

Sociology 21: Political Sociology Spring 2015

Class: Political Sociology (Sociology 21)
Meeting: MWF 11:15-12:20; Location: 108 Reed Hall
X-hour Tu 12:00-12:50; Location: 108 Reed Hall

Instructor: Joseph DiGrazia
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Office Hours: Tuesday 2:00-4:00 (or by appointment)
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Course Description

Political sociology is the study of how groups of people solve problems; that is, how they cooperate and engage in conflict over the distribution of power and resources. This course will serve as an introduction to the field, focusing on both theory and its application to real life cases. We will examine nation states and their relationships with their citizens; social movements, how they emerge and why they may succeed or fail; and individual-level political behavior, beliefs, and attitudes.

Course Objectives

Students who successfully complete Sociology 21 will be able to:

- Think about political issues from a sociological perspective.
- Apply the concepts learned in class to current political events and policy debates.
- Consider controversial topics in a respectful manner that incorporates multiple viewpoints and synthesizes complex information.
- Construct articulate, thoughtful and effective arguments in writing.

Required Texts

Olson, Mancur. 1965. *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press

All additional required readings will be available on Canvas. All readings must be completed before coming to class.

Course Requirements

Class Participation

Students are required to attend class sessions and to actively participate in class discussions and activities. What does class participation entail? It means you must be an *active* participant in the class. This includes: 1) contributing to class discussion; 2) demonstrating that you have read and made an effort to seriously engage with the material. If you come into class, sit quietly every day, and do not contribute to class discussion you will receive a 0 for class participation.

In Class Group Assignments

Throughout the quarter we will often have small in-class assignments which you will be asked to complete in groups. These assignments will ask you to engage with the reading material and lecture content within your groups. It is important that you keep up on the readings so that you can fully participate and contribute to the group. You may miss one group assignment without adversely impacting your grade for this component, however you will not be able to make-up missed group work.

Take Home Exams

There will be two take-home essay exams. These are open book and open note, however you should not discuss your answers with anyone else. The exam dates are listed in the course outline.

Book Review

You will be required to write a short book review (approximately 5 pages) on a book manuscript of your choice. I will distribute a list of books to choose from during the first week of class. We will discuss the book review in greater detail in class.

Reading Response Questions

Students will be required to submit at least two questions on the required readings to the class Canvas site each week. There is no limit to the number of questions you can submit, but your questions should pertain to at least two different readings each week. Questions should be submitted by 9am the morning of the class to which the reading pertains. Questions can address the argument, methods or findings in the reading as well as how the piece is connected to the broader themes and concepts we will be discussing over the quarter.

Grading

Your final grade for the class will be based on the course requirements listed above, as shown in the table below. Please note the following about grades: 1) I do not round grades; 2) I **do not negotiate final grades** unless an error was made.

<u>Component</u>	<u>Total Percentage</u>
Participation	5%
Group Assignments	10%
Reading Questions	15%
Book Review	20%
Take Home Exams (2)	50%
Total	<u>100%</u>

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

A	100-93%	C+	79.9-77%
A-	92.9-90%	C	76.9-73%
B+	89.9-87%	C-	72.9-70%
B	86.9-83%	D	69.9%-60
B-	82.9-80%	E	<60

Guidelines and Policies

Honor Principle

All academic work is to be conducted in accordance with Dartmouth's principles of academic honor (<http://www.dartmouth.edu/~uja/honor/>). It may also be helpful for students to read Dartmouth's statement on sources and citations: <https://writing-speech.dartmouth.edu/learning/materials/sources-and-citations-dartmouth>

Religious Observances

Some students may wish to take part in religious observances that occur during this academic term. If you have a religious observance that conflicts with your participation in the course, please meet with me before the end of the second week of the term to discuss appropriate accommodations.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities enrolled in this course and who may need disability-related classroom accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Student Accessibility Services office may be consulted to discuss appropriate implementation of any accommodation requested.

Outline of Topics Covered in Class

Below is an outline of the topics to be covered during the course along with the readings for each class. The schedule should be considered tentative and potentially subject to change should the need arise.

Topic	Associated Readings
	1. Introductory Concepts: Power, Conflict, and Collective Action Problems
3-30: Introduction	
4-1: Power and Conflict	Lipset 1960. <i>Political Man</i> (Canvas) Lukes. 2005. <i>Power: A Radical View</i> (Canvas)
4-3: The Problems of Collective Action	Olson. 1965. <i>The Logic of Collective Action</i> (pg 1-22; 33-52)
	2. The State

4-6: Theories of the State	Gamson. 1975. "The Permeability of the Political Arena" from <i>The Strategy of Social Protest</i> (Canvas) Domhoff. 1990. "Social Networks, Power, and the State" from <i>The Power Elite and the State</i> (Canvas)
4-8: Policy: The racial politics of the US welfare state	Gilens, 1999. Why Americans Hate Welfare (ch1 and 3) (Canvas)
4-10: Policy: The racial politics of the US welfare state	Gilens. 1999. <i>Why Americans Hate Welfare</i> (ch 5 and parts of ch 6) (Canvas)
	3. Political Parties, Organizations, Firms and Unions
4-13: Pressure Groups and Politics	Olson. 1965. <i>The Logic of Collective Action</i> (pg. 53-65, 111-131) Bone. 1958. "Political Parties and Pressure Group Politics" (Canvas)
4-15: Corporate Lobbies	Walker. 2009. "Privatizing Participation" (Canvas)
4-17: Labor Unions Receive First Take Home Exam	Olson. 1965. <i>The Logic of collection Action</i> (pg 66-97) Pearson (CNN) 2012. "What's the 'right-to-work' battle all about?" (Canvas)
	4. Social Movements and Collective Behavior
4-20: Social Movements and Politics	Tilly. 2004. <i>Social Movements, 1768-2004</i> (Canvas) Begin Reading for book report
4-22: Resource Mobilization First Take Home Exam Due	McCarthy and Zald. 1977. "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory" (Canvas) Continue Reading for book report
4-24 : Political Opportunities	McAdam. 1996. "Conceptual Origins, Current Problems, Future Directions" from <i>Comparative perspectives on social movements</i> (Canvas) Continue Reading for book report
4-27: Social Networks and Recruitment	McAdam. 1986. "Recruitment to High Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer" (Canvas) Continue Reading for Book Report
4-29: Narrative, Identity, and Culture	Polleta. 1998. "It Was Like a Fever..." (Canvas) Continue Reading for Book Report
5-1: Impact on Policy Watch "Eyes on the Prize" film by	Soule and King. 2006. "The Stages of the Policy Process and the Equal Rights Amendment, 1972-

this date.	1982” (Canvas) Continue Reading for Book Report
	5. Terrorism, Political Violence, and Reactionary Politics
5-4: Theories of Threat	McVeigh. 2009. <i>The Rise of the Ku Klux Klan</i> , (Canvas) Van Dyke and Soule. 2002. “Structural Change and the Mobilizing Potential of Threat” (Canvas)
5-6: Terrorism	Jurgensmeyer,. 2001. “Terror in the Name of God” (Canvas) Pape. 2003. “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism” (Canvas)
5-8: Riots Book Reports Due	Olzak et al. 1996. “Poverty, Segregation and Race Riots 1960 to 1993” (Canvas)
	6. Political Opinions, Beliefs, and Behaviors
5-11: Public Opinion	Zaller. 1992. <i>The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion</i> (Chapters 1-2), (Canvas)
5-13 Public Opinion Models and Elite Discourse	Zaller. 1992. <i>The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion</i> (Chapter 3, 12), (Canvas)
5-15: Political Participation and Voting	Brady, et al. 1995. “Beyond SES: A resource Model of Political Participation” (Canvas)
5-18: Misinformation	Clay et al. 2010. “Misinformation and the 2010 Election” (Canvas) Kloor. 2012. “GMO Opponents Are the Climate Skeptics of the Left” (Canvas)
5-20: Motivated Reasoning	Nyhan and Reifler. 2010. “When Political Corrections Fail,” (Canvas)
5-22: Conspiracy Theories	Uscinski and Parent. 2014. <i>American Conspiracy Theories</i> (Canvas)
5-25: Memorial Day	No classes today
	7. The Internet and Politics
5-27: Online Organizing and Participation	Bennett and Segerberg. 2012. “The Logic of Connective Action” (Canvas)
5-29: Twitter Revolution? Receive Second Take Home Exam	Grossman. 2009. “Iran’s Protests: Why Twitter is the Medium of the Movement” (Canvas) Christiansen. 2011. “Twitter Revolutions? Addressing Social Media and Dissent” (Canvas) Alterman. 2011. “The Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted” (Canvas)

6-1: Recap	
6-5: Take home exam due Second Take home Exam Due by 4:00pm	