
SPRING 2015

PSC 390: SENIOR CAPSTONE—POLITICAL SCIENCE AND WORLD PROBLEMS

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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course has been specifically designed to meet the Liberal Studies Program's capstone requirement for Political Science majors. "The Senior Capstone experience," according to the LSP, "allows students to explore substantive areas of scholarship and creative works within their major. Students are given the opportunity to create knowledge within the context of the ideas, perspectives, and research of others in the discipline. *The Capstone further provides students the opportunity to integrate and compare knowledge gained from their major with that which was learned in the domain area and core courses of the Liberal Studies Program.* In this culminating experience, students create, under the mentorship of a faculty member, a final project of their own design" (emphasis added). So, taking stock of your education at DePaul by assessing your journey from the First Year Program, the Liberal Studies core curriculum to the requirements of your major, is the very essence of the capstone seminar. In doing so, students should identify areas of strengths as well as gaps in their educational experience as they prepare to embark upon a post-college experience. Most importantly, students should articulate how they intend to address the gaps they identified and how best to leverage their strength after their graduation.

At the heart of the knowledge industry is *problem-solving*. As the title suggests, this course shall examine *how* political science attempts to solve the manifold problems that confront the human race in the political and social spheres of our lives. This course's emphasis on problem-solving should encourage seniors to hone their own problem-solving skills by drawing from the techniques of other disciplines they have encountered

as well as their own to address the problems they have identified or defined. Using a combination of course work, extensive independent research and consultations with me, and guest lectures, students will identify, analyze and produce an independent research paper that describes, explains and proffers solutions to any social problem of their choice.

The readings for this course have been carefully selected to expose students to classical and contemporary works that shed light on social problems and the various solutions proffered and/or implemented to ameliorate or resolve them. These readings are not intended to teach students new content areas—although students could benefit from the mastery of new contents. Rather, one of the objectives of this course is to challenge students to focus on the inherent interdisciplinarity of these cases in dealing with the problems they identified and draw appropriate problem-solving lessons from these studies. The second objective of this course is to encourage students to explore their post-graduation career options as Political Science majors. To this particular end, students will be required to meet with DePaul Career Center’s resource persons to map out a post-graduation career plan.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

I. Attendance (20%): Attendance of **all** class meetings and full participation in class activities shall be required of all students. Attendance shall be taken throughout the quarter for the purpose of allotting grades for class attendance. Students will bear full responsibility for every class that they miss. As per University regulations, students who miss classes for medical reasons must produce acceptable documentary evidence, and must also assume full responsibility for catching up on readings and assignments.

In order to fully maximize the 30 hours of class meeting during the quarter, students are strongly encouraged to read all assigned materials ahead of scheduled class meetings to enhance their ability to participate actively in class discussions. Students are expected to participate in the Discussion board on D2L.

II. Curriculum Assessment (20%): This requirement is mandated by the Liberal Studies Program for all students taking a senior capstone seminar. The following description of the requirement is borrowed from Professors Christina Rivers and Molly Andolina:
This assignment...asks you to reflect, in a somewhat systematic manner, on the various courses you’ve taken while at DePaul. There are several steps involved.

1. Compile an inventory of 10 things that you’ve encountered while a student at DePaul (and elsewhere if you transferred in) that have most influenced your thinking as a student and/or as a person. Sources can include classes, readings, professors, staff, films, documentaries, study abroad, public service, artistic events or objects, guest lectures, panels, teach-ins, protests, or religious events.
2. Identify which general liberal studies learning domain each entry falls under (arts and literature, scientific inquiry, experiential learning, etc.) and try to vary the entries so that you reflect on a variety of experiences. For a review of the domains, go to:
<http://liberalstudies.depaul.edu/About/LearningDomains/index.asp>

3. Arrange the entries in chronological order. Under each entry, write a paragraph that explains how and why, out of all that you've experienced during your studies, this particular entry is so important to you. Try to link that entry with experiences in your life as a student specifically, and as a person more generally.
4. When possible, attach an image or item that illustrates your entries. This can be a photo, something you create, prayer, newspaper/magazine clipping, poem, image from the internet, receipt, ticket, post-card, etc.
5. Draw some generalizations across the ten entries. How would you describe and characterize these experiences as a whole? Do you see any theme or themes that emerge?

Conclude the assignment with at least three or four paragraphs explaining:

- What you believe to be **the purpose of a liberal arts education**—this includes the courses in your major;
- How the above inventory accomplishes that purpose (or does not accomplish it);
- How a liberal arts education has shaped you and your world view;
- How such an education has prepared you (or not) for your life ahead, at least as you currently envision that life.

To further guide your course selection for purposes of your self-reflection exercise, find below an adapted guide sheet originally developed by Professor Christine Rivers:

10 COURSES OR OTHER ACADEMIC EXPERIENCES THAT IMPACTED MY EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE AT DEPAUL:

Liberal Studies Core (Discover Chicago, Focal Pont, etc) _____

Liberal Studies Core (Multiculturalism, Experiential Learning, Tech literacy, etc) _____

Learning Domain #1 _____

Learning Domain #2 _____

Learning Domain #3 _____

Political Science #1 _____

Political Science #2 _____

Political Science #3 _____

Non-PSC Elective or Extra-curricular #1 _____

Non-PSC Elective or Extra-curricular #2 _____

The Curriculum Assessment Essay, which should range between **5-6 pages (double-spaced)**, should be submitted to me via D2L's Digital Drop Box no later than **May 1, 2015**.

III. Post-Graduation Career Plan (20%): As stated earlier in this syllabus, one of the objectives of this course is to get students to start developing a career plan that will guide their post-graduation life. To this end, students shall be required submit a **4-5 page** plan, consisting of their career interests, the relationship between their major and their career interests, the steps taken to meet their goals, and a professional résumé. For this purpose, officials of the Career Center will be invited to make presentations to our class, and students will be required to consult with the staff of the career center to prepare their career plans. The deadline for submitting the career plan is **June 1, 2015**.

IV. Class Presentation (20%): Each student will take turns in making a scholarly presentation to the entire class. This 10-minute presentation will be based on a thorough perusal and critical evaluation of assigned readings for the class session on which the

seminar will be presented. To this end, students will be required to post on D2L's Discussion Board a **3-4 page** abstract of their presentation at least 48 hours before their presentation. Students who do not submit an abstract of their presentation as stipulated will have a maximum grade of a B- for their class presentation. To prepare for the seminar exercise, I shall circulate a seminar roster to the class before or during the third week of classes. It is students' responsibility to ensure that they have been scheduled for class presentation.

V. Independent Research Essay (20%): Each student shall be required to conduct an independent research project on any social problem of their choice, with my prior approval, of course! The research project should identify, describe and explain the problem, and offer reasonable solutions to the problem so analyzed. To this end, I expect all students to have chosen their research topics before the end of April. The research paper should be anchored on a set of questions and at least *two competing theories* that explain the problem or puzzle. The essay should have a clear thesis statement and demonstrate a sophisticated use of evidence to support the thesis, and offer reasoned solutions to the identified problems. The essay must be *mechanically* sound and contain a complete *bibliography* that lists all sources used in the research, such as books/monographs, academic journal articles, newspaper articles, web sources, statistical data, etc. For this project, students are required to work with a technician at the University Center for Writing-based Learning (UCWbL). It is the responsibility of students to arrange for meetings with UCWbL technicians. The length of the independent research essay should range between **10-12 pages double-spaced (Times New Roman 12 point font)**. To facilitate a timely completion of the term paper, students should adhere to the following phases of the research project:

- Stage 1: Research Proposal. Submit a **one-page** project description by **April 27, 2015**. Completed research proposals should be posted in the designated folder on our D2L's drop box menu as a WORD document ONLY, not PDF! The project proposal document should contain *a title, a one paragraph description of the problem, the research questions, a preliminary thesis statement and the kinds of evidence that will be used to support the thesis. The second paragraph should provide a brief annotated bibliography of the most important academic sources for the project, excluding Wikipedia sources, of course!* This stage shall be worth **2.5/25 points**.
- Stage 2: Rough draft of essay and Liaison with UCWbL technician. Work on an early draft of your essay with a technician at the University Center for Writing-based Learning (UCWbL). To get the best of out of your time at UCWbL, you should contact a technician early in the quarter and severally, either in person or electronically. Past experiences have shown that students who have a working draft of their term paper are better able to get the best assistance possible from UCWbL technicians. For that reason, start early in the quarter and get a good draft to your technician as early as possible. When you do meet with a technician, have them send a report directly to me. A written evidence of your consultation with a technician at UCWbL is worth **2.5/25 points**. This phase of the project should run between **April 28-May 23, 2015**.

- Stage 3: Submission of complete draft for my review. Submit a complete draft of your term paper to me for my review/suggestions no later than **May 24, 2015**. This is worth **2.5/25 points**. Your draft term paper should be posted in the designated folder in our D2L's Drop box as a WORD document ONLY, not PDF!
- Stage 4: Final Copy of Research Paper. Submit a revised, final version of your term paper, no later than **June 8, 2015**. The final version of the research paper should be submitted in the designated folder in D2L's Drop Box menu as a Word document, NOT PDF. Hard copies or email attachment of essays will NOT be accepted. The penalty for essays submitted any minute after this deadline is the loss of one grade point for each day past due. This stage is worth **17.5/25 points**.

Working With Writing Technicians at UCWbL. Writing is a central part of this course, and many others in LAS. Because writers improve by sharing their work with others and individual pieces of writing improve through a process of drafting and revision, each student in this class this quarter should make out time to consult with a technician at UCWbL on your essays, especially the final term paper. Work with UCWbL technicians on making real and substantive revisions to your draft essay. You and your technician will spend time, for example, focusing your topic, strengthening your thesis statement, learning relevant grammatical principles, or providing more or more effective evidence for your claims. The goal of this whole process is to help you make smart, significant revisions to your paper *before* the paper is turned in for a grade. Overall, your UCWbL technician will help you to learn more about the standards for written products in this course, and about the process of writing and revision. However, **you—not your UCWbL technicians—are ultimately responsible and accountable for the integrity and quality of research and writing that you produce for this course.**

POLICIES ON LATE SUBMISSION OF ESSAYS, ENROLLMENT AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students are required to submit their essays on time. The penalties for late submission of essays are stiff: the loss of one full grade point for each day past due. In addition, I reserve the right not to accept essays that are **three days past due**. All students must be officially registered for this class in order to attend and earn credit.

In all essays and assignments, students are **strongly cautioned against any form of plagiarism**, which is an *unethical* conduct that also violates University policy on academic integrity. All students enrolled in this course should familiarize themselves with the University's policy on academic integrity, which is located at:

<http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/homehandbook.html>. According to this policy:

‘Plagiarism includes but is not limited to the following: (a) The direct copying of any source, such as written and verbal material, computer files, audio disks, video programs or musical scores, whether published or unpublished, in whole or in part, without proper acknowledgement that it is someone else’s. (b) Copying of any source in whole or in part with only minor changes in wording or syntax even with

acknowledgement. (c) Submitting as one's own work a report, examination paper, computer file, lab report or other assignment which has been prepared by someone else. This includes research papers purchased from any other person or agency. (d) The paraphrasing of another's work or ideas without proper acknowledgement.' Plagiarism will result in a failure of the assignment or possibly of the course.

STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss their specific needs. All discussions will remain confidential. To ensure that you receive the most appropriate reasonable accommodation based on your needs, contact me as early as possible in the quarter (preferably within the first week of class), and make sure to also contact the Center for Students with Disabilities (CSD) by phone at 773-325-1677; or in person at the Student Center, Room #370.

ADDITIONAL UNIVERSITY RESOURCES FOR STUDENTS

1). FINANCIAL AID SERVICES

DePaul's office for financial aid has an apt description of its services and rationale that I could not resist posting in full:

Paying for college is a great investment, but it can also leave you feeling a little breathless. That's why we're here. The Office of Financial Aid is your guide and your resource for helping to make college affordable. Have questions? We'll find answers. Want to apply for financial aid and scholarships? We'll point you in the right direction. Need more funding? We know where to look for additional sources.

[\(http://www.depaul.edu/admission/FinancialAid/\)](http://www.depaul.edu/admission/FinancialAid/)

2). WRITING CENTER

DePaul Writing Center offers a wide range of services to all members of the university community. Located in the Loop (Lewis 1600) and LPC (McGaw 250), the Writing Center is prepared to assist students at every stage of the writing process:

Grounded in the belief that language in general, and writing specifically, shapes and sustains democratic processes, the members of the University Center for Writing-based Learning community believe writing is fundamental to an individual's participation in democracy in that writing promotes learning, critical inquiry, self-development, and reflection through continual revision. We are committed to both DePaul's shared vision to enhance 'academic rigor' and DePaul's mission to promote personalism through appreciation of the 'dignity of each individual.' As

such, we collaborate with writers from all disciplines, backgrounds, levels of expertise, and roles within the University community. Our goal is to help develop better writers along with better writing. (URL: <http://condor.depaul.edu/writing/what/Writing%20Center/wc.html>).

3). *CAREER COUNSELING AND GUIDANCE*

It is not too early to think about a career. If you have not already done so, plan on meeting with your faculty advisor to discuss your career interests and choices. In addition, DePaul's Career Center has various resources to guide you seek and plan for a career, internships, etc. Here is the URL for the career center:

<http://careercenter.depaul.edu/>

4). *STUDENT MENTORING*

Mentoring services are available to all DePaul students at any level of study and academic preparation. It is not too early or too late to seek out a mentor. The Alumni Sharing Knowledge (ASK) initiative is a great place to start: "An ASK mentor is a professional who volunteers his or her time to network with DePaul students and provide advice and career insight. Connecting with a mentor gives you the chance to ask questions about a major, field or career path, and learn from other people's experiences" (<http://ask.depaul.edu/Students/MentoringandAdvice/index.asp>).

5). *COUNSELING SERVICES*

The University Counseling Services (UCS) is devoted to students' varied counseling need: "We are committed to a student centered, developmental approach. Our purpose is to assist students in defining and accomplishing personal/academic goals, thus maximizing their potential to benefit from the academic environment and experience." The URL for UCS is: <http://studentaffairs.depaul.edu/ucs/>

6). *GENERAL CONCERNS/INFORMATION*

Visit DePaul Central (<http://depaulcentral.depaul.edu/>) for more information on additional resources that are available to you at DePaul University.

EMERGENCY EVACUATION POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Students should familiarize themselves with DePaul's emergency evacuation policy and procedures, which may be downloaded from the following web site:

<http://rmehs.depaul.edu/emergency/evacuation.asp>

GRADING POLICY

The department of Political Science requires that all majors must earn a C- or higher in their Senior Capstone to graduate. An "A" indicates an excellent and exceptional performance. This grade is reserved for students whose work demonstrates an extraordinary level of competence and distinction. A perfect attendance record, for instance,

would meet the criterion of excellence. A student who regularly or always reads all the assigned materials before class meetings and volunteers accurate comments and responds correctly to direct questions posed to him/her or the class, will meet this standard. “B” is assigned to a satisfactory performance of an assigned task. This grade indicates that no new insight has been added, and that the student’s performance is above average. “C” indicates an average performance by a student. This grade usually indicates that a student barely met the requirements of a task and needs to work harder. Very few students get a “D”, which indicates a less than satisfactory (i.e. below average) performance of tasks, and even fewer students obtain an “F”, which indicates a failure to perform up to the minimum level of expectation. Pluses (+) and minuses (-) are used to indicate better or lesser performance levels between the grades. **Students whose performance falls consistently at or below a “C” average should contact me early on to find ways of addressing possible problems of comprehension, interpretation and writing.** Here is the numerical grade distribution, in percentages: 98-100 (A+, final grades excepted); 94-97 (A); 90-93 (A-); 85-89 (B+); 80-84 (B); 75-79 (B-); 70-74 (C+); 65-69 (C); 60-64 (C-); 55-59 (D+, final grade excepted); 50-54 (D); 0-49 (F). Please note that all assigned letter grades, unless otherwise stated, are converted to the *lowest* end of the numerical scale.

In all, the final evaluation shall be based on the following distribution:

Activities	Grade Allocation
Class Attendance	20%
Seminar	20%
Curriculum Assessment (Due May 1, 2015)	20%
Career Plan (Due June 1, 2014)	20%
Research Essay (due June 8, 2015)	20%
TOTAL	100%

REQUIRED TEXTS

(Available at Barnes & Noble DePaul Bookstore, LPC. E-reserve password: psc390)

Achebe, Chinua. (1966/1989). *A Man of the People*. Anchor Books

Briggs, Xavier de Souza. (2008). *Democracy as Problem Solving: Civic Capacity in Communities Across the Globe*. MIT Press.

Klare, Michael T. (2002). *Resource Wars: The New Landscape of Global Conflict*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Smith, Adam. (1776/1993). *An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations*. New York: Oxford University Press.

COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK 1: INTRODUCTIONS AND COURSE OVERVIEW

March 30: Paradigms and the Social Sciences

Readings

- ❖ Margaret Masterman, "The Nature of Paradigm." In Imre Lakatos and Alan Musgrave, eds. *Criticism and the Growth of Knowledge*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970 (on reserve).

April 1: Idiosyncrasy of Knowledge Production in Political Science

Readings

Stanley Hoffmann (1977), "An American Social Science: International Relations." *Daedalus* 106(3): 41-60.

WEEK 2: FREE TRADERS AND THE SEARCH FOR GLOBAL ECONOMIC PROSPERITY

April 6: Political Economy and Wealth Creation

Readings

- ❖ Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Books I & IV.

April 8: The Contradictions and (Un)foreseen Consequences of Free Trade

Readings

- ❖ Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Book V.
- ❖ Jacob Viner (1947), "Conflicts of Principle in Drafting a Trade Charter," *Foreign Affairs* 25(4): 612-628.
- ❖ John Gray, "A Point of View: The Revolution of Capitalism." <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-14764357>

WEEK 3: IMPERIALISM, CIVILIZATIONS, AND WORLD DOMINATION

April 13: Civilizations and Global (Dis)order

Readings

- ❖ Harold J. Laski (1947). "The Crisis in Our Civilization," *Foreign Affairs* 26(1): 36-51.

- ❖ X [George Kennan] (1947), “The Sources of Soviet Conduct.” *Foreign Affairs* 25(4): 566-582.
- ❖ Henry Kissinger (1957), “Strategy and Organization,” *Foreign Affairs* 35(3):379-394.
- ❖ Samuel P. Huntington (1993), “The Clash of Civilizations?” *Foreign Affairs* 72(3): 22-49.

April 15: The Logics of Imperialism and their Problems

Readings

- ❖ Barbara Ward Jackson (1957), “Britain's Imperial Legacy,” *Foreign Affairs* 35(3): 412-421.
- ❖ The Marquess of Zetland (1930), “Self-Government for India.” *Foreign Affairs* 9(1): 1-12.
- ❖ Baron Lugard (1930), “Native Policy in East Africa.” *Foreign Affairs* 9(1): 65-78.
- ❖ Samir Amin (1972), “Underdevelopment and Dependence in Black Africa—Origins and Contemporary Forms,” *Journal of Modern African Studies* 10(4): 503-24.

WEEK 4: POST-IMPERIALISM AND NATION-BUILDING

April 20: Post-Imperial Nation-building Project

Readings

- ❖ Frank Moraes (1958), “Gandhi Ten Years After” *Foreign Affairs* 36(2): 253-266.
- ❖ Kwame Nkrumah (1958), “African Prospect,” *Foreign Affairs* 37(1): 45-53.

April 22: Democracy and Post-Colonial Elites

Readings

- ❖ Chinua Achebe, *A Man of the People*. (Read All).

WEEK 5: INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO THE RESCUE?

April 27: International Organizations and Human Problems

Readings

- ❖ Eduard Beneš (1930), “Ten Years of the League,” *Foreign Affairs* 8(2): 212-224.
- ❖ Dulles, John Foster (1945), “The General Assembly.” *Foreign Affairs* 24(1): 1-11.
- ❖ Beate Jahn (2012), “Humanitarian Intervention—What’s in a Name?” *International Politics* 49 (1), pp. 36-58.

April 29: Midterm Assignment (no classes; complete your curriculum assessment essay and submit no later than May 1)

WEEK 6: THE ENIGMA OF NATURAL RESOURCES (PART I)

May 4: Natural Resources and Human (In)dignity

Readings

- ❖ Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars*, chs. 1 & 2.
- ❖ Thomas Homer-Dixon (1991), "On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict," *International Security* 16, pp. 76–116.

May 6: Oil-Driven Conflicts

Readings

- ❖ Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars*, chs. 3-5.

WEEK 7: THE ENIGMA OF NATURAL RESOURCES (PART II)

May 11: Conflicts over Water

Readings

- ❖ Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars*, chs. 8 & 9.

May 13: Rethinking Geography and Conflict

Readings

- ❖ Michael T. Klare, *Resource Wars*, chs. 6 & 7.
- ❖ Jon Barnett (2000), "Destabilizing the Environment-Conflict Thesis." *Review of International Studies*, Vol. 26, pp. 271–288.
- ❖ Simon Carney (2012) "Addressing Poverty and Climate Change: The Varieties of Social Engagement," *Ethics and International Affairs* 26(2): 191-216.

WEEK 8: DEMOCRACY AS PROBLEM-SOLVING (PART I)

May 18: The Democratic Solution to Social Problems

Readings

- ❖ Xavier de Souza Briggs, *Democracy as Problem Solving*, chs. 1 & 2.

May 20: Democracy and Urbanization

Readings

- ❖ Xavier de Souza Briggs, *Democracy as Problem Solving*, chs. 3-5.

WEEK 9: DEMOCRACY AS PROBLEM-SOLVING (PART II)

May 25: (Memorial Day—No Classes)

May 27: Democracy and Human Capital Development

Readings

- ❖ Xavier de Souza Briggs, *Democracy as Problem Solving*, chs. 6-11.

WEEK 10: CONCLUSIONS

June 1: Democracy, Collective Action and Human Welfare

Readings

- ❖ Thomas Pogge and Luis Cabrera (2012), “Outreach, Impact, Collaboration: Why Academics Should Join to Stand Against Poverty,” *Ethics and International Affairs* 26(2): 163-182.
- ❖ Xavier de Souza Briggs, *Democracy as Problem Solving*, ch. 12.

June 3: Politics, Collective Action and the Problem of Poverty

Readings

- ❖ Jeffrey Sachs, *The End of Poverty*, chs. 17 & 18 (on reserve).
- ❖ Philippe Diaz, “The End of Poverty?” (DVD).