INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE

Grado en Relaciones Internacionales / Bachelor in International Relations BIR SEP-2023 IPS-IR.1.S.A

Area Comparative Politics
Number of sessions: 30
Academic year: 23-24
Degree course: FIRST
Number of credits: 6.0
Semester: 1º
Category: BASIC
Language: English

Professor: **NIKOLINA ZIDEK**

E-mail: nzidek@faculty.ie.edu

Nikolina Židek is Adjunct Professor at IE School of Global and Public Affairs since 2016. She is also member of the Research Group "Lugares, marcas y territorios de memoria" (Places, marks and territories of memory) of the Memory Studies Nucleus, Institute for Economic and Social Development/Instituto de Desarrollo Económico y Social (IDES) in Buenos Aires.

She was an invited lecturer at the Advanced Study Course in Human Rights and Genocides, Universidad del Museo Social Argentino (UMSA) in cooperation with Luisa Haraibedian Foundation, Buenos Aires, Argentina (2017-2019). She was also a post-doctoral fellow at the Center for Southeast European Studies - University of Graz, Austria (2020) and at the Center of Advanced Studies of Southeastern Europe - University of Rijeka (2021 and 2022). In 2022 she was a researcher within POPREBEL, a large Horizon 2020-funded research project on the rise of populism in Central and Eastern Europe.

Dr. Židek holds a PhD in political science from the Complutense University in Madrid and a Masters degree in International Studies from the Diplomatic School of Madrid in cooperation with the Complutense University. She wrote her PhD thesis on Transitional justice and EU enlargement to Croatia and Serbia. Before entering the academia Dr. Židek was previously working for 12 years as Croatian professional diplomat. She was posted in Croatian Embassies in Madrid and Buenos Aires.

Her areas of expertise are transitional justice and human rights, memory politics, the Balkans, diaspora politics, and democratization processes.

nzidek@faculty.ie.edu

SUBJECT DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce students to the study of politics through a study of key concepts, basic theories, ideologies, and approaches to the enduring questions that motivate political research. The objective of the course is to prepare the students for further coursework in political science and international relations. The course will also include several sessions dedicated to the basic academic writing and research skills in political science in order to be able to navigate the literature in the discipline and to write academic papers in the future.

There are no prerequisites for this course than to be aware and interested in learning more about political science. As we will try to apply the theories to current events, they will play an important role in our discussions during the semester. The students are expected to do the readings before class and to read at least one major news outlet regularly to facilitate their participation in the class. Also, being informed about current topics is an asset.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To make students acquire the necessary tools to start thinking like political scientists;
- To learn the basic skills for academic writing and reading in political science.
- Get to know key issues and concepts in political science
- Develop an understanding of key issues of democracy, state formation, nationalism and political culture with an ultimate goal of a better understanding of contemporary politics
- See interconnections between various aspects of politics and learn to apply these issues to contemporary cases in democratic societies
- Acquire the ability to explain the purpose of institutions and why they are important for studying politics
- Think critically and independently about world politics and its actors
- Develop the ability to be an informed and critical citizen and gain the tools for active engagement in the political life of his/her country of origin or choice
- To develop students drafting and presentation skills through class essay writing and oral presentations.
- To learn the basic academic writing skills in political science research.
- To enable them to have a better understanding of the interdependencies connecting the sphere of politics with other social sciences

TEACHING METHODOLOGY

IE University teaching method is defined by its collaborative, active, and applied nature. Students actively participate in the whole process to build their knowledge and sharpen their skills. Professor's main role is to lead and guide students to achieve the learning objectives of the course. This is done by engaging in a diverse range of teaching techniques and different types of learning activities such as the following:

Sessions will combine the explanation of theoretical concepts with practical activities such as doing exercises and class activities where appropriate. Students will prepare the readings before class.

Learning Activity	Weighting	Estimated time a student should dedicate to prepare for and participate in

Lectures	30.0 %	45.0 hours
Discussions	4.0 %	6.0 hours
Exercises in class, Asynchronous sessions, Field Work	20.0 %	30.0 hours
Group work	20.0 %	30.0 hours
Individual studying	26.0 %	39.0 hours
TOTAL	100.0 %	150.0 hours

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND ACTIVITIES

READING & QUIZZES

Your success in this course depends critically on doing the assigned readings before class. Everything we do in class --- lectures, discussions, and activities --- is premised on the assumption that you have done the reading. For instance, lectures do not summarize readings; rather, they expand upon key points with reference to additional examples or new concepts. Of course, we do not expect you to understand every aspect of the reading on your own before class. However, you should read the article as many times as necessary until you have a firm grasp of the main argument and key takeaways. (We have kept out of class assignments to a minimum to give you sufficient time to do this.) If you are struggling to keep up with readings or to understand a particular reading, contact the professors for help.

The professor reserves the right to give unannounced quizzes on the readings, which would factor into the participation component of the final grade.

COURSE WEBSITE & COMMUNICATION

The syllabus, slides, and any other materials distributed in class will be posted on the course website. All announcements will be posted on the course website. Students are responsible for reading these announcements and following instructions posted there.

OFFICE HOURS & MEETINGS

Students are encouraged to contact the professor to schedule office hours if they have questions about course material or grades. Office hours may be held in-person or via Zoom.

DEADLINES & LATE WORK

All deadlines are 23:59h Madrid time. Late work is only accepted in the case of documented medical or family emergency. If such an emergency occurs, take appropriate documentation to the MIR office and inform the professors. We will not accept work that is submitted late because of internet connection problems, computer failures, uploading the wrong file, and so on. Please leave yourself sufficient time before the deadline and take care to upload the correct file. If you cannot submit an assignment on Blackboard, you may email it to the professors before the deadline. All assignments --- whether submitted on Blackboard or by email --- will be analyzed with anti-plagiarism software.

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY

This syllabus is subject to change (with notice).

PROGRAM

SESSIONS 1 - 2 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Introduction and What is Politics

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 1) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 3 - 4 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Politics and the State

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 2) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 5 - 6 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Political Power, Authority, and the State

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 3) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 7 - 8 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Academic writing workshop (I)

Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: What is an Academic Paper? Finding a Research Question and Making Sense of the Scholarly Answers to Your Research Question (Lit Review)

Book Chapters: Writing a Research Paper in Political Science (Chapters 1, 2 & 4) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 9 - 10 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Democracy and Political Obligation

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 4) (See Bibliography)

Article: What Political Institutions Does Large-Scale Democracy Require? (Political Science Quarterly, Volume 120 Number 2 2005) (CED)

SESSION 11 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Midterm written exam

SESSION 12 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Academic writing worskhop (II): Thesis, model, and hypothesis. Research design.

Book Chapters: Writing a Research Paper in Political Science (Chapters 6 and 7) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 13 - 14 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Freedom and Justice

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 5) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 15 - 16 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Traditional ideologies

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 6) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 17 - 18 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Challenges to the dominant ideologies. Social identity: gender, ethnicity, race. Intersectionality.

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 7) (See Bibliography)

Book Chapters: Chapter 8. (There is no justice in History) in Sapiens: a brief history of humankind (CED)

Technical note & tutorials: African Women in the 21st Century, Participation and Progress: Interview with Professor Grace Obado (IRE020035-U-ENG-VID)

SESSIONS 19 - 20 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Academic writing worskhop (III): Evaluating the argument. Bringing your paper together in three essential ways: the conclusion, introduction, and title

Book Chapters: Writing a Research Paper in Political Science (Chapters 8 and 9) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 21 - 22 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

> - Environment
> - Social Challenge

Institutions and states. The Modern State.

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 8) (See Bibliography)

SESSIONS 23 - 24 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

> - Governance
> - Social Challenge

Political Culture and Non- Western Political Ideas

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 9) (See Bibliography)
Article: Direct democracy, political culture, and the outcome of economic policy: a report on the
Swiss experience (European Journal of Political Economy, Vol. 16. 2000. 287–306) (CED)

SESSIONS 25 - 26 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

> - Governance
> - Social Challenge

Civil society, interest groups, and the media

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 14) (See Bibliography)
Multimedia Material: Social movements in times of pandemic (IE Library)
Multimedia Material: Lobbying and Public Affairs: Interview with Professor Inma Puig-Simon (IE Library)

SESSIONS 27 - 28 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

> - Governance
> - Social Challenge

Democracies, democratization, and authoritarian regimes. Transitional justice.

Book Chapters: Introduction to Politics (Chapter 15) (See Bibliography)
Article: How Countries Democratize (Political Science Quarterly, v124 n1 (2009 08 25): 31-69) (CED)
Own Material: Transitional Justice

SESSION 29 (ASYNCHRONOUS)

Sustainability Topics:

> - Governance
> - Social Challenge

Group Presentations

Students will upload their group presentations and have 72 hours to provide feedback on the rest of the presentations.

SESSION 30 (LIVE IN-PERSON)

Sustainability Topics:

- Governance
- Social Challenge

Final Exam

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each student has four attempts over two consecutive academic years to pass this course.

For every BIR Program mandatory class aside from the IR Unplugged and BIR Electives, students are required to obtain the minimum grade of 5 required to pass the course. Students whose grade in the Final Exam (or the largest assignment) is below 5 will fail the course. The rule applies to whichever assignment carries the greatest weight to the final grade. Dates and location of the final exam will be posted in advance and will not be changed.

The final grade in the course will be based on individual work that will be weighted according to the table below. Students will have to apply their academic writing skills in a final essay. A minimum grade of 5 in the final exam will be required to pass the course.

Students must attend at least 70% of the sessions. Students who do not comply with the 70% attendance rule will receive a 0.0 on their first and second attempts and go directly to the third one (they will need to enroll in this course again the following academic year).

Students who are in the third or fourth attempt must contact the professor during the first two weeks of the course.

Your final grade in the course will be based on both individual and group work of different characteristics that will be weighted according to the table below. Details will be given in the first session.

A. CLASS PARTICIPATION

Three main criteria will be used in reaching judgment about your class participation:

Depth and Quality of Contribution: The most important dimension of participation concerns what it is that you are saying. A high quality comment reveals depth of insight, rigorous use of case evidence, consistency of argument, and realism.

Moving Your Peers' Understanding Forward: Great ideas can be lost through poor presentation. A high quality presentation of ideas must consider the relevance and timing of comments, and the flow and content of the ensuing class discussion. It demands comments that are concise and clear, and that are conveyed with a spirit of involvement in the discussion at hand.

Frequency: Frequency refers to the attainment of a threshold quantity of contributions that is sufficient for making a reliable assessment of comment quality. The logic is simple: if contributions are too few, one cannot reliably assess the quality of your remarks. However, once threshold quantity has been achieved, simply increasing the number of times you talk does not automatically improve your evaluation. Beyond the threshold, it is the quality of your comments that must improve. In particular, one must be especially careful that in claiming more than a fair share of "airtime", quality is not sacrificed for quantity. Finally, your attempts at participation should not be such that the instructor has to "go looking for you". You should be attempting to get into the debate on a regular basis.

NOTE: As a sign of respect toward the person presenting the lecture (the teacher as well as fellow students), side conversations are not allowed.

IMPORTANT RULE: Good participation does not presume you understand everything in the readings – good questions make for good participation. So do not be afraid of being wrong when you participate in class. We are here to learn and any learning process in life involves making mistakes.

B. GROUP PRESENTATIONS

During the course the students will do in-class group presentations on the main issues of the topics seen in previous sessions and case studies chosen by them related to these topics. The groups will not always be composed of the same members. The presentations are going to be in Power-Point format with an upper time limit of 12-15 minutes. There will also be a final group presentation as a part of the final exam.

The objective of this process it to give you practice in presenting and understanding relevant issues in political science. It also strengthens teamwork and good use of strong and weak points of its members.

Good presentations are concise, have an introduction of the main issue, show several case studies/real-life examples, and draw a conclusion. All the group members participate in the presentation.

GUIDELINES FOR GROUP PRESENTATIONS:

1. Good presentations are concise, have an introduction of the main issue, show several case studies/real-life examples, and draw a conclusion. All the group members participate in the presentation.

2. The purpose is to see that you understood the concept of the task you are given and that you are able to apply it to the examples from real life- case studies.

3. Be sure to get to the point, to be able to explain the main features of every concept, and then go to the examples, and finally draw some conclusion- i.e. why is it important, how it works, what are the drawbacks or risks etc. Distribute the tasks among yourselves.

4. The general structure should be: Introduction-case study/studies- conclusion.

5. You should not read the text from the slides nor try to follow the exact wording as in the textbookexplain the phenomenon with your own words.

6. At group presentations you are evaluated as a group, so the performance of each one of you can affect the grade of the group as a whole. Bear that in mind.

7. The presentations last 12-15 minutes, meaning that each of you should speak for 2-3 minutes. So, prepare well for your part and don't read the text.

8. Those of you who are not very fluent in English, practice more, if necessary learn your part by heart.

9. Those of you who are very fluent in English, don't rely only on your fluency, but prepare yourselves for the presentation.

10. Manage your group, know your strengths and weaknesses. Have a guiding thread of your presentation, don't just saturate it with examples that are not mutually coherent. Tell a story.

C. TESTS: MID-TERM AND FINAL EXAM

There will be two tests based on the readings for each session and lectures given by the instructor. The aim of the tests is to check your understanding of basic concepts and will review the assigned reading and class discussions for the sessions of the course.

The tests are strategically divided in two parts and are therefore considered two parts of an exam of the course content.

D. INDIVIDUAL WORK - FINAL ESSAY

Based on what they learned at the Academic Skills workshop, each student will write one short paper related to topics of particular interest to you and related to the course syllabus, issues that aroused curiosity in you, or related discussions. Focus on current issues and originality will be highly valued. The project will give you the opportunity to reflect on what you have learned in class and apply it to some particular country or region. More details on the project will be provided at the start of the course. The topic should be discussed with and approved by the instructor before you begin work on it. It is a good idea to start thinking about potential paper topics early in the semester and come see me discuss your ideas. All papers will be graded using Turnitin.

criteria	percentage	Learning Objectives	Comments
Final Exam	40 %		Final exam
Group Presentation	10 %		Final group presentation
Individual work	20 %		Final research paper
Class Participation	10 %		A máximum of 10%. This can be exceeded when it is based on individual works such as quizzes, response papers, etc.
Intermediate tests	20 %		Midterm exam.

THIRD CALL POLICY:

Any student in their third call of a course, also known as a "Retaker" or "Re-Sit", is obliged to observe the following rules:

- Third call students must contact their professors before or during the first session to ask which work and or *sessions will be required to obtain a passing grade. The professor will determine which work will be required in their course.

  *(e.g. when presenting group work, sitting for examinations or other work done in class).

- Retakers are exempt from failing the call due to absences; however, they are not exempt from work the professor designates as necessary to obtain a passing grade. This means some sessions may be mandatory to attend in order to complete the work within.

- Students in their third call are responsible for managing the conflicts in their schedule, should students need advice on how to manage their conflicts they should visit the program office.

EXTRAORDINARY EXAMINATION POLICY:

Any student whose weighted final grade is below 5 will be required to sit for the extraordinary exam to pass the course (except those not complying with the attendance rules, whom are banned from this possibility).

Grading for retakes will be subject to the following rules:

- The extraordinary call will consist of a comprehensive exam or equivalent assignment. The grade will depend only on the performance on this exam; continuous evaluation over the semester will not be taken into account.

- Dates and location of the retakes will be posted in advance and will not be changed.

- The exam/assignment will be designed bearing in mind that the passing grade is 5 and the maximum grade that can be attained is 8 out of 10.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Compulsory

- Robert Garner, Peter Ferdinand, and Stephanie Lawson. (2020). *Introduction to Politics.* 4th. OUP Oxford. ISBN 0198820615 (Digital)

- Lisa A. Baglione. (2019). *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science.* 4th. CQ Press (SAGE Publishing). ISBN 1544371721 (Digital)

UNIVERSITY AND PROGRAM POLICIES

The program fully supports the professor in enforcing any classroom specific rules laid out either within this syllabus or enacted later by the professor. Students should be aware that the IE University code of conduct specifically states that, "The use of laptops during lectures must be authorized by the professor". Students are hereby notified that the professor is in charge of their classroom, and that it is the students' responsibility to fully read and understand the code of conduct, attendance and ethics policies of this university. **Students breaking these rules and policies could face punishments up to expulsion**.

Links to all of those policies are found below:

BEHAVIOR RULES

Please, check the University's Code of Conduct here. The Program Director may provide further indications.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Please, check the University's Attendance Policy here. The Program Director may provide further indications.

ETHICAL POLICY

Please, check the University's Ethics Code here. The Program Director may provide further indications.

PLAGIARISM / ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Plagiarism is the dishonest act of presenting another person's ideas, texts or words as your own. This includes in order of seriousness of the offense:

- providing faulty sources;

- copy-pasting material from your own past assignments (self-plagiarism) without the instructor's permission;

- copy-pasting material from external sources even while citing them;

- using verbatim translations from sources in other languages without citing them;

- copy-pasting material from external sources without citing them;

- and buying or commissioning essays from other parties, including AI tools.

IEU students must contact the professor if they don't know whether the use of a document constitutes plagiarism. **For help with your academic writing, contact the Writing Center** (writingcenter@faculty.ie.edu). The professor will also advise the student on how to present said material. All computer written assignments must be submitted through anti-plagiarism software, (either Turn-It-In or Safe Assign directly in Blackboard) which produces a similarity report and detects cases of plagiarism. Professors are required to check each student's academic work in order to guarantee its originality. If the originality of the academic work is not clear, the professor will contact the student in order to clarify any doubts. Students using external tutorial support should report it to the professor and the BIR Program from the moment they began receiving this support. In the event that the meeting with the student fails to clarify the originality of the academic work, the professor will inform the Director of the Bachelor Program about the case, who will then decide whether to bring the case forward to the BIR Academic Review Panel. Very high similarity scores will be automatically flagged and forwarded to the Academic Review Panel. Plagiarism constitutes a very serious offense and may carry penalties ranging from getting a zero for the assignment to expulsion from the university depending on the severity of the case and the number of times the student has committed plagiarism in the past.

11th May 2023