

# Syllabus

**Course Number:** POLS 673 (88226)

**Course Title:** The Future of Political Systems

**Number of Credits:** 3

**Semester:** Spring 2017

**Course Time/Location:**

- January 11, 2017 – May 3, 2017
- Wednesdays from 4:30 pm – 7:00 pm, Hawai'i time
- On-campus: BUSAD C103

**Instructor:** Dr. Richard Lum

**Office Hours:** By appointment

**Prerequisites:** Graduate standing or instructor's permission

## Overview

This class will explore the current and future challenges that political communities may face and will engage students in designing preferred systems of governance for those situations. The issue of (re)designing political systems has grown larger and more urgent in recent years as leaders and communities around the world have come to recognize the limits of traditional governance structures in addressing complex, boundary-spanning, and interdependent challenges. This class will guide students through an examination of these and other issues and will focus on the process of designing wholly new political systems that can more effectively cope with emerging challenges.

Through class lessons and team work students will engage in the basic steps of a futures research (foresight) process: historical analysis, scanning and emerging issues analysis, and forecasting. Students will build upon the outputs of that process to engage in a political design process to develop preferred political systems for the alternative futures they forecast. In this way students will gain a process-oriented introduction to futures studies and will employ that knowledge in support of anticipating the needs and possibilities for political systems in the future and designing new political systems.

## Objectives

Students will learn/develop:

- What is futures studies and foresight work
- A fundamental process for conducting futures research
- A view of political innovation in history
- A familiarity with current and emerging governance challenges
- A familiarity with a range of emerging tools and concepts for new political systems
- A framework and process for designing political systems

## Required Texts

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## Classes

Classes will be conducted on Wednesdays from 4:30 pm to 7 pm (2 ½ hours). The first segment of class will be a lecture by the instructor (or guest lecturer) and the remaining class time will be discussion and hands-on exercises. Attendance and participation in the class is key to engaging the course material and to practicing with the tools and exercises being taught.

## Schedule

Week	Classroom and Discussion Topics	Assignments Due
<b>1</b>	Futures Studies and Foresight	20-year forecast of US government
<b>2</b>	History of Government	Futures research worksheet
<b>3</b>	Political Design Today	Timeline of innovations in governance
<b>4</b>	Competing Images of Future Systems	Analysis and critique of contemporary constitution making
<b>5</b>	Current Challenges and Complaints of Government	Analysis and critique of a distinct image of the future
<b>6</b>	Emerging Governance Challenges	Analysis of proposed solutions to current challenge or complaint of govt.
<b>7</b>	Scenarios of Political Futures	Two emerging issue write ups
<b>8</b>	New and Emerging Science Related to Governance	Scenario descriptions and visualizations
<b>9</b>	New Technologies for Governance	Scientific discovery write up
<b>10</b>	New Concepts and Models for Governance	Emerging technology write up
<b>11</b>	Designing Political Systems I	Political concept write up
<b>12</b>	Designing Political Systems II	Political design worksheet
<b>13</b>	Class Review and Stress Testing	Draft description and visualization
<b>14</b>	Designing Political Systems III	Progress report incorporating stress test results
<b>15</b>	Effecting Political Change	Revised 20-year forecast of US government
<b>16</b>	Team Presentations	Final team reports and visualizations

## Assignments

Students will have weekly assignments to complete (see Schedule, above). These assignments will be related to the lectures and readings and will help to reinforce the important points and/or skills embedded in the weekly lessons.

## Team Projects

In addition to weekly assignments, students are responsible for a team project for class. Students will work as teams to design future political systems. Each team will design in the context of a specific alternative future, which the class will develop together.

Final drafts of team projects will be submitted in multiple formats:

- Written report and description of the political design
- Visualization of the political design

Project materials should identify the advantages as well as the trade-offs inherent in the team's design choices.

Student teams will have an opportunity to present early drafts of their designs to the entire class and receive constructive feedback on improving their designs. The teams will present their final designs on the last day of class.

## Grading

Grades will be based on class participation, weekly assignments, team presentation, and team project.

Attendance and participation:	20%
Weekly assignments:	20%
Team project presentation:	20%
Team project report:	40%

**Dropping the Course:** the last day to drop the course without a “W” grade is January 17 ([http://manoa.hawaii.edu/records/calendar/spring\\_2017.html](http://manoa.hawaii.edu/records/calendar/spring_2017.html))