

POL101:
The Real World of Politics
University of Toronto
Department of Political Science
Winter 2023

Professor Courtney Jung
Email address: courtney.jung@utoronto.ca
Wednesday 10-12, BT101

Course description

Welcome to POL 101, The Real World of Politics! This course introduces students to the field of political science through the major issues and problems of contemporary politics. Students will engage the concepts and debates that anchor the study of political science through lectures and discussions that directly address contemporary political problems and issues such as climate change, elections and electoral systems, liberalism, race and racism, democracy, Indigenous rights, social movements, political participation, and the politics of the pandemic. Students will also learn important academic skills in this course, including how to take notes, how to read and think critically, and how to write. This is a terrific course to take in your first year because our TAs are specially trained to teach writing, and the course assignments are also designed to teach critical thinking and writing.

Learning Objectives:

Through this course, students will:

- Deepen their understanding of the political events, ideas, and debates that are shaping the world
- Learn to take notes
- 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

Course structure and policies

This class will be conducted in-person. The course includes weekly in-person lectures and weekly tutorials. Please sign up for a tutorial if you have not already done so.

Students should plan to do the weekly reading before the lecture, because the lectures will make reference to, and assume knowledge of, the readings.

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.

Tutorials

Students in this course must attend a weekly in-person tutorial. 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

Assignment 1: Introductory paragraph, including thesis statement.

Due Feb 12, 2023 midnight EST. (15%)

Assignment 2: Using evidence to make a persuasive argument

Due Mar 19, 2023 midnight EST. (15%)

Three sets of lecture notes: Submitted at the end of lecture (15%)

Final Exam: to be held during final exam period (40%)

Participation in tutorial (15%)

Assignments and lecture notes will be submitted online, using the ‘assignments’ function on Quercus. A rubric will be distributed with each assignment.

Tutorial Participation – 15%

Your participation in tutorial will be evaluated by your TA. Your participation grade will be based on tutorial attendance, active engagement in class discussion, and evidence that you have attended the lecture and completed the reading for the week. All tutorials for this class will be in person. Tutorial attendance is mandatory for this course.

Lecture Notes – 15%

Your lecture notes will be graded three times over the course of the semester. Professor Jung will let students know at the beginning of the lecture whether they are required to submit their notes for that lecture. On those days, students will submit their lecture notes online through Quercus before they leave class. Students who take handwritten notes should upload a photo of their notes. Each set of notes will be worth 5% of a student’s grade.

Late policy

Late assignments will be penalized at a rate of 1% per day.

Lecture notes must be submitted immediately after lecture; late notes will not be accepted.

Corrupted files policy

It is virtually impossible for a file to become corrupted through submission to Quercus.

Therefore “corrupted files” will be penalized as late submissions. If you are concerned about your file being corrupted, please copy and paste the text of your assignment into the text box of an email and send it to the TA at the time of your submission. This way, if anything happens to your file, you can show that it was completed on time.

Extension policy

If you require an extension, you should speak 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. You will have two weeks to complete each assignment. The assignments are designed to be cumulative, so you will build your skills over the course of the semester. It is your responsibility to manage your workload throughout the semester so that you are able to submit your work on time.

Grade Appeals

Grade appeals must be raised within seven (7) days of the assignment being returned to you. If you believe 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 rubric for the assignment. It is your responsibility to demonstrate that your work merits a higher grade. Your TA will send your graded assignment and your written appeal to a designated appeals TA who will regrade your assignment. Remember that your grade may go up or down on appeal.

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 Head TA or Professor to overturn a TA's decision regarding participation.

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>

It is now possible to ask a chatbot to do your work for you. Use of a chatbot, and any other method of presenting work that is not your own as your own, also counts as plagiarism. Be aware that there is also software that detects the use of chatbots. Faculty and TAs in the Faculty of Arts and Sciences are on high alert this semester as we explore how this new technology affects university pedagogy. Please do not use chatbots to complete, inspire, or enhance the work you hand in this semester.

Resources

Accessibility Services: The university 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 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.

Course Outline.

Required readings, podcasts, and videos/documentaries will be posted in weekly "modules" on Quercus.

Introduction (1/11)

No tutorial this week

Democracy (1/18)

Tutorials start this week

Read: Robert Kaplan, “Was Democracy Just a Moment?” *The Atlantic Monthly*, December 1997 online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1997/12/was-democracy-just-a-moment/6022/>

Watch: “Francis Fukuyama and The End of History,”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YM6p-15fjBg>

Skim: “How democracy is under threat across the globe,”
<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/08/19/world/democracy-threat.html?searchResultPosition=3>

Electoral systems and elections (1/25)

Read: Pippa Norris, “Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems” *International Political Science Review* Vol. 18, No. 3

Political Participation (2/1)

Read: Schlozman, Verba, and Brady, “Participation is not a Paradox: The View from American Activists” *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 25, No.1 (Jan., 1995) pp1-36

Skim: Hahrie Han, “Practicing Democracy,”
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bzDXXZHQaJc>

Social movements (2/8)

Listen: Professor Jung’s podcast interview with Professor Deva Woodly

Read: Jelani Ince, Zackery Dunivin, “Black Lives Matter protests are shaping how people understand racial inequality,” *The Conversation*, March 30, 2022.
<https://theconversation.com/black-lives-matter-protests-are-shaping-how-people-understand-racial-inequality-178254>

Liberalism, Rights, and Constitutions (2/15)

Read: Ryan, Alan. 1993. “Liberalism.” In *A Companion to Contemporary Political Philosophy*, edited by Robert E. Goodin and Philip Pettit, 291–311. Malden, MA; Oxford: Blackwell Pub.

Winter reading week (2/22) NO CLASS

Race, Gender, and Politics (3/1)

Read: Anthony Marx, "Race-making and the nation-state," *World Politics*, Vol 48, Issue 2, 1996

Read: Erin Tolley "Lack of council diversity puts municipalities at risk," *Policy Options*, October 2018

Read: Terry Glavin, "There are more crucial issues than the colour of Vancouver's council" *National Post*, October 31, 2018

Indigenous politics and reconciliation (3/8)

Read: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015. *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*. "Legacy," pp. 135-183

[http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Honouring the Truth Reconciling for the Future July 23 2015.pdf](http://www.trc.ca/websites/trcinstitution/File/2015/Honouring_the_Truth_Reconciling_for_the_Future_July_23_2015.pdf)

Read: Jung, Courtney. 2018. "Reconciliation: Six Reasons to Worry." *Journal of Global Ethics* 14 (2): 252–65.

The politics of personal responsibility (3/15)

Read: Wiedemann, Andreas and Wise, Tess, "The Dog-Whistle Politics of Personal Responsibility, Credit, and the American Welfare State," (July 17, 2020). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3579128> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3579128>

Listen: "Reasons to be cheerful podcast: The winner takes it all" with Michael Sandel

Climate change (3/22)

Read: Steven Bernstein and Matthew Hoffman, "Why action on climate change gets stuck and what to do about it," (<https://theconversation.com/why-action-on-climate-change-gets-stuck-and-what-to-do-about-it-128287>)

Listen: Professor Jung's podcast interview with Steven Bernstein and Matt Hoffman

Stasis and Progress in Politics (3/29)

Reading to be determined

To be determined (4/5)