

PSCI 4950-861
Senior Capstone
Spring 2016

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University of Nebraska- Omaha

Office Hours: TTh 8:45-9:45am and Th 1:00-3:00pm
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This is the senior capstone course for political science majors at UNO. The course examines a topic involving a wide range of political science theories, methods, and fields to provide majors a sense of how the elements of political science fit together to make a coherent discipline. The course may not be repeated. This course satisfies the university third writing course requirement.

This course is designed to facilitate the process of research. Each of students will research and write up an original project, which you will share with the class and faculty of the program. Ideally, your project will culminate in a publishable-quality research paper. The instructor will help the students who produce a publishable work in seeking for publication.

The students are expected to learn the processes and mechanisms of research and writing in the end of the course term. The course will be composed three types of activities: (1) lectures in which the students will be introduced methods and mechanisms of research; (2) faculty presentations in which UNO faculty will share their research with the students with the motivation that the students familiarize themselves with the processes of research on various issues; and (3) discussions on student work in which students will share their research with their peers in classroom throughout the semester to get a critical feedback both from the instructor and other students in class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Required Readings:

- Baglione, Lisa A. 2015. *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: a Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure, and Methods*. 3rd ed. Los Angeles: Sage/CQ Press.
- Ramazan Kılınç, "International Pressure, Domestic Politics and Dynamics of Religious Freedom: Evidence from Turkey," *Comparative Politics*, Volume 46 No 2 (January 2014), pp. 127-145.
- Ramazan Kılınç, "Critical Junctures as Catalysts in Democratic Consolidation: The Case of Turkey," *Political Science Quarterly*, Volume 129 No 2 (Summer 2014), pp. 293-318.
- Ramazan Kılınç and Carolyn Warner, "Micro-Foundations of Religion and Public Goods Provision: Belief, Belonging and Giving Catholicism and Islam," *Politics and Religion*, Volume 8 No 4 (December 2015), pp. 718-744
- Carolyn Warner, Ramazan Kılınç, Christopher Hale, Adam Cohen and Kathryn Johnson "Religion and Public Goods Provision: Experimental and Interview Evidence from Catholicism and Islam in Europe," *Comparative Politics*, Volume 47 No 2 (January 2015), pp. 189-209
- Ian Pelletier, Leif Lundmark, Rachel Gardner, Gina Scott Ligon and Ramazan Kılınç, "Why ISIS' Message Resonates: Leveraging Islam, Socio-Political Messaging and Adaptive Messaging," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, Forthcoming in July 2016

In addition to the text, we will also be reading and analyzing research papers and articles from the UNO political science faculty, with an eye toward understanding the research process.

Make-Up Exams and Incompletes

I will not allow make-ups without an ***official documented excuse*** regarding medical or family emergencies. Please keep in mind that late assignments will be downgraded. An incomplete will only be given in exceptional circumstances (a documented circumstance beyond the student's control). Students will only be given an incomplete if they have been doing passing work during the semester.

Code of Conduct

All students need to acquaint themselves with what constitutes academic dishonesty and the consequences thereof. See the general university policies for further information:

<http://www.unomaha.edu/aandsaffairs/leftcolumn/inside/students/policiesandprocedures/aiundergrad.php>. ***Laptops and other devices with internet connections are not allowed during the classes.***

Although I acknowledge that laptops provide several benefits for learning, I am convinced, based on my experience, that they distract students from the lecture and discussions.

Fairness and Disability Statement

The instructor of this course is committed to support the learning of all students, irrespective of gender, race, age, religion, handicapping condition, or sexual preference. Students should be able to expect that their learning environments are free from any form of prejudice. Students requiring special consideration must contact and work through the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities in EAB 117 (554-2872). This office then notifies the instructor in writing of the accommodations the student needs in compliance with 504/ADA.

Grading

Your final grade will be based on the following criteria.

1. Attendance (10 %) and Participation (4 %)

Since this is a seminar class, you are expected to attend all the course sessions. More than two unexcused absences will negatively influence your grade. After two absences, each absence will decrease your attendance grade by 1 % up to 10 % maximum. You are also expected to productively contribute to classroom discussions, as one third of the class will be reserved for discussions on peer work. This contribution can be in the form of participating informal and formal debates, posing and responding questions, sharing other resources that can facilitate classroom learning. Class attendance and participation will worth 14 percent of your final grade.

2. Research Paper (80 %)

Each student will be required to write a research paper on a topic of her/his own choice. If you have trouble identifying a good topic/theme to follow, please consult with me as early as possible so that I may assist you. This assignment, which include reading, writing, and speaking, has five components:

a. Research Question and Annotated Bibliography (10 %): Submit a topic and preliminary bibliography of at least 20 academic sources for the professor's approval. The topic must be accompanied by a research question; the sources must be listed in appropriate citation format and should be academic sources from a university press publishing house and/or peer-reviewed. The instructor will provide detailed instructions and a grading rubric later in the semester. The research question and annotated bibliography is worth of 10 % of your final grade and is due on **February 5**.

b. Literature Review and Argument Development (15 %): In this assignment, the students will (1) analyze and classify the existing work on their research topic and (2) develop their own argument and put in into the context of the existing literature. They are expected to discuss how they contribute to the existing literature on the topic. The instructor will give detailed instructions and grading rubric later in the

semester. The literature review and argument development is worth of 15 % of your final grade and is due on **March 4**.

c. Book Genealogy Assignment (10 %): In this paper, you are required to write a critical analysis of a book on your chosen topic. The book should be published between 2014 and 2016. Please make sure that the book contributes to your research. This review will be different from typical book reviews. You will situate the book into the literature by identifying the intellectual precedents of the book. You're also expected to discuss the implications of the book for the future of the literature on your chosen topic and implications for your own research. Your paper will be 4-page-long (double spaced), and you should use citations and quotations properly. The book genealogy assignment is due on **March 18**. This paper will worth 10 percent of your final grade.

d. Research Design and Analysis (15 %): After developing the argument, the students will be expected to prepare a research design in which they will identify how they will demonstrate their argument, what methods they will use, and how they will utilize their data. They are also expected to analyze the data the way that they identify in the research design. The instructor will provide detailed instructions and grading rubric later in the semester. The research design and analysis is worth of 15 % of your final grade and is due on **April 8**.

e. Final Paper (20 %): The final paper should report all of your research findings in a traditional research paper format. The paper will be 20-25 page-long (double spaced), and you should use citations and quotations properly. It will be graded on intellectual content, scholarship, style and mechanics. The instructor will provide special instructions and a grading rubric later in the semester. The final paper is worth of 30 % of your final grade. The final paper is due on **April 29** and the students should submit the paper via Blackboard.

f. Poster Presentation (10 %): All the students will present their research papers as poster presentation on the last day of the class. Part of the grading (30 % of your grade for this assignment) in this assignment will include an advance version of your presentation on the week before the presentation. Your friends will give you feedback to improve your presentation before it is presented to the public. The presentation of your work will worth 10 % of your final grade. The in advance presentations are due on **April 19** and the final presentations will be conducted on **April 26**.

3. Discussion on Student Work (2 % each, 6 % total)

Throughout the semester, we will have three separate sessions to discuss student work. In those days, the students are expected to share their progress in research based on the questions that the instructor raises. Each student is expected to critically engage with their peer's research and help them in solving the issues that they face in the research process. To do so, the students will be expected to read one of their peer's work before the class. Each discussion will worth 1.5 % of your final grade. The discussions will take place on **February 9, March 8 and April 12**.

4. MFT Exam

A grade of C- or above in this course is required for graduating with a major in political science. In addition, it is required that students take the Major Field Test in Political Science (a standardized test from ETS administered by the testing center under secure conditions). The university pays the fee for you to take this test, and we use it for assessment purposes to determine curriculum strengths, weaknesses and changes. You will be taking this exam during the university scheduled final exam time for this course, currently scheduled in **Kaiser Hall 543 on Thursday, May 5 from 12:30 pm - 3pm**. It will be taken on the computers in the lab there. You will need to bring your **UNO ID card** and follow instructions given

by the exam proctor. Performance on the exam is not part of your course grade, but you cannot pass the course without taking it.

A Summary of Grading Requirements

<u>Course Requirement</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Attendance	10 %	
Participation	4 %	
Question and Bibliography	10 %	February 5
Student Work Discussion 1	2 %	February 9
Literature Review and Argument	15 %	March 4
Student Work Discussion 2	2 %	March 8
Book Genealogy Assignment	10 %	March 18
Research Design and Analysis	15 %	April 8
Student Work Discussion 3	2 %	April 12
First Draft of Poster Presentation	3 %	April 19
Poster Presentation	7 %	April 26
Final Paper	20 %	April 29
MFT Exam	0 %	May 5
TOTAL	100 %	

The entire course is worth 100 points:

A	94-100 points	C	72-76 points
A-	90-93 points	C-	69-71 points
B+	87-89 points	D+	66-68 points
B	83-86 points	D	63-65 points
B-	80-82 points	D-	60-62 points
C+	77-79 points	F	0-59 points

COURSE SCHEDULE AND READINGS

INTRODUCTION

January 12: Overview of the Course

PART 1: RESEARCH QUESTION AND BIBLIOGRAPHY

January 19: Finding a Research Question

Baglione, Chapter 1, "So You Have to Write a Research Paper," pp. 1-14

Baglione, Chapter 2, "Getting Started: Finding a Research Question," pp. 15-40

January 26: Using Library Resources

Presentation by James Shaw

The class will meet at UNO Criss Library, Room 112

February 2: Citation and Annotated Bibliography

Baglione, Chapter 3, "Learning Proper Citation Forms, Finding the Scholarly Debate, and Summarizing and Classifying Arguments: The Annotated Bibliography" pp. 41-74

Research Question and Annotated Bibliography due on February 5

February 9: Class Discussion on Student Work: Research Questions and Annotated Bibliography

PART 2: LITERATURE REVIEW AND ARGUMENT DEVELOPMENT

February 16: Faculty Presentations

February 23: Literature Review

Baglione, Chapter 4, "Making Sense of Scholarly Answers to Your Research Question: Writing the Literature Review," pp. 75-92

March 1: Argument Development and Refinement

Baglione, Chapter 5, "Effectively Distilling Your Argument: The Thesis, Model and Hypothesis," pp. 93-108

Literature Review and Argument Development due on March 4

March 8: Class Discussion on Student Work: Literature Review and Argument Development

PART 3: RESEARCH DESIGN, DATA ANALYSIS AND ORGANIZATION

March 15: Research Design

Baglione, Chapter 7, "Making Your Plan and Protecting Yourself from Criticism," pp. 121-154

Book Genealogy Assignment due on March 18

March 22: Spring Break

March 29: Analysis and Assessment

Baglione, Chapter 8, "Evaluating the Argument: The Analysis and Assessment Section," pp. 155-174

April 5: Organization

Baglione, Chapter 6, "Revising and Editing Your Work: The Writing-Thinking Spiral," pp. 109-120

Baglione, Chapter 9, "Bringing the Paper Together in Three Essential Ways: The Conclusion, Introduction and Title," pp. 175-190

Research Design and Analysis due on April 8

April 12: Class Discussion on Student Work: Research Design and Analysis

April 19: In-Class Poster Presentation

April 26: Poster Presentations

Final Paper Due on April 29

May 5, 12:30 p.m.: MFT Exam