Political Science 800
Political Science as a Discipline and Profession
Fall 2014
Wednesdays 5:30-6:45pm
422 North Hall

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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.

To facilitate this process, prior to each week's class, you will post 1–2 questions or comments related to that week's readings on the class discussion board, available on the course website at Learn@UW. The deadline for posting questions is 6 am the day of the seminar. I will share these comments with our guest faculty member before class. Please come to class prepared to discuss your comment, plus that of the person who posted just before you on the discussion board (if you posted first, the person who posted last).

Workshops and Colloquia. Much of the work of political science takes place in workshops and colloquia, with visiting speakers and discussion of written work. I want you to get in the habit of attending these. You will already be attending the workshop or colloquium for your primary subfield. I ask you to also attend a) at least one meeting of the workshop or colloquium for
some other subfield, and at least one meeting of some other group (MAD, Political Behavior, the seminar series for an area center, etc.). By the last day of class, you should turn in a 2–3 page paper (hard copy and PDF at Learn@UW), single-spaced, reflecting on the process by which ideas are exchanged and developed in different corners of the academy.

Final Grade. Your final grade for the seminar will be determined as follows: 50% for class participation and advance comments, 50% for attendance of colloquia and workshops and the related paper.

Readings and Schedule

Most readings are available through the Box folder shared with members of this class; 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.

I. Political Science as a Discipline

Introduction
September 3

Positivism and Behavioralism
September 10
Guest: Noam Lupu

Required

Recommended

Rational Choice Theory
September 17
Guest: Andy Kydd

Required

**Political Theory**

**September 24**

Guest: Rick Avramenko

**Required**


**Recommended**


**History and Ideas**

**October 1**

Guest: Erica Simmons

**Required**


**Recommended**


**Department and Disciplinary History**

**October 8**

Guest: Crawford Young

**Required**


**Recommended**


II. Political Science as a Profession

**Publishing Not Perishing**  
**October 15**  
Guest: David Canon

**Required**  

**Recommended**  

**Writing Well**  
**October 22**  
Guest: Ryan Owens

**Recommended**


**The Dissertation**  
**October 29**  
Guest: Jessica Weeks

**Required**


Recommended

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.)

**Becoming a Teacher**

**November 5**

Guest: Melanie Manion

**Required**


Edward M. Bumila. 2010. “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>

**Finding Financial Support**

**November 12**

Guest: Aili Tripp

**Required**


**Recommended**


Professional Ethics are Important
November 19
Guest: Donald Downs

Required

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

No Class for Thanksgiving Holiday
November 26

Peeking Ahead to the Job Market (and Tenure)
December 3
Guest: Yoshiko Herrera

Required
CVs of recent successful ABD candidates, to be provided.

Recommended

Life of the Scholar
December 10
Guest: Nadav Shelef

Required

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