

Readings in Political Science

Fall 2015

Department of Paideia

Busan University of Foreign Studies

Professor Rob Whyte, D570

Office hours: TBA

Course Description

This course provides an introduction to some of the key ideas in political science and, by extension, some insight to the challenges facing contemporary societies and states. These ideas - theories, concepts and questions - relate to democracy, ideology, legitimacy, propaganda, nationalism and globalization, to mention a few. Based on this foundation of knowledge, students will be able to describe and analyze issues and arguments in modern politics.

Course Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Define, describe and exemplify a wide range of key concepts including ideology, the state, democracy and legitimacy.
- Demonstrate an ability to think critically by constructing and evaluating arguments related to political concepts and systems.
- Describe the essential formal and informal features of the U.S. political system, including the three branches of government, voting system, and political culture.

Course Structure and Methodology

2 hours of lectures and 1 hour of presentations and workshops.

The course will operate with two different but overlapping sections. Each week there will be a two-hour lecture and class discussion based on the textbook. Discussion questions to help students learn, remember and understand the reading material will be part of this work.

The third hour of each week will be used to develop specific critical thinking and reasoning skills that will help students understand and evaluate some of the key concepts in the reading. After the midterm exam, we will use this time to listen to and evaluate contemporary political ideas via readings, podcasts and videos.

Textbook

Politics (4th edition) by Andrew Heywood, Palgrave Foundations, 2013. Additional material (e.g. readings, podcasts, videos) will be posted on the instructor's website (www.eslwriting.org). The weekly reading is not long but it is challenging; students are encouraged to keep up with the reading; this is not a book that can be read in a meaningful way over a weekend.

Extra Reading Material

Students are encouraged to read outside materials on a weekly basis. I suggest The Economist and the New York Times or other international English-language newspapers (available online).

Evaluation

There will be a midterm exam, a final exam, two quizzes and a written report. Attendance is important for every student's learning. Please come to every class, and come on time. Students who are frequently late will be penalized: 2 lates = one absence. Students who are absent because of school events or work will see their attendance and participation scores negatively impacted.

Attendance 10%

Participation 10%

Midterm exam 25%

Final exam 25%

Critical thinking test 10%

Quiz (10%)

Written report (10%)

Schedule

Week 1: Intro, course overview, what is politics? (Aug 31)

Week 2: Chapter 2 Political Ideas and Ideologies (Sept 7)

Week 3: Chapter 3 Politics and the State (Sept 14)

Week 4: Chapter 4 Democracy and Legitimacy (Sept 21)

Week 5: Chapter 5 Nations and Nationalism (Sept 21)

Week 6: holiday (Oct 5)

Week 7: Chapter 6 Political Economy and Globalization (Sept 28)

Week 8: midterm exam (Oct 19)

Week 9: Chapter 7 Politics, Society and Identity (Oct 26)

Week 10: Chapter 8 Political Culture and the Media (Oct 12)

Week 11: Chapter 12 Government Systems and Regimes (Oct 19)

Week 12: Chapter 13 Political Executive and Leadership (Nov 9)

week 13: presentations

week 14 review

Week 15: Reading week (Dec 7)

Week 16: Final exam (Dec 14)

Other Matters

The course methods and structure may change depending on student needs and abilities.

At the end of the semester, please do not ask me to change your grade because you have a special situation. If you need a high score, work hard, study hard and come to every class on time ready to learn. Unless I made a calculation error, I will not change your final score.

Every class, you will need four things: a writing tool (e.g. a pencil), a notebook, the textbook and a dictionary. Phone dictionaries are okay. Students who do not bring these learning tools to class may be marked absent.