This course provides an introduction to political science as a discipline and a profession. For our review of the discipline, we will consider a variety of approaches to the study of policies. For our review of the profession, we will discuss matters both broad (e.g., the life of the scholar) and narrow (e.g., obtaining research grants) that are of interest to those building professional careers in political science, particularly in academia.

The purpose of the course is to provide an orientation to basic features of scholarly life. We cannot examine all the various dimensions of this life in a one-credit seminar. The goal is, more modestly, to introduce you to some of the issues—and some of our faculty—at an early point in your scholarly career. Through the course readings and discussion, you will begin to form your own perspective on political science as a discipline and profession.

Requirements

Active Participation. The quality of this seminar depends on the active participation of all students. Everyone is expected to digest the required readings before class and to participate actively in discussion. It is essential to have a good understanding of each reading—not only individually, but, where appropriate, how they fit together.

Reaction Papers. To facilitate our conversations, you should submit a one-page, single-spaced reaction paper each week of the semester. Reaction papers should be just that: they should indicate your responses to, questions about, and observations about the week’s required readings. In them you should feel free to raise points of agreement or disagreement you might have with the various authors. Some weeks it might be a particular author that provokes a reaction; other weeks it might be several of the authors. Do not feel you must respond to every author. The key to this exercise is coming to class prepared with a reaction to some aspect of the week’s readings. When we enter the second half of the course (the profession), you might
find that your reactions are more in the form of questions—for example, questions about the job market that you would like answered that were not answered satisfactorily in the readings.

These papers are required but will not be given a letter grade. Please upload the paper in PDF format no later than 6:00 pm each Tuesday to the dropbox at the Learn@UW site.

_Paper_. In addition to the weekly reaction papers, you will prepare a five-page essay. For this paper you will propose how a reading from one of your substantive seminars this semester could be studied differently using one of the approaches we discussed in the first part of the course. For example, assume in one of your classes you covered voting behavior, and the reading and discussion was based largely on behavioralist research. How might this research topic be approached by a rational choice approach? What, if anything, might this add to our understanding of this topic? Are there important questions one might get at more successfully using this alternative approach? No reading beyond what you have already read for your courses is expected or necessary for this assignment.

The five-page essay is due Monday, December 10 at 6:00 pm. Please upload the paper in PDF format to the dropbox at the Learn@UW site. Do not submit a hard copy of the paper.

_Final Grade_. Your final grade for the seminar will be determined as follows: 50% for submission of reaction papers, 25% for the short essay, and 25% for class participation.

_Readings_

Most readings are available on the Learn@UW site for PS 800 <https://learnuw.wisc.edu>; a few are instead available at the web addresses below. A general disclaimer: the substantive articles assigned for this course are not necessarily the “great” or “best” works in a given area; rather, they illustrate a given perspective, issue, or type of research. Please note that the reading list may be revised as we proceed through the semester.
I. Political Science as a Discipline

Introduction
September 5

Where We Have Been and Where We Are Going?
September 12
Guest: Crawford Young

Required

Recommended

Political Theory
September 19
Guest: Daniel Kapust

Required

Recommended
Positivism and Behavioralism
September 26
Guest: John Ahlquist

Required

Recommended

Rational Choice Theory
October 3
Guest: Maggie Peters

Required

History and Ideas
October 10
Guest: Erica Simmons

Required

Recommended
II. Political Science as a Profession

Peeking Ahead to the Job Market (and Tenure)
October 17
Guest: Yoshiko Herrera

Required

Recommended

Conferences Aren’t Just for Conferring
October 24
Guest: Ryan Owens

Required
Christopher Zorn. “A Typology of Political Science Professional Meetings.” [modified]

Recommended
Publishing Not Perishing
October 31
Guest: Rikhil Bhavnani

Required

Recommended

Becoming a Teacher
November 7
Guest: David Canon

Required
Edward M. Bumila. 2011. “Graduate Students as Independent Instructors: Seven Things to Know about Teaching Your Own Course while in Graduate School.” *PS* 44: 557-60.

Recommended
Teaching and Learning Excellence at UW. [https://tle.wisc.edu](https://tle.wisc.edu)
Money Helps
November 14
Guest: Aili Tripp

Required

Recommended
UW Research & Sponsored Programs web site. http://www.rsp.wisc.edu/

No Class for Thanksgiving holiday
November 21

Professional Ethics are Actually Important
November 28
Guest: Donald Downs

Required

Recommended

Academic Misconduct policies at UW (Student Assistance & Judicial Affairs). <http://students.wisc.edu/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html>

**Life of the Scholar**

**December 5**

Guest: Kathy Cramer Walsh

**Required**


**Recommended**


<http://www.apsanet.org/imgtest/womeninpoliticalscience.pdf>

**Monday, December 10:** Five-page essay is due by 6:00 pm in the Learn@UW dropbox.

**Doing the Dissertation**

**December 12**

Guest: Lisa Martin

**Required**


Review a few of the recent winners of APSA dissertation awards. (The 8 awards are listed at <http://www.apsanet.org/content_4113.cfm> and dissertations can be found through the UW library web site.)

Recommended

Review handouts from the orientation packet.