

POLS 110
INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL SCIENCE:
POLI SCI FI

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This is an introductory course to Political Science that focuses on the basics of what makes our lives, our experiences, our worldviews, inherently political. Using as inspiration contemporary science fiction, our goal for this semester is to answer a few basic questions that act as an actionable foundation for future political scholarship: How does experience affect policy? How are governments organized? Why do some have more power than others? How can contemporary media affect governance? None of these questions have a single answer; rather, they work as guide posts for your own research interests, allowing for the development of critical political inquiry.

By using science fiction to frame our understanding of political science — the discipline, as well as prescient theories and concepts — we'll work to extrapolate modern political assumptions and power dynamics, attempting to figure out how our experiences affect the stories we tell, and, in turn, how the stories we tell affect our experiences.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Understand basic concepts, problems, systems, ideologies, and terminologies of what is understood to be contemporary political science.
- Think critically about contemporary issues, going beyond surface level analysis to engage with multiple political perspectives and philosophies.
- Be able to use our analyses and studies of science fiction texts to understand political terms in the context of domestic and international politics, going beyond a theoretical exploration to a practical application via contemporary issues.
- Write critically, without resorting to *only* summarizing, about media and current events.
- Understand the “genre” of Political Science as written word and be able to write within this genre effectively, especially in the context of Western political theory canon.
- Be able to format writing in the style of widely used formatting types (especially MLA and Chicago).
- Be able to both write *and* present critical political science to an audience of peers.

ASSIGNMENTS

READING ANALYSES x 4

Turn in **four** (4) analytical responses to topics/concepts we've been going over in class. Each of these analyses will coincide with the conclusion of a class module, and represent a chance for you to conceptualize your understanding of overarching themes as well as specific examples and concepts. The requirements are as follows:

- 900 words, double spaced, Times New Roman (or easily read equivalent), MLA formatted with attached works cited.
- You can start with a summary, but the majority of this assignment should be *analytical*.
- Feedback will be given via rubric grades and discussions with the Professor — you have the opportunity to edit and re-submit these for a higher grade. In addition, we will be participating in writing and citation workshops throughout the semester that will help you strength your analytical writing skills in regards to these assignments.

*Detailed assignment requirements and rubrics to be provided via Laulima closer to Spring 2018.

- Fulfills WI hallmarks W1, W3, W4.

PATCHWORK SCIENCE FICTION GROUP PROJECT

In a group, you'll be responsible for analyzing a work of science fiction in regards to its politics, both in terms of in-world power relations, as well as "meta" analyses of how said work of SF can be useful in understanding our own worldviews and experiences.

That is, with this project, you'll be considering the questions:

- How does power operate within the world within this text?
- What contemporary issues does this text expand and focus on?
- How does this text make its arguments and viewpoints obvious to reader/viewer?
- How can this text be used to understand contemporary politics?

This is a "patchwork" project, meaning that group members will work together to finish a) a presentation on their chosen text and analyses, and b) a write-up of their findings, with each group member providing at least 1500 words to the analysis while working with their peers to form a cohesive final product.

While more detailed instructions and requirements will be provided via Laulima in the latter half of the semester, below are some basics:

- **Presentation:** 15 - 20 minutes, with visual aids, a clear and easy to follow flow of information, and participation from all group members.
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- **Writing Assignment:** In groups, you will provide in-depth analysis of one aspect of chosen text. For instance, one group member could focus on gender identities and constructs within this text, and how it either parallels, exacerbates, or changes contemporary ideas of identity, while another focuses on governmentally and sovereign power. The purpose of these analyses is to form a nuanced and multi-

perspective understanding of the political life of a specific piece of science fiction. 1500 words, doubled spaced, in an easy to read font. **Students must cite at least four outside resources, and must format their work in MLA or Chicago. Both in-text citations *and* a works-cited list are required.**

- You will turn in two drafts, prior to your final product. These will act as opportunities to gain feedback on both your writing style and content/analysis.
- Writing assignment fulfills W1, W2, W3, W4.

CLASS PARTICIPATION

Your class participation grade consists of your attendance grade (see below for more details on your attendance requirements), and your weekly participation in class discussions and activities. This grade will be given weekly.

POLICIES & PROCEDURES

GRADING

Reading Analyses	40%
Class Participation	10%
Group Presentation	20%
Individually Graded Final Write-Up	30%

FORMATTING

MLA or Chicago formatting is required for all assignments. Include all URLs for web-based resources. Failure to appropriately cite sources results in an automatic point deduction. Some suggestions to make citation easier:

- **Zotero**
- **citationmachine.net**
- **bibme.org**

PLAGIARISM

There is zero tolerance for plagiarism in this class. If you're caught plagiarizing, you will be reported to the UH Office of Judicial Affairs and will receive a failing grade. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- The submission of any copied document from another individual without proper citation.
- The submission of the same document in more than one course without instructor permission.
- Neglecting to cite direct or paraphrased quotes using the proper format.

Please review the UH Student Conduct Code for further information at studentaffairs.manoa.hawaii.edu.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance will be taken daily. You can be absent up to 3 times **with prior notice** without affecting your grade. After that, total points will be docked 1% for every day absent.

COMMUNICATION

I'll answer all emails pertinent to class within 24 hours except on weekends. Please use proper email etiquette when writing and responding to any email correspondence — while emojis are useful, and often vastly more entertaining forms of communication, they aren't acceptable for academic writing. To ensure that emails don't get lost in my increasingly chaotic inbox, begin with a subject line that includes your class, plus a word or two that describes your reason for writing (i.e.: POLS 110 Midterm Essay Question or POLS 110 Help).

STUDENT ACCOMMODATIONS

If you require accommodation, please let me know via email and contact the KOKUA program at (808) 956 – 7511 or at hawaii.edu/kokua.

ACADEMIC GRIEVANCES

UHM policy dictates that the faculty and students of UHM are provided consistent and equitable treatment in resolving disputes arising from the academic relationship between faculty and student(s). The applicability of this policy is limited to those issues directly associated and concomitant with the faculty member's responsibilities as a teacher and the students' responsibilities as a learner. Resources for students concerning academic grievances are available at <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/publichealth/students/resources-for-student-grievances>

SAFE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT PRACTICES

In this class, we will be discussing, debating, and conversing about current issues that may cause disagreements and conflicting opinions. Dealing with disagreements, whether political or otherwise, in a mature, ethical, and non-aggressive manner is an integral part of learning to communicate, and work together, with peers at the University level and beyond. Free speech comes with the ethical and moral responsibility of understanding how your words affect and have power over others; please keep this in mind during classroom discussions, and help encourage a safe space of learning for you, and for those around you.

SCHEDULE

REQUIRED TEXTS

Allen, Michael A., and Justin S. Vaughn, eds. [*Poli Sci Fi: An Introduction to Political Science through Science Fiction*](#). Reprint edition. New York: Routledge, 2016.

PART 1: Theory

PART 2: Behaviorism and Ideology

PART 3: Political Institutions

PART 4: Identity

PART 5: Statecraft & Security

WEEKLY SCHEDULE*

**This schedule represents a work in progress: texts, readings, and due dates will be changed and added in Summer 2017.*

WEEK	TEXTS	ASSIGNMENTS
1 Introductions + Theory	Introductions + Syllabus V & A Ch. 1: Improving Public Policy	
2 Theory	V & A Ch. 2: Equilibrium <u>M.A.D & Dr. Strangelove</u>	
3 Behaviorism & Ideology	V & A Ch. 3: Citizenship Deleuze — Postscript on Societies of Control	
4 Behaviorism & Ideology	V & A Ch. 4: Voting <u>Idiocracy is a Cruel Movie</u>	
5 Behaviorism & Ideology	V & A Ch. 5: Culture & Choice <u>Blame the Echo Chamber on Facebook. But Blame Yourself Too.</u>	DUE: Analysis 1
6 Political Institutions	V & A Ch. 6 - 7: Executive & Legislative Branch Michelle Alexander — The New Jim Crow	
7 Political Institutions	V & A Ch. 9: Rights & The Constitution Mathew S. Hull — Government of Paper	
8 Political Institutions	V & A Ch. 10: Bureaucracy Mathew S. Hull — Government of Paper	DUE: Analysis 2
9 Identity	V & A Ch. 11: Gender Judith Butler — Interview on Performativity	
10 Identity	V & A Ch. 12: Identity Politics <u>Samantha Bee — Identity Politics/Civil Rights</u>	
11 Identity	V & A Ch. 13: Failed States	DUE: Analysis 3
12 Statecraft + Security	V & A Ch.14: Civil War	
13 Statecraft + Security	V & A Ch. 15: Drone Warfare Gregoire Chamayou — Theory of a Drone	

14 Statecraft + Security	V & A Ch. 16: International Relations <u>Benjamin Bratton — Black Stack</u>	DUE: Analysis 4
15 Introducing POLS	Group Work Week	
16 Concluding POLS	Presentations	DUE: Video Essay + Individual Write up