please follow the procedures as set out by the University and see your Academic Counseling office to present your case and documentation before asking me for an extension without penalty. For more detailed information and forms, please visit <https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm>, and for further policy information please visit http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

Schedule of Weekly Readings & Topics

Week 1 [May 9 –May 13]: Studying Politics: Political Concepts

MW: Chapters 1- 2: pp. 3- 46

Dyck: Chapter 1: pp. 4- 24

Week 2 [May 16 --May 20]: Political Thought, Philosophy, and Ideology

MW: Chapter 3, pp. 47-78

Dyck: Chapter 5, section on Political Ideologies, pp. 138-148

Week 3 [May 23- May 27]: Structure of the State (I): The Role of Government

MW: Chapter 4: pp. 82 – 105

Dyck: Chapter 2: “Governments and States: Perpetual Works in Progress,” pp. 30-54

Week 4 [May 30-June 3]: Structure of the State (II): Branches of Government (The Political Executive; Legislature; and the Judiciary)

MW: Chapter 5: pp. 108- 131 & Chapter 6: pp. 133-160

Week 5 [June 6-June 10]: Political Participation: Elections and Parties

MW: Chapter 7: pp. 161-182

Dyck: Chapter 10: “Democracy in Action: Elections, Political Participation, and Citizens’ Power,” pp. 282-311

Week 6 [June 13- June 17]: “Agenda Setters & Influencers”: Facebook & Twitter phenomena

MW: Chapter 8: pp. 185-209

Dyck: Chapter 4: “Political Culture and Socialization: The Media and Other Mind Shapers,” pp. 84-112

Week 7 [June 20- June 24]: Nationalism and Identity

*** MID-TERM EXAM (covering weeks 1-6): June 25th, 9 am- 11 am**

Dyck: Chapter 3, “Cultural Pluralism, Nationalism, and Identity,” pp. 58-77

Week 8 [June 27-July 1]: Politics in Developed States: A comparative study of Canada, the US, Japan, and the European Union

MW: Chapter 9, pp. 212- 241

Week 9 [July 4 –July 8]: Foreign Policy (I): International Politics, Hegemony, and Global Governance

MW: Chapter 11: pp. 274-303. [Theoretical approaches in the study of International Relations and Foreign Policy]

Dyck: Chapter 15: “World Politics: Global Anarchy, Global Governance,” pp. 434-454.

Week 10 [July 11 –July 15]: Foreign Policy (II): International Security

MW: Chapter 12: 306- 325.

Dyck: Chapter 14: Regime Change in an Era of Globalization, pp. 406-431.

Week 11 [July 18- July 22]: International Political Economy (I)

MW: Chapter 13: pp. 328-353.

Dyck: Chapter 16: “The Politics of Globalization,” pp. 456-473.

Week 12 [July 25- July 29]: IPE of North-South Relations (II): Economic Development & Developing States

MW: Chapter 10: 244- 270.

Dyck: Chapter 13: “The Politics of Development and Underdevelopment,” pp. 372-402.

Week 13 [August 1- August 5]: Conclusion

*** FINAL EXAM**

Good luck, enjoy the class and have an enjoyable summer term!