Course Outline POLI 338, Sec. A01
September-December 2019
Approaches to Political Analysis
Wednesday 12.30 am-15:20 pm
Room: –DTB A357

Instructor: Dr. Reeta Chowdhari Tremblay
Email: reeta@uvic.ca
Office hours and location: Monday 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm or by appointment, DTB A308

We acknowledge and respect the Lkwungen-speaking peoples on whose traditional territory the University stands and the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSÁNEĆ peoples whose historical relationships with the land continue to this day

Course Description:
This course intends to introduce students of political science to a variety of approaches in the social sciences. It is designed to help students to design their research projects by developing some familiarity with current methodological debates and by asking a fundamental question: how and to what extent is it possible to combine different perspectives into a coherent research design? This course underscores the fact that there is no single approach to political science, and, there is no unique ‘best’ approach to understanding and explaining complex political phenomena. There is an on-going debate among political scientists regarding the validity of several competing and complementary approach. Instead we will learn in this course that there is a plurality of approaches and we ought to consider the validity of each approach.

The course is divided into three parts: the first part introduces students to the traditional dominant paradigms in political science and the genesis of the behaviour revolution; the second part examines the ontological and epistemological underpinnings of various approaches; the third part details the theoretical underpinnings/assumptions/frameworks/concepts of different approaches in political science. Although this course does not deal with Methods (tools), we will conclude the course with a discussion of research design – introducing the students to concepts and concept formation and the comparative method.

Required Texts
2. Additional Required Readings posted on Course Spaces.
For the Final Exam, you will be tested on your understanding of the lecture material, the textbook as well as readings assigned.

Course Spaces

Course Spaces is an online learning resource provided by the University of Victoria. The POLI 338 page provides important course material such as the syllabus and information on the various course assignments. The additional materials (additional readings) for the course are posted to the POLI 338 page.

Evaluation Criteria

This course emphasizes critical analysis and open discussion of the weekly readings, as well as the development of your research and writing skills. Final grades are broken down accordingly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7 Assignments:</th>
<th>Due dates marked</th>
<th>70%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam:</td>
<td>(Examination Period)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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Attendance, Assignments, and Grading:

The UVic Academic Calendar states: “Students are expected to attend all classes in which they are enrolled.” Attendance will be taken, and any student who attends fewer than 70 percent of scheduled class sessions will be assigned a grade of “N” for the course. Students must complete all assignments (see Course Requirements) in order to get credit for the course.

The Learning Environment:

The UVic Academic Calendar notes: “The University of Victoria is committed to promoting critical academic discourse while providing a respectful and productive learning environment. All members of the university community have the right to experience and the responsibility to help create such an environment.” Students and community partners have diverse views on the issues discussed in this course, and we seek to create an environment in which all perspectives – including those of the instructors – can be analyzed critically in a respectful fashion.

Grading Policies and Academic Integrity:

Students must complete all assignments in order to get credit for the course. Numerical grades will be converted to letter grades as follows:

- 90-100% = A+
- 85-89% = A
- 80-84% = A-
- 77-79% = B+
- 73-76% = B
- 70-72% = B-
- 65-69% = C+
- 60-64% = C
- 50-59% = D
- Below 50% = F
Complete overview of University of Victoria’s undergraduate grading system:
http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2013/FACS/UnIn/UARe/Grad.html

As per University of Victoria policy, you must complete all assignments. Failure to do so will result in a grade of ‘N’ (incomplete) for the course.

**Assignments:** All assignments are marked in the course outlines. The expectations is that you summarize the readings, discuss major points raised in each reading, identifying the main thesis of each author and the arguments (or empirical evidence) pursued to substantiate their approach. It is essential that you reflect upon the class lecture (which introduces you to a distinct approach plus the readings). For each assignment, I have pointed out the readings you should refer to when summarizing the assignment reading.

For each assignment, I expect a minimum length of 6 typed pages (double-spaced) and a maximum length of 10 typed pages (double-spaced).

You must submit every assignment at the beginning of the class; once discussion has begun, assignments will no longer be accepted and it will receive a grade of zero. In short, no late assignments will be accepted. Please no excuses

**Final Exam**

The final exam will take place during the examination period. It is a written exam, two essays questions and will last for two hours. The exam will be cumulative and will cover both the readings (text book as well as the readings) and lecture material from the entire course.

**Class Participation**

Active attendance and participation in broader class discussion are important aspects of this course. See above: Attendance, Assignments, and Grading. I strongly encourage you to come to class prepared to discuss the readings as well as with questions and/or observations regarding the course material and the cases that we are examining.

**Classroom Etiquette and Collegiality**

I expect appropriate and respectful behaviour from everyone in the course. You are in this class to learn and that requires your full and undivided attention. Accordingly, please arrive to class on time. Laptops are only permitted in class for taking notes. Further, texting is not permitted and cell phones must be turned off during class time. Students must also be respectful to each other and to each other’s contributions to class discussion.

**Accessibility**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the Centre for Accessible Learning as soon as possible. The CAL staff are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations;
https://www.uvic.ca/services/cal/; e-mail: infocal@uvic.ca. The sooner you let them know your needs the quicker they can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is intellectual honesty and responsibility for academic work that you submit individually or as a member of a group. It involves commitment to the values of honesty, trust and responsibility. It is expected that students will respect these ethical values in all activities related to learning, teaching, research and service. Therefore, plagiarism and other acts against academic integrity are serious academic offenses.

The responsibility of the institution - Instructors and academic units have the responsibility to ensure that standards of academic honesty are met. By doing so, the institution recognizes students for their hard work and assures them that other students do not have an unfair advantage through cheating on essays, exams, and projects.

The responsibility of the student - Plagiarism sometimes occurs due to a misunderstanding regarding the rules of academic integrity, but it is the responsibility of the student to know them. If you are unsure about the standards for citations or for referencing your sources, ask your instructor. Depending on the severity of the case, penalties include a warning, a failing grade, a record on the student’s transcript, or a suspension. It is your responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity, which can be found on pages 32-34 of the undergraduate calendar.

It is your responsibility to understand the University’s policy on academic integrity:
http://web.uvic.ca/calendar2017-09/undergrad/info/regulations/academic-integrity.html

Useful information from the University on plagiarism and tips on how to avoid it:
http://library.uvic.ca/instruction/cite/documents/avoiding_plagiarism.pdf

Course Experience Survey (CES)

I value your feedback on this course. Towards the end of term, as in all other courses at UVic, you will have the opportunity to complete an anonymous survey regarding your learning experience (CES). The survey is vital to providing feedback to me regarding the course and my teaching, as well as to help the department improve the overall program for students in the future. The survey is accessed via MyPage and can be done on your laptop, tablet, or mobile device. I will remind you and provide you with more detailed information nearer the time but please be thinking about this important activity during the course.
Course Schedule and Readings

Week 1 (4 Sep)

Introduction to the Course, What is Politics? The Study of Political Science; Behavioural Revolution; Distinction from the Normative Study of Politics

Paradigms, Approaches and Methods – Conceptual Clarity; Shift from dominant Paradigms to a Wider Set of Approaches


Weeks 2 and 3 (11 and 18 Sep)

Major Paradigms - (Old Institutionalism, Pluralism/neo-Pluralism; Elite theory and Marxism/neo-Marxism)


Lowndes, Stoker and Marsh. Chapter on Marxism: A global perspective by Ray Kiely


**Assignment 1 due 25th September**

Submit Assignment 1 (Hacker and Pierson reading, apply the main themes underlined in Weeks 2 and 3 readings)


Week 4 (25 Sep)

Ontology and Epistemology in Political Science – What we study? How we know things? Positivists; Post-Positivists; Constructivists, Interpretivists; and Humanistic ontologies and epistemologies

**Assignment 2 due 2nd October**

Submit Assignment 2 (Almond and Genco, use the readings for Week 1 on Behaviour Revolution and Normative theory Lowndes, Stoker and Marsh David Sanders; “Normative Theory” by Chris Armstrong )


**Week 5 (2 Oct)**

Rational Choice Approach


Lowndes, Stoker and Marsh. Chapter on “Rational Choice” Andrew Hindmoor and Brad Taylor”.


**Week 6 (9 Oct)**

(No assignment this week)

Political Economy Approach: intersection of politics and economy


johanna bockman, “neoliberalism” Contexts, Vol. 12, No. 3 (Summer 2013), pp. 14-15 (Recommended)


**Assignment 3 due 16th October**

Submit Assignment 3 (Pierson, 1996 essay)


**Week 7 (16 Oct)**

New Institutionalism (Historical, Sociological and Rational Choice)

Lowndes, Stoker and Marsh. Chapter on “Institutionalism” by Vivien Lowndes.


**Assignment 4 due 23rd October**

Submit Assignment 4 (Hall and Taylor, make sure to bring in Steinmo’s concerns about change and path dependency and Schmidt’s inclusion of ideas)

Hall, Peter & Taylor, Rosemary. (1996). “Political Science and Three New Institutionalisms”. Political Studies 44.5, 936-957

**Week 8 (23 Oct)**

Feminism; different approaches to the Feminist thought

Lowndes, Stoker and Marsh. Chapter on “Feminist and Gender Approaches” by Meryl Kenny and Fiona Mackay.

**Assignment 5 due 30th October**

Submit Assignment 5 (Tong)


**Week 9 (30 Oct)**

Intersectionality


**Assignment 6 due 6th November**

Submit Assignment 6 (Hancock and Hughes, apply the readings for Week 9)


**Week 10 (6 Nov)**

Combining Approaches- Institutionalism and Gender; Intersectionality; Nationalism and Social Movements


**Reading Break: 13th November**

**Assignment 7 due 20th November**

Submit Assignment 7 (Mackay et Al and Wadsworth- make sure to refer to the Week 8 readings on Institutionalism)


**Week 11 (Nov 20)**

Note: do the following reading quickly before coming to the class and be prepared to discuss.

**Week 12 (27 Nov)**

Discourse analysis and Ethnographic Research

*Stoker and Marsh.* Chapters on “The Challenge of Research Design”, “The Comparative Method”. (Recommended)


**Week 13 (Dec 4)**

Review plus how to design a research project