

University of Toronto  
Department of Political Science  
POL101  
The Real World of Politics  
Summer 2022  
[Work in progress]

Instructor: Daniel Sherwin

Email address: Daniel.sherwin@mail.utoronto.ca

### **Course Description**

Welcome to POL 101, The Real World of Politics! This course will explore some of the major topics and themes that are shaping our political lives, including: the COVID-19 Pandemic, Climate Change, the Russian Invasion of Ukraine, Indigenous politics and #Landback, Anti-black racism and Black Lives Matters, Liberalism, Democracy, Social Movements, Feminism, and Freedom. These topics will be explored through a sustained engagement with the idea of *the state*. What is the state? What can it do and what can't it do? How do political actors change the state? What does politics look like beyond the state?

### **Learning Objectives:**

Through this course, students will:

- Deepen their understanding of the political events, ideas, and debates that are shaping the world
- Become comfortable reading and extracting information from a variety of sources, including academic articles and books, media articles, reports, and podcasts
- Critically evaluate a variety of sources, analyzing the substance and merits of their arguments
- Develop their ability to make persuasive written and verbal arguments about politics

### **Overview**

This class will be conducted online. Because it is a summer course, we will be working on a compressed schedule. Each week, two lectures will be uploaded to quercus. Each Thursday, you will attend an online tutorial. I will also upload a third, skills-based mini-lesson, which will support your assignments for that week.

Generally speaking, lectures are designed to help you understand the weekly readings and/or to complete your assignments. Tutorials are opportunities to put your learning into practice, by discussing big ideas with your peers.

**Your Responsibilities:**

Each week, students will 1) watch two lectures, 2) complete the assigned readings (or ‘listens’) 4) submit a weekly “accountability” assignment and 4) participate in tutorial.

In four of the weeks, students will also be expected to submit a short writing assignment. No writing assignment in this class is longer than 500 words.

**Students should plan to do the reading and watch the lecture *before* their tutorial meets each week.**

**Readings**

All the readings for the course are available online or posted on Quercus. The reading load for this course is not heavy, but some of it will be written in a style that is not familiar, and require slow, careful attention.

**Tutorials**

Students are divided into online tutorial groups. Tutorials will involve a combination of group discussions, small group work, and opportunities to practice and get feedback on important writing-related skills.

Each tutorial group is assigned a TA, who will lead your discussions and be available to you for office hours (in person or online) and by email. *Your TA should be your primary point of contact for any questions about this course.*

**GRADING SCHEME**

<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Weekly short answer assignments	25% = 5% * 5, (see below)
Writing assignments	65% (see below)
Tutorial Attendance and Participation	10%

**Weekly short answer assignments - (5% x 5 assignments)**

There will be six (6) assignments over the course of the term. Your best five grades will count.

The purpose of short answer assignments is to ensure your accountability to the course and help you prepare for tutorials

Short answer assignments will be due at 10AM on Thursday (ie. Before the first tutorial). They are intended to ensure that everyone arrives in tutorial ready for discussion. For this reason, ***no extensions will be permitted on weekly short answer assignments.***

Each week, an answer key will be posted. No feedback will be given on weekly assignments.

Short answer assignments will be graded according to the following scale.

5	Excellent (Demonstrates deep understanding and thoughtful engagement: goes above and beyond)
4	Complete (Clear evidence of engagement with course materials; writing is generally clear)
2	Partially complete (Questions not fully answered; Answers demonstrate a failure to read or engage with course materials; answers are extremely unclearly written)
0	Incomplete (Questions not answered; No evidence of engagement with course materials)

**Writing assignments (65%)**

There will be four writing assignments. Detailed instructions and a rubric for each will be posted on quercus. You will receive feedback from your TAs on your writing assignments.

**Thesis statement assignment – 10%**

You will be required to write four sentences that introduce a controversy, explain the disagreement, and present a thesis statement.

**Short essay – 20%**

You will write a 400-500 mini-essay in which you take a clear stance on an assigned topic.

**Revision assignment – 10%**

You will revise and re-submit your short essay based on the feedback you received from your TA. You will also submit a 150-200 word reflection explaining the revisions you made and assessing the quality of your revised work.

**Final short essay – 25%**

You will write a 400-500 word mini-essay in which you take a clear stance on a controversy related to feminism, anti-racism, or Indigenous politics.

**Participation – 10%**

Your participation in tutorial will be evaluated by your TA. They will communicate their expectations to you. If they don't, ask.

**Assignment Deadlines at a glance**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Weekly assignment (Due Thursday at 10AM)</b>	<b>Writing Assignment</b>
<b>Week 1 (The State)</b>	May 12, 10AM: Assignment 1	
<b>Week 2 (Liberalism, Democracy)</b>	May 19, 10AM: Assignment 2	Monday, May 16: Thesis statement
<b>Week 3 (Pandemic, Climate)</b>	May 26, 10AM: Assignment 3	Friday, May 27: Short Essay
<b>Week 4 (War and International Relations)</b>	June 2, 10AM: Assignment 4	
<b>Week 5 (Race and Resistance)</b>	June 9: Assignment 5	Friday, June 14: Revisions
<b>Week 6 (Gender, Patriarchy, and Freedom)</b>	June 16: Assignment 6	Monday, June 20: Final Short essay

**Course Outline**

**Week 1: Politics and the State**

Lecture 1.1a: Introduction: Where Are We?

Lecture 1.1b: Review of Syllabus

Lecture 1.2: The State:

[podcast] David Runciman, “Hobbes” *Talking Politics: History of Ideas*

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Selections.

Garner, Robert, Peter Ferdinand, Stephanie Lawson, and David B. MacDonald.  
*Introduction to Politics: Second Canadian Edition*. Oxford University Press, 2016. “States” pp.  
139-146

Lecture 1.3: How to write a thesis statement

## **Week 2: Liberalism and Democracy (Harnessing the state)**

Lecture 2.1: Democracy:

Introduction to Politics: “What is democracy?” And “Historical Background” 56-61.

IDEA Report, “Plurality: First Past the Post” 35-44, “the Two-Round System” p. 52-3  
“Proportional Representation” 55-59; Mexico 96-99, New Zealand 100-103

Lecture 2.2: Liberalism:

*Introduction to Politics*: “Liberalism” 89-91;

John Rawls, *Theory of Justice*, sections 3, 11

Lecture 2.3: Reading Difficult Texts and Taking notes

## **Week 3: Pandemic, Climate (Can the state solve big problems?)**

Lecture 3.1: Pandemic

Adam Tooze, *Shutdown*. Chapters 3, 4.

Lecture 3.2: Climate.

Podcast: Courtney Jung, Matthew Hoffman, and Steven Bernstein.

Ann Pettifor, *The Case for the Green New Deal*. Introduction

Lecture 3.3: Making a persuasive argument

## **Week 4: War and International Relations (The state in the world)**

### Lecture 4.1: Ukraine, War, and International Relations

John Mearsheimer, 2014 “Why the Ukraine Crisis Is the West’s Fault”

Introduction to Politics, “Liberalism and the rise of International Relations” and “The Realist Turn” pp. 304-313

### Lecture 4.2: Globalization, Migration, and Sanctions

Readings TBD

### Lecture 4.3: Locating valuable secondary sources

## **Week 5: Race and Resistance (The State and Race)**

### Lecture 5.1: Race, Gender, and Colonialism

Mills, Charles W. “Overview” in *The Racial Contract*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997.

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake. “The Sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples’ Bodies.” In *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance*, 95–118. University of Minnesota Press, 2017.

### Lecture 5.2: Anti-racist Social Movements

[Podcast] Courtney Jung with Deva Woodly: Black Lives Matter

[Podcast] Daniel Sherwin with Riley Yesno: Idlenomore and #LandBack

Simpson, Leanne Betasamosake, Rinaldo Walcott, and Glen Coulthard. “Idle No More and Black Lives Matter: An Exchange (Panel Discussion)” *Studies in Social Justice; Windsor* 12, no. 1 (2018): 75–89.

### Lecture 5.3: Revising your own work

## **Week 6: Freedom (Politics beyond the state)**

### Lecture 6.1: Freedom from the State

F. Hayek *The Road to Serfdom*

Lecture 6.2: Freedom from Heteropatriarchy

Amia Srinivasan 2018 “Does anyone have the right to sex” *London Review of Books*

Lecture 6.3: Supporting your argument with evidence

## **COURSE RULES AND POLICIES**

### **Late policy**

The purpose of weekly assignments is to ensure your preparation for tutorial. As such, late weekly assignments will not be accepted. Remember that your lowest weekly assignment grade (including a zero) will be dropped.

Late writing assignments will be accepted *only* when an extension has been granted.

### **Extension policy**

If you require an extension, you should reach out to your TA *before* the assignment is due. Extensions will be granted for valid medical or family-related reasons. Extensions will be no more than one week (7 days).

In keeping with best practices in accessible pedagogy, this course has been designed to accommodate many schedules and learning styles. The assignments are designed to be low-stakes and cumulative, so you will build your skills over the course of the semester.

It is your responsibility to manage your workload throughout the semester. Look ahead in your calendar and anticipate busy periods. Try not to skip a weekly assignment early in the semester; you may want to “drop” a low grade at the end of the term.

### **Grade Appeals**

If you believe that an error has been made in one of your assignment grades, you should send an email or private Quercus message to your TA explaining the error, with clear reference to the answer key or rubric for the assignment. It is your responsibility to demonstrate that your work merits a higher grade.

Grade appeals must be raised within seven (7) days of the assignment being returned to you.

If you are unable to resolve the issue with the grading TA, you may appeal to the instructor. He can be reached at [Daniel.Sherwin@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:Daniel.Sherwin@mail.utoronto.ca). Your appeal should clearly explain why the work you submitted warrants a higher grade than it received, with clear and explicit reference to the answer key and/or rubric.

If you believe an error has been made with your participation grade, you may appeal to your tutorial TA. Tutorial TAs have total discretion over participation grades; you may not appeal to the course instructor to overturn a TAs decision.

### **Communication**

Information will be communicated to students through Quercus. You are responsible for checking Quercus regularly. You also must check your UofT e-mail regularly.

Your tutorial TA should be your first point of contact for most questions related to the course, including queries about course material, requests for extensions, and requests to regrade. Your TA will explain how to reach them during the first tutorial.

The best way to contact Daniel is by e-mail at [Daniel.sherwin@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:Daniel.sherwin@mail.utoronto.ca). You can just call him “Daniel”.

When corresponding by e-mail, please put “POL 101” at the beginning of the subject line, followed by the subject of your e-mail (for example: “JPI 201: Question about assignment 1”).

### **Accessibility**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and contact Accessibility Services at [accessibility.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:accessibility.services@utoronto.ca) <http://www.studentlife.utoronto.ca/as/contact-us>

### **Plagiarism**

Cheating and plagiarism are serious academic offences. University policy requires that course instructors refer suspected plagiarism cases to the Office of Academic Integrity for resolution. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto’s policy on plagiarism at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/advice/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize>

### **Resources**

**Accessibility Services:** The course is fully committed to providing students with fair access to their courses. Students with special needs or disabilities are strongly encouraged to register with Accessibility Services to arrange for needed accommodations.

**Writing Support:** Students can attend workshops and arrange one-on-one appointments for feedback on their written work. Students can visit [www.writing.utoronto.ca](http://www.writing.utoronto.ca) for information and advice on all aspects of academic writing. Students are encouraged to make use of the college writing centers for individualized consultations on their written assignments. Interested students should book their appointments with the writing centers early, as they fill up fast. Information about the writing centers is available at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-centres/arts-and->



science. Students can also take advantage of the Library's free "Writing Plus" academic skills workshop series, described at <http://www.writing.utoronto.ca/writing-plus>. International students can find information about the English Language Learning program (ELL), which includes practice opportunities for improving oral communication and critical reading skills, at <http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/current/advising/ell>.

**Registrar Support:** Students are encouraged to contact their registrar promptly if they experience unexpected challenges during the course that may require accommodations.

**Health and Wellness:** Students can access a wide range of programs and services to support their health and wellbeing. Many of these programs are listed at:

<https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/department/health-wellness/> 6

**Crisis Support:** Students in distress can access a range of free crisis lines available from the University of Toronto and the City of Toronto, as listed below:

- University of Toronto: <https://studentlife.utoronto.ca/task/support-when-you-feel-distressed/>
- City of Toronto: <https://www.toronto.ca/311/knowledgebase/kb/docs/articles/311-toronto/information-and-business-development/crisis-lines-suicide-depression-telephone-support-lines-non-crisis-mental-health-services.html>

Most of these crisis lines are available 24 hours a day and some address specific problems that students may be experiencing. Immediate assistance is available as follows:

- • My SSP for University of Toronto Students: 1-844-451-9700.
- • Good 2 Talk Student Helpline: 1-866-925-5454
- • Gerstein Crisis Centre: 416-929-5200
- • Distress Centres of Greater Toronto: 416-408-HELP (4357)
- • The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH): 250 College Street (walk-in)

You are not alone: please get help if you're experiencing difficulties or are in distress.