



**Faculty of Social Sciences
Department of Political Science**

**5P80: Great Works in Politics
Fall 2017**

This Term's Theme: "How Not to be a Stupid Social Scientist"

**Wednesdays 2:00 p.m. – 4:50 p.m.
MCD 403**

Professor: Stefan Dolgert

<https://brocku.academia.edu/StefanDolgert>

Office: Plaza 345

Office Hours: Tuesdays: 12:15 – 1:15 p.m., Wednesdays 1:00 – 2:00 p.m., and by appointment

Email: sdolgert@brocku.ca

Introduction

Watching how democracies are governed, lately, you could be forgiven if you drew the conclusion that facts no longer matter, and that all that counts in politics is lying more cleverly than your opponent. There's a substantial amount of truth to that claim (I've even written on that subject)...but see what I did there? I started talking about truth when I didn't even mean to! And so we get into the thorny relationship between truth and politics, and begin to ponder what a "science of politics" could actually be. How can political science explore the nature of the world in a scientific manner – indeed is science really even the appropriate modality for exploring the world at all – and what is the relationship between scientific knowledge and the political institutions in those societies that are purportedly "representative democracies"?

This course will address these questions, and many others, though pragmatically it is also designed as an introduction to the craft of political science research. As we look to these larger questions (many of which center on how to connect "truth" and "politics"), you will also be learning to think in a more reflective way about what it is to be a professional in the academic discipline of political science. For that reason, we'll begin with the controversy roiling the American Political Science Association, on "Data Access and Research Transparency." Starting here will help clarify what's at stake in the debates which we will then assess in the following weeks, on positivism and various critiques of

the positivist philosophy of science. We'll then move on to a discussion of several contending methodological families in political science – essentially those indebted to economics, biology, anthropology, and philosophy – before concluding with three inarguably “great works” in politics (by Elinor Ostrom, James Scott, and Iris Marion Young). We'll move from the particular (DA-RT), to the general (debates in philosophy of science), down to the “applied general” (methods deriving from economics, et al.), until we finally get to some exemplars of the craft of political science. There are many ways to be a good political scientist, and by the time you leave this class you'll be ready to embark on one of those paths (indeed you're on it already).

Course Objectives

- 1) Students will learn the fundamental problems and promise of a scientific approach to politics, and articulate their preferred vision of the relationship between science and democracy.
- 2) Students will learn to assess debates in the philosophy of science, especially those between: Positivism and Post-Positivism, Naturalism and Interpretivism, Realism and Constructivism, Structure and Agency, Critical and Traditional Theory, Determinism and Emergence.
- 3) Students will engage in methods of feminist, postcolonial, and “science and technology studies” critique.
- 4) Students will learn contending methodologies in Political Science, including those stemming from economics, biology, anthropology, post-structuralism, and philosophy.
- 5) Students will evaluate classic works in political science stemming from three traditions of political science (rational choice institutionalism, historical institutionalism, political theory) through the lens of debates in the philosophy of science.

Textbooks (ordered, in bookstore)

Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures: Science as a Vocation & Politics as a Vocation* - ISBN 9780872206656

Thomas Kuhn, *Structure of Scientific Revolutions* -50th Anniv. Ed – ISBN 9780226458120

Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural?: Postcolonialisms, Feminisms and Epistemologies* – ISBN 0253211565

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities* – ISBN 9781784786755

Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons: Evolution of Institutions for Collective Action* IBSN 9781107569782

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed* – ISBN 9783000782152

Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference* – ISBN 9780691152622

Seminar Style

This class will be conducted as a discussion-intensive seminar. As graduate students, you are now expected to comport yourselves with a level of professionalism that is qualitatively different from that displayed by undergraduates. Please come prepared to discuss all the materials each day, and this means arguing about them in a thoughtful manner with your instructor and fellow classmates. These discussions should be respectful of others' views, but in no way does that suggest that we paper over our differences with others. We will learn from each other precisely to the extent that we can figure out exactly how much we disagree with one another.

In my role as the instructor for the course I may have occasion to give a mini-lecture or opening statement in some classes, but in every class I will try to offer a few concluding thoughts at the close of the session, to wit: “What have we learned? What questions have we answered? What new problems have emerged, to which we have yet to find answers? What ghosts are haunting us, from questions unanswered? And in what direction should we be pushing ourselves to explore in the coming weeks, based on what we have left unsaid today?”

Assignments:

Seminar Participation: 20%

Seminar Facilitation: 10% (Written set of interpretive prompts/questions. Prompts are due to the Instructor, via email, by five p.m. on MONDAY, the day before class)

Critical Reading Paper: 15% (1500 words, due October 4)

Discussion Posts (online in the Forum, via Sakai): 10% (10 postings total, 1% each)

Final Paper (7000-8000 words): 40% (due December 15)

Final paper proposal: 5% (300 words, due November 8)

Seminar Participation:

Given that this is a graduate course, participation counts heavily. Please make sure to actively (and thoughtfully) engage in conversation each session, and please check with the professor if you have any questions regarding your participation grade throughout the semester.

Seminar Facilitation:

Each student will be responsible for facilitating one of the class sessions. Facilitators do not need to provide a lengthy introduction on their appointed day, but should provide several questions or topics **in writing** for discussion, and should be prepared to briefly introduce each question or topic. Facilitators must submit questions to the Professor by 5 p.m. on Monday, before class that week.

Missing a Seminar:

Sometimes life intervenes, and you may need to miss a seminar. All students get one “free” absence with no excuse needed (though please email the Instructor as a courtesy). After that absence, additional absences will require a 1000 word critical summary of the readings for that week, to be emailed to the professor by the following class period (after the missed class).

Discussion Posts:

Prior to each week of class BEGINNING WITH WEEK TWO, each student is required to post one item to the Forum section of Sakai by 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday of that week. THERE IS NO POSTING DUE IN WEEK TWELVE. This posting is to be approximately 150-250 words.

Each post should address a question to the text, or to one of the other student posts for that week. They can take many forms, and the following are just a few examples: 1) puzzle through what the author means... e.g. “Author X seems to state that Z is the case, but I cannot understand how this argument works, since the Author also says Y. One way to resolve this seeming dilemma is to include B in the argument, which removes the contradiction; 2) argue with the author... “Author M states X and Y, both of which result in a argument that is immoral (state why) and threatens democratic legitimacy (state why). Author M’s position is of no use to us in crafting a theory of posthuman politics; 3) “Student U has posted that Author P is wrong because of K. While I agree that K is a problem, Student U does not take into account Author P’s argument J, which answers the contradictions raised by Student U.” Hopefully these examples will give you an idea of the flavour of the postings, but please do make your commentary livelier than what I have just written above! I expect that these postings will facilitate class discussions by placing a number of issues on the table well before the actual class session, and I will likely be responding to some of the issues raised in my own discussion for that week.

Deadline to Withdraw is Monday, November 6, 2017.

Last date for withdrawal without academic penalty. Students will be able to ascertain at least 15% of their total semester mark, by October 31.

Academic Integrity:

In this course we aim to conduct ourselves as a community of scholars, recognizing that academic study is both an intellectual and ethical enterprise. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; that is a vital part of academic life. You are also obligated to document every occasion when you use another’s ideas, language, or syntax. You are encouraged to study together, discuss readings outside of class, and share your drafts during peer review and outside of class. In this course, those activities are well within the bounds of academic honesty. However, when you *use* another’s ideas or language—whether through direct quotation, summary, or paraphrase—you must formally acknowledge that debt by signalling it with a standard form of academic citation. Per university policy, YOU ALSO MAY NOT RE-USE YOUR OWN WORK, FROM PREVIOUS OR CURRENT CLASSES.

STUDENTS WHO DO NOT CITE TO THE ASSIGNED EDITIONS OF THE TEXTS WILL INCUR A PENALTY OF -30% ON THEIR ESSAYS OR POSTS.

See the Brock University policy on Academic Misconduct (<https://brocku.ca/academic-integrity/graduate-students/studying-with-integrity/>), and also the Political Science Department's statement on academic integrity, which appears at the end of the syllabus.

Late Submission Policy:

The penalties for late submission of assigned coursework (e.g., papers, assignments, weekly reflections) are 2% per day, unless accompanied by medical documentation. See Medical Exemption Policy and the medical health certificate at <http://www.brocku.ca/health-services/policies/exemption>

Turnitin.com

Written assignments may be submitted through Turnitin.com, at the instructor's discretion. The instructor will supply links and password at the time of the assignment. If you object to uploading your assignments to Turnitin.com for any reason, please notify the instructor to discuss the matter further.

Intellectual Property Notice:

All slides, presentations, handouts, tests, exams, and other course materials created by the instructor in this course are the intellectual property of the instructor. A student who publicly posts or sells an instructor's work, without the instructor's express consent, may be charged with misconduct under Brock's Academic Integrity Policy and/or Code of Conduct, and may also face adverse legal consequences for infringement of intellectual property rights.

Academic Accommodation:

As part of Brock University's commitment to a respectful work and learning environment, the University will make every reasonable effort to accommodate all members of the university community with disabilities. If you require academic accommodations related to a documented disability to participate in this course, you are encouraged to contact Services for Students with Disabilities in the Student Development Centre (4th floor Schmon Tower, ex. 3240). You are also encouraged to discuss any accommodations with the instructor well in advance of due dates and scheduled assessments.

Academic Accommodation due to Religious Obligations:

Brock University acknowledges the pluralistic nature of the undergraduate and graduate communities such that accommodations will be made for students who, by reason of religious obligation, must miss an examination, test, assignment deadline, laboratory or other compulsory academic event. Students requesting academic accommodation on the basis of religious obligation should make a formal, written request to their instructor(s) for alternative dates and/or means of satisfying requirements.

Medical Exemption Policy:

The University requires that a student be medically examined in Health Services, or by an off-campus physician prior to an absence due to medical reasons from an exam, lab, test, quiz, seminar, assignment, etc. The Medical Certificate can be found at:

<http://www.brocku.ca/health-services/policies/exemption>

SCHEDULE OF READINGS**Pre-Week One Reading:**

1) Gabriel Almond, “Separate Tables” (distributed by instructor)

What the heck is DA-RT, and why would anyone care about it?

2) APSA Presidents’ STATEMENT ON DA-RT, November 24, 2015:

<http://www.politicalsciencenow.com/data-access-and-research-transparency-initiative-da-rt/>

3) Jeff Isaac, January 23, 2016, “Is More Deliberation About DA-RT Really So Good?”:

<http://www.the-plot.org/2016/01/23/is-more-deliberation-about-da-rt-really-so-good/>

Background (optional):

“Pro DA-RT” links:

<http://www.dartstatement.org/#!2014-dart-symposium-in-ps/c1mwv>

Sceptical of DA-RT links:

<https://dialogueondart.org>

I. WHAT IS SCIENCE?**Week One: September 6****Preludes and Nocturnes**

Discussion of “Great Works,” “stupid social science,” democracy and science, and DA-RT

Week Two: September 13**Max Weber on Science and Politics; Facts and Values**

Max Weber, *The Vocation Lectures* – entire (“Science as a Vocation,” “Politics as a Vocation”)

Week Three: September 20
Normal Science and Paradigmatic Change

Thomas Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (entire, but skim 66-111)
Lakatos, Imre. "Criticism and the methodology of scientific research programmes." In *Proceedings of the Aristotelian society*, vol. 69, pp. 149-186. Aristotelian Society, Wiley, 1968.

http://personal.lse.ac.uk/robert49/teaching/ph201/Week05_xtra_Lakatos.pdf

Week Four: September 27
Feminist, Postcolonial, and Multicultural Approaches to the Science Question

Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural?* (entire)

II. FOUR WAYS TO METHOD

Week Five: October 4
Economic Approaches to Politics

Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action*. Chapter 1 "A Theory of Groups and Organizations" pp. 5-52 (provided by instructor)

Anthony Downs, 'An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy', *Journal of Political Economy*, 65:2, April 1957 (135-140)

Riker, William H., and Peter C. Ordeshook. "A Theory of the Calculus of Voting." *American political science review* 62, no. 01 (1968): 25-42.

Recommended:

Douglass North. "Economic performance through time." *The American economic review* 84, no. 3 (1994): 359-368.

Robert Axelrod. "The emergence of cooperation among egoists." *American political science review* 75, no. 02 (1981): 306-318.

FALL BREAK October 9th – 13th

Week Six: October 18
Is Politics a Branch of Biology? Sociobiological approaches

E. O. Wilson, *Consilience: The Unity of Knowledge*. Chapter "From Genes to Culture," pp. 136-177.

Special forum in *Perspectives on Politics*, Vol. 11 No. 2: "Nature and Politics"

John Hibbing, "Ten Misconceptions Concerning Neurobiology and Politics," pp. 475-489

Kay Schlozman, "Two Concerns About Ten Misconceptions," pp. 490-491

George Marcus, "What's that You Say?" pp. 492-494

Troy Duster, "Emergence vs. Reductionism in the Debate Over the Role of Biology in Politics," pp. 495-499
Larry Arnhart, "The Grandeur of Biopolitical Science," pp. 500-503
Ange-Marie Hancock, "Neurobiology, Intersectionality, and Politics: Paradigm Warriors in Arms?" pp. 504-507
William Connolly, "Biology, Politics, Creativity," pp. 508-511
Linda Zerilli, "Embodied Knowing, Judgment, and the Limits of Neurobiology," pp. 512-515
Anne Jacobson, "New Souls for Old," pp. 516-519
John Hibbing, "Neurobiology and Politics: A Response to Commentators," pp. 520-524

Week Seven: October 25
Cultural Approaches, and the Question of Structure

Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Chapter 1, "Thick Description: Toward an Interpretive Theory of Culture, pp. 3-32; Chapter 15, "Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cock Fight," pp. 412-454 (provided by instructor)
Sally Haslanger, "What is a (social) structural explanation?" *Philosophical Studies*, 173 No. 1 (2016): pp.113-130.
<http://sallyhaslanger.weebly.com/uploads/1/8/2/7/18272031/haslangerwhatissocialstucturalexpanation.pdf>

Week Eight: November 1
Theoretical Approaches

Wolin, Sheldon. "Political theory as a vocation." *American Political Science Review* 63, no. 04 (1969): 1062-1082.
Skinner, Quentin. "Meaning and Understanding in the History of Ideas." *History and theory* 8, no. 1 (1969): 3-53.
Strauss, Leo. "What is political philosophy?." *The Journal of Politics* 19, no. 03 (1957): 343-368.

III. FOUR CONTEMPORARY EXEMPLARS

Week Nine: November 8
Qualitative Approaches and Culture

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*

Week Ten: November 15
The Social Choice Approach

Elinor Ostrom, *Governing the Commons*

Week Eleven: November 22
A Qualitative Kind of Institutional Theory

James Scott, *Seeing Like a State*

Week Twelve: November 29
Representation, Difference, Oppression, and Justice

Iris Marion Young, *Justice and the Politics of Difference*

APPENDIX 1: ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT AND LATE ESSAYS POLICY

Department of Political Science *POLICY ON LATE ESSAYS*

Late essays received by the instructor or deposited in the Political Science department essay boxes after 4:00 p.m. of the date on which they were due will be penalized **two per cent** per day from Monday through Friday and **five per cent** from Friday 4:00 p.m. to Monday 8:30 a.m. No paper will be accepted two weeks after the due date. **Individual instructors may impose different penalties and submission requirements. Be sure to check your course outlines.**

An essay is considered received when the **original** hard copy of the paper is in the hands of the instructor or in the box outside the Political Science Department's office. (ALL ESSAYS MUST INCLUDE A TITLE PAGE WITH THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CLEARLY MARKED: STUDENT NUMBER, TA and INSTRUCTOR'S NAME, COURSE NAME and NUMBER).

Having an essay date-stamped by security, or the library, or anyone else does **not** constitute receipt of the essay by the Political Science Department. Instructors may require that essays be submitted electronically. In this case, students must consult with the instructor on what constitutes a late essay.

Instructors may establish more restrictive deadlines or more severe penalties in particular courses – check the course outline. Extensions of due dates are granted only in circumstances that are beyond the student's control, such as health problems that are supported by a Brock medical certificate or other, clearly equivalent, situations.

Time management problems are not grounds for extensions. You are strongly urged to avoid these penalties by beginning to work on essays early in the term; by setting your own target dates for completion that are several days before the due date; and by carefully budgeting your time.

POLICY ON RETURNING MARKED ESSAYS

Marked essays will normally be returned during class meetings or at the final examination. Students who are not in class to receive their essays or do not receive them at the final examination can obtain them in three ways:

- directly from the instructor during his/her office hours (unless the instructor specifies in the course outline or by notice on his/her office door that this option is not available), and/or
- directly from the instructor on specific days and at specific times announced in class or posted on his/her office door.

- after the term has ended students should contact their instructor for specific instructions for collecting their papers.

Note: Essays that are not picked up within a year after the end of term will be shredded.

UPDATED March 2017

APPENDIX 2: STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

STATEMENT OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Please read and sign the following statement, and submit this sheet with your paper. Your paper will not be graded until you have submitted this form.

I, the undersigned, confirm that I understand that all the following constitutes academic misconduct according to Brock University's policy on academic misconduct, which in turn is consistent with general academic practice:

- Quoting someone's words without using quotation marks
- Quoting someone's words without acknowledging the source
- Citing someone else's ideas in my own words but without citing the source
- Using someone else's organization of ideas
- Allowing someone else the opportunity to borrow material from my paper (e.g., by letting them have access to my paper when they are writing their own paper)
- Writing the paper for another student, or doing some of the work for them (such as, but not limited to, reading the articles for them and providing them with notes on the articles)
- Allowing someone else (or paying someone else) to write part or all of my paper, or do some of the work for me. The exceptions to this are that it is acceptable to allow someone to type the paper for me or make editorial comment on it. However, if someone types the paper for me, or if I incorporate an editorial suggestion, and there are errors in the typing or the suggestion was misguided, I take full responsibility for those errors.
- Submitting this work to another course without both instructors' permission.

I confirm that I have not done any of the above forms of academic misconduct.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX 3: MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT SERVICES

Mental Health Support Services

Confidential Personal Counselling on Campus

- To make an appointment to see a counsellor call 905-688-5550 extension 4750 during regular
- office hours (8:30 - 12:00, 1:00 - 4:30) or visit the Student Development Centre (ST400)
- during office hours.
- <https://brocku.ca/personal-counselling>

Student Justice Centre

A space safe on campus that provides listening, support, and referral services. Services are available Monday through Friday 9:00-5:00 (TH252A) by appointment or drop in. www.brocksjc.ca

I.M. Well App

The I.M. Well app aims to address the stigma surrounding mental wellness by connecting students to the appropriate services on campus and within the community. This is an educational tool that covers a wide variety of topics such as anxiety, depression, transition and addiction. This app also offers a 24/7 live chat with mental health professionals.

<https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.eapexpert.iamwell&hl=en>
<https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/im-well/id1150435727?mt=8>