

**SPRINGFIELD COLLEGE IN ILLINOIS**  
**INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE (PSC 110-70)**

**E Session, 2005**  
**D-103**  
**Monday**  
**6:00 p.m. – 10:00 p.m.**

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**I. Course Description**

This course is an introduction to the principals and methods of political science, focusing on the nature and development of political science as a discipline, the political process, political institutions, and the interrelationships among elements in the political system.

**II. Textbook and Materials**

Required text:

Thomas M. Magstadt, *Understanding Politics: Ideas, Institutions, & Issues*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., Thomas Wadsworth, Inc., 2006.

Supplemental materials

*The New York Times* [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com),

*The Times* (of London) [www.the-times.co.uk](http://www.the-times.co.uk)

*These materials are available, free, on the World Wide Web. You should make it a regular practice to read one of these newspapers to keep current on issues affecting government and politics.*

**III. Mission Statement**

The mission of Springfield College in Illinois is to provide students the best liberal arts education in the Ursuline tradition of a nurturing faith-based environment. We prepare students for a life of learning, leadership and service in a diverse world.

**IV. Goals, Objectives, and Outcomes**

**A. Goals**

1. To understand the principals and methods of political science.
2. To understand political processes and institutions, and appreciate how these elements interrelate within a political system.

**B. Common Student Learning Objectives (CSLO's)**

1. Content Knowledge [Lifelong Learning]
  - a. Know and apply the central concepts of the subject matter. (CK-1)
2. Communication Skills [Lifelong Learning & Leadership]
  - a. Communicate effectively in oral and written forms (CS-1)
3. Problem-Solving Skills [Lifelong Learning & Leadership]
  - a. Seek information and develop an in-depth knowledge base, grounded in research. (PS-2)

**C. Course-based student learning objectives. (CBSLO's)**

- CBSLO-1 explain the relationships between political life and cultural ideas (CK-1);
- CBSLO-2 describe formal government institutions, legal structures, and political behavior and processes (CK-1, CS-1);
- CBSLO-3 describe political systems, identify international organizations, and explain the relationships between nations (CK-1, CS-1);
- CBSLO-4 analyze and evaluate political phenomena (CK-1);
- CBSLO-5 demonstrate an understanding of the process of social scientific inquiry (CK-1, CS-1);
- CBSLO-6 analyze value judgments about political decisions and policies (CK-1, PS-2);

- CBSLO-7 explain the social-psychological sources and historical-cultural origins of political attitudes and values, and analyze critically the personal and social implications of alternative values (CK-1, CS-1, PS-2);
- CBSLO-8 demonstrate an understanding of the capacities and skills needed to participate effectively and democratically in society (CK-1).
- CBSLO-9 explain the historical significance of political ideologies and their relevance to contemporary issues of government structures, political processes, and public policy (CK-1, CS-1, PS-2).

V. **Teaching Methods/Delivery System**

Lectures supplement the material in the text. It is the student’s responsibility to have read the assignments in advance. Having read the material prepares students for the lectures. If students do not read the text in advance, parts of the lectures will be much more difficult to understand. Applied activities, including both individual and group work, will supplement the subject matter.

VI. **Course Requirements**

**Attendance policy:**

Attendance will be taken during each class session. Given the unique nature of a New Horizon’s course, attendance is essential. Missing just one class will put a student severally behind. For that reason, attendance and participation make up a large part (20%, equal to the final exam) of the final grade.

**Reading assignments**

PLEASE NOTE: *All readings must be completed prior to class.*

8/22/05	<b>COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS</b> <i>Utopia, Dystopia and Theories of Representation</i>	Magstadt, Chapters 3-4
8/29/05	<b>COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS</b> <i>Authoritarianism and Totalitarianism</i>	Magstadt, Chapters 5-6
9/5/05	<b>DEMOCRACY</b> <i>Parliamentary Democracy</i>	Magstadt, Chapter 7
9/12/05	<b>DEMOCRACY</b> <i>Developing Democracy</i>	Magstadt, Chapters 8-9
9/19/05	<b>POLITICAL PARTICIPATION</b> <i>The Culture of Citizenship</i>	Magstadt, Chapter 10-11
9/26/05	<b>POLITICAL PARTICIPATION</b> <i>Leadership and Power</i>	Magstadt, Chapter 12-13
10/3/05	<b>REVOLUTION &amp; WAR</b> <i>Theories of Conflict</i>	Magstadt, Chapter 14-16
10/10/05	<b>REVIEW</b>	Final Exam

**Written assignments**

**THEORY JOURNAL** (CK-1, CS-1, CBSLO-1, CBSLO-6)

During the term, students are asked to keep an ongoing “Theory Journal” which incorporates readings, classroom discussions, and their own personal thoughts, analysis and insights. Writings should not simply summarize the material covered, but instead consist of personal reactions and ideas about the content of the class. This is not an “academic” paper, so students are free to ramble, speculate, and criticize in whatever way they want. The writing will be cumulative and should assist in preparing for the final exam.

**CHAPTER OVERVIEW** (PS-2, CBSLO-2)

Each student will deliver one short (5-10 minute) overview of an assigned chapter from Magstadt. The student will then pose questions to the class for further consideration and direct a discussion of the relevant topics.

**MOVIE REVIEW (CS-1, CBSLO-7)**

Each student will prepare a 2-3 page review of one of the movies shown in class, or of another movie as approved in advance by the instructor. Reviews should focus less on specific plot analysis, but rather on what the bigger themes of the movie are and how they reflect the main goals and/or topics of the course.

**COUNTRY BRIEFING PROJECT (CK-1, CS-1, PS-2, CBSLO-2, CBSLO-3, CBSLO-9)**

Student teams will study the political structures of a chosen country and prepare a *Country Briefing Book* and classroom presentation.

**“GITMO” PROJECT (CS\_1, PS-2, CBSLO-1, CBSLO-4)**

Students will write a fictional newspaper editorial that puts forth a well reasoned argument in defense of either former Secretary of State Colin Powell or Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld as to the state of affairs at “Gitmo” related to prisoner’s of war.

**INTERVIEW PROJECT (CS-1, CBSLO-8)**

Each student will interview an elected official, from any level of government (city, county, state, federal) and write up a description of the official’s background, along with his/her answers to the questions posed by the student and a short summation of the experience.

**UTOPIAN PROJECT (CS-1, PS-2, CBSLO-1, CBSLO-5)**

Students will work in groups to prepare for a class debate on the nature of Utopias. Students will review political philosophy and literature, including John Locke, Jacques Rousseau, and Thomas Jefferson. After reading and discussing these works, the students will work in groups to prepare for a debate with their classmates about the possibility of a utopia's existence.

**Note on Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism is defined as follows: "The deliberate and knowing presentation of another person's original ideas or creative expressions as one's own." Generally, plagiarism is immoral but not illegal. If the expression's creator gives unrestricted permission for its use and the user claims the expression as original, the user commits plagiarism but does not violate copyright laws. If the original expression is copied without permission, the plagiarist may violate copyright laws, even if credit goes to the creator. And if the plagiarism results in material gain, it may be deemed a passing-off activity that violates the Lanham Act." Black's Law Dictionary, 8th ed. (2004), p. 1187.

Diana Hacker notes, “three different acts are considered plagiarism:

- (1) failing to cite quotations and borrowed ideas,
- (2) failing to enclose borrowed language in quotation marks, and
- (3) failing to put summaries and paraphrases in your own words."

(A Writer's Reference, by Diana Hacker, Bedford St. Martin's Press, 2003, page 331.)

Some instances of plagiarism may, in fact, be violations of copyright law and subject to prosecution. The SCI Student Handbook lists plagiarism as a serious breach of conduct standards and will result in disciplinary action.

**VII. Means of Evaluation of Outcomes**

1.	Participation	80 points
2.	Final Exam	80 points
3.	Theory Journal	40 points
4.	Movie Review	40 points
5.	Class Projects	160 points (4 x 40)
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>400 points</b>

## **GRADING SYSTEM**

<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>LETTER GRADE</b>
360-400	A
320-359	B
280-319	C
240-279	D
below 240	E

### **VIII. Topical Course Outline**

#### **8/22/05 COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

- What are the main theories regarding society?
- What can the study of utopian thought teach us about contemporary politics?
- Different models of democracy and how they differ.
- Locke's contribution to American Democracy.

#### **8/29/05 COMPARATIVE POLITICAL SYSTEMS**

- The basic types of nondemocratic government.
- Machiavelli on power.
- Consolidating power in a totalitarian state.

#### **9/5/05 DEMOCRACY**

- The basic operating principals of the parliamentary system.
- Comparing and contrasting democracies.
- Strengths and weaknesses of parliamentary versus presidential rule.

#### **9/12/05 DEMOCRACY**

- Common models of states in transition to democracy
- Democratization and development around the world.
- Models of dysfunctional states.

#### **9/19/05 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

- What is the concept of citizenship to Aristotle and other political thinkers?
- What factors influence the political socialization of citizens?
- Different forms of electoral systems.
- The differences among one-, two- and multiparty systems.

#### **9/26/05 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION**

- The study of leadership as an aspect of the overall study of politics.
- What is a demagogue?
- What is the nature of exemplary leadership?
- Why is liberty valuable?

#### **10/3/05 REVOLUTION & WAR**

- Defining revolution.
- Compare and contrast the American and French Revolutions.
- Theories on revolution (Pain, Locke and Burke)
- Theories on disenchantment.
- Terrorism versus common crimes.
- The psychological roots of terrorism.
- What causes war?

#### **10/10/05 REVIEW**

- Final Exam

IX. **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**

Springfield College in Illinois provides individuals with disabilities reasonable accommodations to participate in educational programs, activities, and services. Students with disabilities requiring accommodations to participate in college-sponsored programs, activities, and services or to meet course requirements should contact the Director of the Resource Center as early as possible.

X. **Assessment: Classroom Assessment Techniques**

Goals, objectives, and learning outcomes that will be assessed in the class are stated in this syllabus. Instructor will use Classroom Assessment Techniques as deemed necessary in order to provide continuous improvement of instruction. Students are required to take part in all assessment measures.

XI. **IAI statement**

*Introduction to Political Science* (PSC 110) has been approved by the Illinois Articulation Initiative as meeting the criteria stipulated for S5 903: Principles of Political Science.

**S5 903: Principles of Political Science** (3 semester credits).

*Introduction to the principles and methods of political science, focusing on the nature and development of political science as a discipline, the political process, political institutions and the inter-relationships among elements in the political system.*