

PROFESSIONAL NORMS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE

PL SC 511
M 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM
236 Pond Lab.

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Office Hours: M 2:30-3:30 (And by Appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is the first of two courses in a required series on professional development in the graduate program in political science. The first course focuses specifically on fundamental knowledge and skills that will help graduate students throughout graduate school but also in their later careers as a scholar. The topics over the course of the semester fall into three main themes: 1) understanding the norms and requirements of the profession; 2) the fundamentals of good research; and 3) an introduction to teaching. Professionalization topics include planning your graduate school years, putting together a curriculum vita, communicating with senior scholars, and writing the MA; teaching topics including planning a course and recitation sections, preparing lectures or discussion classes, as well as documenting your teaching; and the research fundamentals that we will discuss include defining problems, crafting arguments, outlining and revising manuscripts.

OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the course, students will be able to:

- (1) Explain the procedures and milestones characteristic of the Ph.D. program in political science.
- (2) Compose and maintain a curriculum vitae and professional website.
- (3) Describe your approach to teaching.
- (4) Demonstrate the ability to teach undergraduate students both orally and in writing.

COURSE MATERIALS

We will read a variety of short pieces. I will post them on Canvas or circulate them via e-mail. We will read extensively from two books:

- *How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* by Ambrose et al.
- *Ethics and Experiments: Problems and Solutions for Social Scientists and Policy Professionals*, ed. Desposito

Both books are available for free e-Reading through the Penn State Library, or you may want to purchase a copy.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading for the course will be pass/fail. Grading for the course is as follows: Participation (20%), Attendance at Talks (20%), Professional Image Portfolio (30%), and Teaching Portfolio (30%). You must receive a grade of 70% *and complete all written assignments by the end of finals week* in order to pass this course. Failure to complete all written assignments by 5PM on the Friday of finals week will constitute failure of the course.

Participation. Please remember that attending class and sitting silently is not, by definition, “participation.” This is a graduate seminar. It is your collective job to carry the majority of our class discussion. Everyone’s experience in this course is enhanced by regular attendance and active participation; conversely, everyone’s experience suffers if individuals do not participate. Remember that a sincere question often adds as much (if not more) to our understanding of the course material as an explanation of the week’s readings. So, don’t be afraid to speak up! Of course, repeated absences harm your participation grade by limiting your opportunity to contribute to our conversation.

Attendance at Department Talks. Over the course of the semester, you must attend 5 research talks. These can be in the department’s speaker series, the professionalization brownbag series, the CAPR brownbag series, job talks

(should we have any), or in another venue on campus so long as the speaker is addressing a topic that relates, in some way, to political science. Within 2 weeks of each talk, you will submit a 1-2 page memo to Canvas that describes: (1) the speaker, date, and location, (2) the central argument of the talk, and (3) your reaction to the talk: what about the research presented at the talk did you find compelling or lacking? What about the speaker's presentation (in terms of the slides and effective oral communication techniques) did you find compelling or lacking?

Professional Portfolio. Your major assignment for the first half of the seminar is to craft your professional and public images by creating the following documents. These are documents you will continually keep updated as you progress through graduate school. The "final" version of these documents are due by noon on the Monday of Spring Break, uploaded to Canvas.

1. *Backwards Calendar.* The "starting" point for your backwards calendar should be the date you intend to complete and defend your dissertation, and the ending point should be this semester. Try to include as much detail as you can. You must include your candidacy exam, your MA essay defense, your comprehensive exam schedule and your plan for when you will hold your dissertation proposal defense. Also consider adding items such as conference attendance, fieldwork (if applicable), planned paper submissions to journals and any fellowships or grants you might want to apply for. A draft of this document is due, uploaded to Canvas, at our second class meeting.
2. *Curriculum Vitae.* You will create and revise a curriculum vitae. A draft of this document is due, uploaded to Canvas, at our third class meeting.
3. *Professional Website.* You will create a professional website. You can use any web hosting service you like, but remember that PSU has an easy-to-use option available: <https://sites.psu.edu/>. You must provide me a link to a draft of your website by Feb. 15.
4. *CITI Training.* Students taking the seminar are required to complete online training for Penn State CITI (Collaborative Training Initiative). CITI provides short online training modules regarding the ethical conduct of research. For this course, you are required complete two training modules: the Social and Behavioral **RCR** (Responsible Conduct of Research) and the **Human Subjects Research**. To complete these trainings, go to the CITI website (<https://www.research.psu.edu/education/citi>) and login. Once you complete the online training, there is a short test. You must receive at least 80% in order to pass; when you pass, you receive a certificate of completion. Please upload your certificate to Canvas and also provide it Kristy.

Draft Teaching Portfolio. Your major assignment for the second half of the seminar is to craft a teaching portfolio. The "final" version of these documents are due by the Wednesday of Finals Week, uploaded to Canvas.

1. *Teaching Philosophy Statement.* A 1-2 page (single-spaced) summary of your teaching philosophy. The document should describe both (1) your attitude toward instruction and mentoring and (2) the sorts of classes you expect to be able to teach when you are on the job market.
2. *Course Visitation Reflection.* You will attend one course meeting for two different undergraduate courses taught by tenured, tenure-track, or teaching faculty in our department (e.g. not classes taught by other graduate students). You should write a 5-page essay that reflects on your experience, comparing and contrasting the course activities and instructional approaches taken by the instructors, noting both what you found to be successful and what you might do differently. **You should check with the instructor to receive their permission before you visit their course.**
3. *Course Plan.* Choose any undergraduate class in this department. Your task is to draft:
 - a. A "clean" syllabus for that course, like you would give to your class.
 - b. A rationale for that syllabus, explaining all of the important decisions you made (e.g. the sort of students you expect to have in the course and how the course might change if those assumptions were different, sets of topics and their ordering on the syllabus, the readings, the assessment plan, and the activities you plan to help students learn). All together, I expect the rationale will be 6-8 pages long.

- c. Two Sample Assignments. These should be assignments for major assessment milestones in the class (e.g. final projects or papers) or well-developed essay questions.
4. *Microteaching*. You will teach a short lesson to the class. More information on this assignment will be provided in class.

EXPECTATIONS/PROCEDURES

RESPECT. In this course, we are all engaged in the endeavor of preparing ourselves for successful careers. Everyone comes to this course with a different background in the subject (particularly with respect to the technical aspects of the readings). It is important that we all treat each other with the utmost respect.

CRITICISM. This is a seminar and, as such, it is our job to be critics. As you read for class, you should examine the goals of an article, the persuasiveness of the evidence it presents in support of its theory, and the place it makes for itself in the literature. Remember that a harsh critique isn't the same thing as an intellectually rigorous one, and focus less on what you perceive to be flaws and more on what you could learn from the article. Oftentimes, it is more difficult to point out what is "good" than what is "bad". In other words, treat our authors the way you would like to be treated by students in your shoes in 20 years.

OFFICE HOURS. I have office hours, listed at the beginning of the syllabus. My door is usually open, and you shouldn't hesitate to stop by outside of my scheduled office hour times.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS. Assignments not submitted by the assigned due date and time are late. This is a graduate class, so I expect you to communicate with me about things that affect your ability to get an assignment in on time. All assignments must be completed to complete this course.

EXTENSIONS. Extensions will be granted in only the most severe circumstances. If you foresee the need for an extension, one needs to be requested and granted at least 24 hours before the due date. No one is entitled to an extension; they will be offered only at my discretion.

A NOTE ON GRADES. I do not *give* grades. You *earn* grades. It is essential that you are proactive regarding your performance in this course; *do not wait* until grades are posted and then ask how your grade could be improved. At that point, barring a mathematical error on my part, it cannot be. If, at any point, you are unsure of your current standing in the course, please come to my office hours.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY. I take violations of the University's academic dishonesty policy—reprinted below—very seriously. Please review the policy and let me know if you have any questions.

The Department of Political Science, along with the College of the Liberal Arts and the University, takes violations of academic dishonesty seriously. Observing basic honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless an instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. Students uncertain about proper citation are responsible for checking with their instructor.

In an examination setting, unless the instructor gives explicit prior instructions to the contrary, whether the examination is in-class or take-home, violations of academic integrity shall consist but are not limited to any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids, or from any person or papers or electronic devices, or of any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his or her own work or not.

Lying to the instructor or purposely misleading any Penn State administrator shall also constitute a violation of academic integrity.

In cases of any violation of academic integrity it is the policy of the Department of Political Science to follow procedures established by the College of the Liberal Arts. More information on academic integrity and procedures followed for violation can be found at: <http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/student-services/academic-integrity/academic-integrity>

NOTE TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES. Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. The Student Disability Resources Web site provides [contact information for every Penn State campus](#). For further information, please visit the [Student Disability Resources Web site](#).

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, [participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation](#). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your [campus's disability services office](#) will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

COUNSELING AND PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES. Many students at Penn State face personal challenges or have psychological needs that may interfere with their academic progress, social development, or emotional wellbeing. The university offers a variety of confidential services to help you through difficult times, including individual and group counseling, crisis intervention, consultations, online chats, and mental health screenings. These services are provided by staff who welcome all students and embrace a philosophy respectful of clients' cultural and religious backgrounds, and sensitive to differences in race, ability, gender identity and sexual orientation.

[Counseling and Psychological Services at University Park \(CAPS\)](#): 814-863-0395

Penn State Crisis Line (24 hours/7 days/week): 877-229-6400

Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741

EDUCATIONAL EQUITY AND REPORTING BIAS INCIDENTS. State takes great pride to foster a diverse and inclusive environment for students, faculty, and staff. Acts of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment due to age, ancestry, color, disability, gender, gender identity, national origin, race, religious belief, sexual orientation, or veteran status are not tolerated and can be reported through Educational Equity via the [Report Bias webpage](#). You may also contact one of the following offices:

University Police Services, University Park: 814-863-1111

Multicultural Resource Center, Diversity Advocate for Students: 814-865-1773

Office of the Vice Provost for Educational Equity: 814-865-5906

Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs: 814-865-0909

Affirmative Action Office: 814-863-0471

Call 911 in cases where physical injury has occurred or is imminent.

Course Schedule

Below, you'll find a list of all class meetings, the topic we'll discuss, and the reading assignment. You should complete the reading assignment before you come to class and bring any questions that you have with you to class. In the event that deviations from this schedule are necessary, they will be announced in class.

Week 1 (1/8): A Roadmap for Graduate School

- Before Class:
- Frank Baumgartner. "Notes Concerning a Backwards Calendar of Graduate School."
 - Shorter, David. 2014. "Welcome to Graduate School." *Chronicle* 15 Sept.
 - Fidler, Chuck. 2012. "What I Learned About Surviving Graduate School." *Chronicle* Mar. 22
 - Vick, Julie Miller and Jennifer S. Furlong. 2013. "Your First Year in a Ph.D. Program" *Chronicle* 13 Nov.
 - Croxall, Brian. 2010. "An Open Letter to New Graduate Students." *Chronicle* Aug. 19.

During Class: Review syllabus. Discuss goals.

Week 2 (1/22): Presenting Yourself: CVs and Websites

- Before Class:
- Writing a CV*
- "Writing the Curriculum Vita."
 - Kelsky, Karen. "Dr. Karen's Rules of the Academic CV"
- Making an Academic Website*
- Whitson, Roger. "The Ins and Outs of a Professional Academic Website"
- Review at least 3 CVs and websites of graduate students in the department and at other departments.

Draft Backwards Calendar Due.

During Class: Bring two printed copies of your curriculum vitae to class. We will exchange these and provide feedback. Be prepared to discuss ideas for a professional website for yourself.

Week 3 (1/29): Conferences and Research Ideas

- Before Class:
- Walt, Stephen. 2016. "How to Get Tenure." *Foreign Policy* Feb. 17.
 - Rothman, "Comparatively Evaluating Potential Dissertation and Thesis Projects." *PS*
 - Lebo, Matthew. 2016. "Managing Your Research Pipeline." *PS: Political Science and Politics*.
 - Gupta, Devashree and Israel Waismel-Manor. 2006. "Network in Progress: A Conference Primer for Graduate Students." *PS: Political Science and Politics*. 39: 485-490.

Draft CV Due.

During Class: Deciding when to attend, choosing an appropriate conference, submitting a proposal, preparing a poster, presenting on a panel, serving as a discussant

Week 4 (2/5): Research-Related Issues: Collaboration, Academic Integrity, and using LaTeX and BibTeX

Before Class:

Collaboration

- McDermott, Rose, and Peter K. Hatemi. 2010. "Emerging Models of Collaboration in Political Science: Changes, Benefits, and Challenges." *PS*
- Lake, David A. "Who's On First? Listing Authors by Relative Contribution Trumps the Alphabet"
- Sigelman, Lee. "Are Two (or Three or Four... or Nine) Heads Better than One?"

Academic Integrity

- Belcher, Wendy Laura. 2009. *Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, pages 160-163 ("Avoiding Plagiarism").
- Read through the "Understanding Plagiarism" tutorial:
(<http://www.research.psu.edu/training/sari/teaching-support/authorship-plagiarism/authorship-plagiarism#online-learning-tools>).

During Class:

We will discuss professional norms regarding collaboration and coauthorship, citing sources, and managing your bibliography using software.

Week 5 (2/12): Research Ethics I: Recent Controversies and Mental Health in Academia

Before Class:

Read about several recent ethical controversies in political science. The readings marked with a * in each section are required; the others are recommended.

The LaCour-Green Gay Marriage Study

- *Singal, Jesse. 2015. "The Case of the Amazing Gay-Marriage Data: How a Graduate Student Reluctantly Uncovered a Huge Scientific Fraud." 29 May. *Science of Us*
- Brookman, Kalla, and Aronow. "Irregularities in LaCour (2014)"

The Goffman Ethnography

- *Lewis-Kraus, Gideon. 2016. "The Trials of Alice Goffman." 12 Jan. *New York Times*.
- Lubet, Steven. 2015. "Ethics on the Run." *New Rambler Review*.
- Goffman, Alice. 2015. "A Reply to Professor Lubet."

Mental Health in Academia

- *Fogg, Piper. 2009. "Grad-School Blues." *Chronicle of Higher Education*
- *Pain, Elisabeth. 2017. "Ph.D. Students Face Significant Mental Health Challenges." *Science*.

During Class:

We will discuss recent ethical controversies related to data usage and research transparency.
Draft Website due 2/15

Week 6 (2/19): Research Ethics II: The Ethics of Experiments

Before Class:

- Read the following chapters from Desposato
 1. Introduction (Desposato)
 5. "Prison States and Games of Chicken" (Driscoll)
 17. "Ethics and Research in Political Science" (Zechmeister)
 19. "Conclusion and Recommendations" (Desposato)

The Stanford-Dartmouth Montana Study

- *Johnson. 2015. "Campaign Experiment Found to be in Violation of Montana Law." *The Monkey Cage*.
- *Leeper, Thomas J. 2015. "In Defense of the Montana Experiment." 25 Oct.
- *McCulloch v. Stanford and Dartmouth* (COPP 2014-CFP-046)

During Class: We will discuss norms related to ethics in research, especially in experiments.

Week 7 (2/26): Research-Related Issues: Replication and Data Transparency

Before Class: Read about two recent controversies in political science. The readings marked with a * in each section are required; the others are recommended. We will divide various short articles pro- and anti-DA-RT among the class.

Producing Replicable Research

- *"Good Practice in Data Collection and Storage"
- *Bowers, Jake and Maarten Voors. 2016. "How to Improve Your Relationship With Your Future Self." *Revista de Ciencia Politica*. 36(3):829-848.
- *Wilson et al. 2017. "Good Enough Practices in Scientific Computing" *PLOS Computational Biology*.
- Healy, Kieran. *The Plain Person's Guide to Plain Text Social Science*.
- Nagler, Jonathan. 1995. "Coding Style and Good Computing Practices." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 28(3): 488-492.

The DA-RT Controversy in Political Science

- The Symposium on DA-RT in the Spring 2016 *Comparative Politics Newsletter*.
 - *Golder and Golder, "Letter from the Editors", Section I
 - *Each of the "Source Documents on DA-RT"
- "Openness in Political Science: Data Access and Research Transparency" Symposium in the January 2014 issue of *PS*.
- Browse the DA-RT Website: <https://www.dartstatement.org/>
- Browse the "Dialogue on DA-RT" website: <https://dialogueondart.org/>

The Replication Crisis in Psychology

- *Dominus, Susan. 2017. "When the Revolution Came for Amy Cuddy." *New York Times* 18 Oct. <<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/10/18/magazine/when-the-revolution-came-for-amy-cuddy.html>>.
- *Gelman, Andrew. 2017. "Beyond 'Power Pose': Using Replication Failures and a Better Understanding of Data Collection and Analysis to Do Better Science" 18 Oct. <<http://andrewgelman.com/2017/10/18/beyond-power-pose-using-replication-failures-better-understanding-data-collection-analysis-better-science/>>.
- *Carney, "My Position on Power Poses"

During Class: We will discuss norms related data transparency and replication.

SPRING BREAK

Professional Portfolio Due Monday.

Week 8 (3/12): Teaching, Part I: Organizing Classes and Writing Syllabi

- Before Class:
- Read Ambrose et al., Introduction + Chapters 1-3
 - Berrett, Dan. 2015. "The Unwritten Rules of College." *Chronicle of Higher Education*. 21 Sept.

During Class: Case Studies

Week 9 (3/19): Teaching, Part II: Leading Class Sessions (Lectures, Discussions, and "Active Learning")

- Before Class:
- Paul, Annie Murphy. 2015 "Are College Lectures Unfair?" *New York Times* 12 Sept.
 - Hansen, Edmund J. 2017. *20plus Tips on College Teaching*. Schreyer Institute on Teaching Excellence. Read Tips 1-15.
 - Enerson et al. 1997. *The Penn State Teacher II*. Chapters 2 and 3.
 - Lang "Small Changes in Teaching" Series, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*.
- Draft Teaching Philosophy Due.**

During Class: Case Studies

Week 10 (3/26): Teaching, Part III: Assessing Student Learning and Being a TA

- Before Class:
- Read Ambrose et al., Chapters 4-5
 - Schreyer Institute for Teaching Excellence. "A Guide to Effective Grading", "Beginning of the Semester: Questions to Ask Faculty Members", and "List of Resources to Refer Undergraduates"
 - Rank and Pool. 2014. "Writing Better Writing Assignments." *PS*.

During Class: Bring to class a draft essay prompt for a class you might teach. Case Studies

Week 11 (4/2): Teaching, Part IV: Course Climate, Teaching Evaluations, and Teaching Philosophy

- Before Class:
- Read Ambrose et al., Chapters 6, 7 and Conclusion
 - Linse, "Effective Use of SRTE Data"
 - Martin, "Gender, Teaching Evaluations, and Professional Success..." *PS*

During Class: Discuss Case Studies

Week 12 (4/9): Microteaching

- Before Class: Prepare your lesson.
- Draft Syllabus and Rationale Due.**

During Class: You will teach us!

Week 13 (4/16): Diversity and Inclusion

- Before Class:
- *Chenoweth et al. 2016. "How to Get Tenure (If You're a Woman)." *Foreign Policy* 16 Apr.
 - *Mershon and Walsh. 2016. "Diversity in Political Science: Why it Matters and How to Get It." *Politics, Groups, and Identities*.
 - *McClain et al. 2016. "Race, Power, and Knowledge: Tracing the Roots of Exclusion in the Development of Political Science in the United States." *Politics, Groups, and Identities*.
 - *Claypool and Mershon. 2016. "Does Diversity Matter? Evidence from a Survey of Political Science Faculty." *Politics, Groups, and Identities*.
 - *Beckwith, Karen. 2015. "State, Academy, Discipline: Regendering Political Science." *PS: Political Science and Politics*.
 - *Teele, Dawn Langan and Kathleen Thelen. 2017. "Gender in the Journals" *PS: Symposium on Gender Diversity in Political Methodology in the Spring 2014 issue of The Political Methodologist*.

Course Visit Reflection Due.

During Class: We will discuss issues related to diversity and inclusion, drawing on a panel discussion.

Week 14 (4/23): Next Steps. Writing an MA Thesis.

- Before Class:
- King, Gary. "Dissertation Advice"
 - Vick Julie Miller and Jennifer S. Furlong. 2014. "Your Third Year in a Ph.D. Program" *Chronicle* 8 Jan.

During Class: Discuss Summer plans and MA Thesis Ideas.

All Department Talk Reflections due by Friday (2/27).

Finals Week

Turn in Teaching Portfolio by Wednesday (5/2) at noon.