

Introduction to American Politics: Using social movements to understand the tenets of American Politics

A Writing Enriched, Social Justice, and Honors Course

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Sarah James, PhD, MEd

Department of Political Science

Gonzaga University

Professor: Sarah James, PhD, MEd (please call me Professor James or Dr. James!)

Email: james@gonzaga.edu

OVERVIEW

Our primary goal in this course is to become **more informed and engaged members of our communities** through learning about the **history, theories, science, and skills of politics**. In order to do this, we will use three recent social movements: the 1960's Civil Rights Movement (Civil Rights); 2nd Amendment Politics (Gun Control and Opposition to Gun Control); and abortion politics (pro-life and pro-choice movements) to examine the institutions, core principles, and forces of American politics. Each week we will have three broad goals: first, we will explore the **foundational thinking** about a particular key institution or concept in American government. Second, we will examine **contemporary political science** that explains theories on the functioning and impact of the weekly topic. Our understanding of the foundation and political science will inform our third goal: applying our political science knowledge to evaluate the goals, achievements, and missed opportunities of each movement. We will also use the real-world occurrences of civil rights, 2nd amendment, and abortion politics to **question assumptions of the founders and of political scientists**. The course is built around the following essential questions:

- How have the **structures and institutions** of American government **changed over time**?
- How do the structures and institutions of American government influence **the pace of social and political change over time**?
- To what extent are American **institutions conducive to achieving equality and equity** among Americans?
- Given the goals in our founding documents, how should we **balance civil rights and civil liberties** in American government and politics? How has this changed over time?

In addition to learning about American politics and the social movements, we will **also improve our abilities to read, write, analyze, and converse in the social sciences**. Specifically, we meet the expectations of a **writing enriched** course by enhancing our ability to:

- Employ the **norms of writing and argumentation** in social science
- Locate and evaluate the **relevance and credibility of primary and secondary sources** typical to social science writing
- Effectively **incorporate primary and secondary sources** to support arguments about social science phenomena
- Develop habits of **drafting, seeking feedback, and revising** our writing

We will discuss strategies for digesting social science efficiently, and how to apply the principals of political science to be effective [leaders for the common good and social justice](#) through the avenues and policies that interest us most. We will also practice engaging in informed and constructive dialogue with our peers.

ASSIGNMENTS

There are **five categories of assignments** in this course: **academic engagement, reading responses, annotated bibliographies, draft memos** making incremental progress towards your final paper, and the **final paper** itself.

Reading reflections

Students must complete reading reflections for 6 of the 14 weeks. Reading reflections consist of 250 words comparing, contrasting, and reacting to the themes of the readings, videos, and podcasts assigned for the day. This is also an opportunity to ask questions and about the readings or concepts that were confusing. Reading reflections **are due by the start of class** and

should be posted to the discussion board on Canvas. Criteria for success for the reading reflections will be posted on our course Canvas page and discussed the first week of class. *Reading reflections submitted after class will be accepted but will receive an automatic 10 point deduction.*

Developing your own movement for social or political change

To practice thinking and writing like a social scientist, students will **develop a plan for a building their own social movement**. You will have the opportunity to identify a policy problem of your choosing, study its history, and propose a solution for addressing it. More detailed descriptions of each assignment and the rubrics I will use to score them are on Canvas and will be discussed in class. Assignments should be submitted via Canvas.

Assignment deadline overview

Final memos are due by 11:59PM via Gradescope, which you can access through Canvas, as a PDF. Draft memos do not need to be submitted but should be completed in such a way that students can exchange digital files or paper copies.

Assignment	Deadline	
6 reading reflections	3 must be completed by March 8 th , all completed by end of semester	3% each for a total of 18%
Annotated bibliography: policy history	February 2, 2024	5%
Memo 1 draft: identifying the problem	February 13, 2024	N/A
Final memo 1: identifying the problem	February 20, 2024	10%
Annotated bibliography: movement goals	March 2, 2024	5%
Academic engagement mid-semester self-reflection	March 20, 2024	10% (average mid and end of semester grades)
Memo 2 draft: movement goals	March 26, 2024	N/A
Final memo 2: movement goals	April 5, 2024	12%
Memo 3 draft: Political strategy & analysis	April 23, 2024	N/A
Final memo 3: Political strategy & analysis	April 29, 2024	15%
Final paper	May 10, 2024	25%

Late work policy

All students may have an **automatic 48-hour extension on any final memo or final project assignment**. Students may automatically assume they can use the 48-hour extension. This is intended to give you the flexibility to manage your own time and any unexpected challenges that might arise throughout the semester. Our assignments are designed to give you an opportunity to receive and implement feedback as the semester goes on. Letting assignments pile up will undermine your ability to improve as a writer and complete the final assignment. *When I receive assignments by the 48-hour extension deadline, I will provide detailed feedback on writing. I do not guarantee that I will provide detailed feedback on assignments submitted after the 48-hour extension deadline.*

Because students have a choice on when to complete **reading responses**, they must be **submitted by the start of class on the day of class that readings are due**. Late reading assignments will be graded, but the final grade will be reduced by 10 points.

EXPECTATIONS

I see my role as learning alongside my students as we explore the nuances of American politics, and therefore believe that as students and teacher we should have mutually reinforcing expectations of one another.

What you can expect from me

I won't always know the right answer, but my training as an academic prepares me to structure our conversation around key findings in social science and, when I don't know the answer to something, to find it quickly. You can expect me to bring **enthusiasm, curiosity, and clear expectations** for our daily objectives to each of our sessions. I am also committed to being **transparent about my expectations** for our assignments to ensure that all students, regardless of their past experiences with political science, are prepared to excel in my course. I am excited to **collaborate** with students if and when they are considering political science as a potential major, including discussing how the skills central to the discipline apply to different post-graduate

careers. Finally, I am committed to creating a classroom environment in which students feel comfortable bringing their full identity to rigorous, empirically grounded debate. I welcome suggestions on how to ensure our classroom is a welcoming and rigorous space for all.

What I expect of you

Our class is structured such that the more effort and curiosity students bring to the class, the more you will get out of it. I expect students to evaluate what interests them about our content and to allocate their time and attention accordingly. Students should complete all reading and video assignments before the start of class. **Participation** is a basic expectation of the course, and I expect all students to **contribute to the intellectual climate** of the course through offering opinions in class, thinking through questions in their reading assignments, participating actively in small group discussions and simulations, and attending office hours. I also expect students to reach out when they need additional support or guidance beyond what I have provided. Students should critically examine our readings and question the premises, methods, and data in everything we review. Finally, I expect students to **provide constructive feedback** on the structure and content of our course through mid-semester and end of semester course evaluations. You can learn more about final course evaluations [here](#).

A note on language and course content

We are studying American politics through the lens of three social movements, each of which engages with many emotional and hotly contested political issues, views, and values. Our goal is not to evaluate the value of the movements, but to understand the **strategies that activists, voters, and politicians have used to achieve their desired outcomes**. I use the names each of the movements has conventionally used to describe themselves. This does not preclude us discussing the political implications of these names themselves but is rather necessary for the simplicity of describing our course.

To learn about politics and our movements, we will be reading a mix of journalistic and scholarly sources. All writers have bias—the assignment of a particular reading or podcast is not an endorsement of the views communicated; rather it is intended as a starting point for a conversation for us react to and analyze perspectives in light of findings from political science.

STATEMENT OF INCLUSION & BELONGING

One of the goals of this class is to **use social science research to ground conversations about American politics**, but this approach does not remove the passion, emotion, and challenge of having such conversations. This is especially true given that we will only be working together for two weeks. Furthermore, we all interpret findings through the lenses of our own experiences, be it ideological, racial, regional, or economic (to name a few). I have done my best to include a **diverse set of perspectives**; however, I acknowledge that it is possible there may be both overt and covert biases in the material, due to both the lens through which much of political science and journalism is written and through my own biases when choosing materials.

We will discuss topics that may generate strong personal and emotional reactions. Our conversations will not always be easy; we **will make mistakes** in our speaking and our listening; sometimes we will need patience or courage or imagination or any number of qualities in combination to engage our texts, our classmates, and our own ideas and experiences. We will always need respect for others. Thus, an additional aim of our course necessarily will be for us to **increase our facility with the sometimes-difficult conversations** that arise as we deepen our understandings of multiple perspectives. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention. If and when this occurs, there are several ways to address it:

1. Discuss the situation privately with me. I am always open to listening to students' experiences and want to work with students to find acceptable ways to process and address the issue.
2. Discuss the situation with the class. Starting by asking a question from a position of assuming the best about the speaker's intentions can be a useful strategy for bringing something to the class' attention. Chances are there is at least one other student in the class who had a similar response to the material. Discussion enhances the ability for all class participants to have a fuller understanding of context and impact of course material and class discussions.
3. If for any reason you do not feel comfortable discussing the issue directly with me, I encourage you to consult the various resources available on campus:
 1. The [Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion](#), which cultivates an academic environment that is welcoming and accessible to students, staff, and instructors regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, religion, disability, and sexual orientation or identity.
 2. The [Bias Incident Assessment and Support \(BIAS\) Team](#) exists to foster a campus environment where everyone feels safe and respected. Those who experience or witness a bias incident should visit the [BIAS Report site](#).

COURSE CALENDAR

The following course calendar is divided into four categories. In the topic column, I have identified **key questions** that will guide our study that week. You should consider these questions as you complete the videos and readings each week. Next, there are some **background videos** from the PBS Crash Course in Government. I expect students to view these videos before class, as we are using them in lieu of a textbook to get the basics of the structure and history of American government. Third, there are readings about general **political science research, theories, and primary sources**. Most weeks contain at least one reading from the Federalist papers—these are intended to give us some insight into the original intentions of the founders. Fourth, I have separated out **readings related to the CRM, PLM, and M4OL** that are relevant to the topic of the week. These readings discuss how the week's concepts have operated (or not) in each of the movements. As you read these, compare and contrast what happens in each movement.

We will use The New York Times at several points throughout class. Please create a *free* student account through Foley library. You can find directions for doing so [here](#).

Note: You should expect to spend 3-5 hours on reading for our class each week. If you are spending much more than this, please reach out to me to discuss additional strategies for making the reading more manageable.

Other note: The **boxes outlined in the triple bars** indicates weeks in which you will be assigned ONE reading of the several listed. I will assign these groups the week ahead in class.

Part I: Setting the stage					
Day	Background	Political science	Civil Rights	2 nd Amendment Politics	Abortion Politics
<p><i>January 16: Introduction</i> What is political science? How do we read and write in political science?</p>					
<p><i>January 18: What is political science & how do we talk about politics?</i> How do we read and write in political science? Why study social movements? How do we talk about politics? What are the expectations for our final project in this course?</p>	<p>Ep 1: Why study government? Cheng, Eugenia. "Solving our problems with math." <i>The Wall Street Journal</i>. Aug. 18, 2023.</p>	<p>"How to Read Political Science", Gonzaga University Brooks, Arthur. "A Gentler, Better Way to Change Minds." <i>The Atlantic</i>. April 7, 2022.</p>			
<p><i>January 23: Introducing the movements</i> What were the goals of the CRM, PLM, and M4OL? What key events led to the start of each movement? What is the legacy of each movement?</p>			<p>Singh, Nikhil Pal. <i>Black Is a Country</i>. Harvard University Press, 2021, <i>Introduction</i>, pgs 1-14.</p>	<p>LISTEN: More Perfect: The Gun Show</p>	<p>LISTEN: The Story of Roe v. Wade, Part 2: The Culture Wars, May 7, 2022</p>
<p><i>January 25: American civic culture</i> What is distinctive about American civic culture? How has this changed over time? What role do young people play in this culture?</p>		<p>Skocpol, Theda. "Associations without members." <i>American Prospect</i>. December 2001.</p>		<p>Goss, Kristin. <i>Disarmed: The missing movement for gun control in America</i>. Vol. 103. Princeton University Press, 2010. Pg 1-12 ONLY</p>	<p>Munson, Ziad. "Mobilizing on Campus: Conservative Movements and Today's College Students 1." <i>Sociological Forum</i>. Vol. 25. No. 4. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 2010.</p>
<p><i>January 30: Challenges of collective action</i> What is collection action and why is it a problem? How do activists overcome the collective action problem?</p>			<p>Chong, Dennis. "Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement." <i>University of Chicago Press</i>. 1991, pg 1-12</p>	<p>Sato, Yuko, and Jake Haselswerdt. "Protest and state policy agendas: Marches and gun policy after Parkland." <i>Policy Studies Journal</i> (2022), pages 1-5 and 8-14; 5-8 are optional. <i>Note: don't get bogged down in all the math—just focus on the main findings.</i></p>	<p>Munson, Ziad. "How People Become Pro-Life Activists." <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>. Feb. 8, 2016</p>
<p><i>February 1: Individual research workshop (No Class Meeting)</i></p>					

<p><i>February 6: The history of political parties and ideology</i> What is the difference between a political party and ideology? How have political parties and ideology changed over time?</p>	<p>Ep 40: Political parties Ep 41: Party Systems</p>	<p>“Growth & Opportunity Project” <i>Republican National Committee</i>. 2013. Pages 1-22 (feel free to skim)</p>		<p>Shalhope, Robert E. "The ideological origins of the Second Amendment." <i>The Journal of American History</i> 69.3 (1982): 599-602; 606-614</p>	<p>Hout, Michael. "Abortion Politics in the United States 1972-1994: From Single Issue to Ideology" <i>Gender Issues</i>. 1999.</p>
Part II: Core documents and institutions					
Day	Background	Political science	CRM	M4OL	PLM
<p><i>February 8: The Constitution</i> What explains the structure of the Constitution and how does it impact contemporary politics? How do elected officials and the public invoke the Constitution to achieve political change?</p>	<p>Ep 3: Checks and Balances Ep 5: Constitutional Compromises</p>	<p>Lepore, Jill. "Our Unamenable Constitution." <i>The New Yorker</i>. October 2022.</p>	<p>Hirsh, Michael. "How America's Founding Fathers Missed a Chance to Abolish Slavery." <i>Foreign Affairs</i>. July 3 2020.</p>	<p>Churchill, Robert H. "Gun Regulation, the Police Power, and the Right to Keep Arms in Early America: The Legal Context of the Second Amendment." <i>Law and History Review</i> 25.1 (2007): 165-175 ONLY</p>	<p>Thomas, George. "What the Constitution Doesn't Say." <i>The Atlantic</i>. February 3, 2022</p>
<p><i>February 13: Peer Review & Writers' Workshop</i> Come to class with a draft of your problem memo</p>	<p>Orwell, George. "Politics and the English Language." <i>The Collected Essays, Stories, and Journalism of George Orwell</i>. 1968</p>				
<p><i>February 15: Norms in American Culture & Politics</i> What are norms? What role do they play in a democracy? What happens when norms are violated?</p>		<p>Foran, Claire. "An Erosion of Democratic Norms in America." <i>The Atlantic</i>. November 22, 2016.</p>	<p>Coates, Ta-Nehisi. "Some Thoughts on Democratic Norms." <i>The Atlantic</i>. June 25, 2012.</p>		
<p><i>February 20: Defining civil rights and civil liberties</i> What is the difference between civil rights and liberties? How do these concepts get invoked in arguments for and against each movement?</p>	<p>Ep 23: Civil rights & civil liberties Ep 24: Freedom of Religion Ep 25: Freedom of speech</p>	<p>Ep 26: Freedom of the press Ep: 27 Search and Seizure Ep 28: Due Process of Law Ep 29: Equal protection</p>	<p>Hooker, Juliet. "Black Lives Matter and the paradoxes of US Black politics: From democratic sacrifice to democratic repair." <i>Political Theory</i> 44.4 (2016): 448-469.</p>	<p>Zick, Timothy. "Framing the second amendment: gun rights, civil rights and civil liberties." <i>Iowa L. Rev.</i> 106 (2020): 231-236, 245-260, 272-281.</p>	<p>Luker, Kristin. <i>Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood</i>. Univ of California Press, 1984; Ch 7, Pg 158-186 ONLY</p>
<p><i>February 22: Federalism</i> What is federalism? Does American federalism facilitate or inhibit policy</p>	<p>Ep 4: Federalism</p>			<p>Goss, Kristin. <i>Disarmed: The missing movement for gun control in America</i>. Vol. 103. Princeton University Press, 2010. Ch 6</p>	<p>Gowen, Annie & Itkowitz, Colby. "Kansans resoundingly reject amendment aimed at restricting</p>

<p>responsiveness and inequality?</p>					<p>abortion rights” <i>The Washington Post</i>. August 3, 2022.</p>
<p><i>February 27: Congress</i> How is Congress structured and how does its structure influence the policy process? Is Congress responsive to public opinion?</p>	<p>Ep 2: Bicameral Legislature Ep 10: Congressional Decisions Caulfield, Rachel Paine. “Before You Vote for a Senator, here are some facts about What They Actually Do.” <i>The Conversation</i>. November 7, 2022</p>	<p>Volden, Craig & Wiseman, Alan. “Who are the Most Effective Lawmakers in Congress?” <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>. October 2014. Leighley, Jan & Oser, Jennifer. “When Do Members of the U.S. Congress Respond to Less Privileged Constituents?” <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>. December 2017.</p>			
<p><i>February 29: Congress and policy change</i> What explains the passage legislation in response to CRM, PLM & M4OL?</p>			<p>Stewart, John G. "When democracy worked: reflections on the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964." <i>NYL Sch. L. Rev.</i> 59 (2014): Parts I, II, IV, VI, IX, X</p>	<p>McDermott & Jones. “Why gun control laws don’t pass Congress, despite majority public support and repeated outrage over mass shootings?” <i>The Conversation</i>. May 2022.</p>	
<p><i>March 5: The executive branch</i> What powers does the President have?</p>	<p>Ep 11: Presidential powers Ep 12: Presidential Powers 2 Ep 15: Bureaucracy Basics</p>	<p>Hill & Jochim. Summary of Neustadt, Richard E. <i>Presidential power and the modern presidents: The politics of leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan</i>. CRPE: Reinventing Public Education. 2017: Pgs 1-5 only. Balkin, Jack M. <i>The cycles of constitutional time</i>. Oxford University Press, USA, 2020. Chapter 2</p>			
<p><i>March 7: The executive branch & policy change</i> What role have presidents played in bringing about policy change?</p>			<p>“How LBJ Saved the Civil Rights Act.” <i>The Atlantic</i>. April 2014.</p>	<p>Scher, Bill. “The Real Reason Obama Didn’t Pass Gun Control.” <i>Politico</i>. August 16, 2019.</p>	<p>Daynes, Byron W., and Raymond Tatalovich. "Presidential politics and abortion, 1972-1988." <i>Presidential Studies Quarterly</i> (1992): 545-561</p>

<p><i>March 12 & 14: No Class for Spring Break</i></p>					
<p><i>March 19: The courts</i> How is the American judicial system structured? To what extent is the structure and decisions of the Courts political?</p>	<p>Ep 19: The structure of the courts Ep 21: Judicial Review PODCAST: More Perfect. Kittens Kick the Giggly Blue Robot All Summer</p>	<p>Students will be assigned to ONE of the following in class: Jurecic, Quinta & Hennessey, Susan. “The Reckless Race to Confirm Amy Coney Barrett Justifies Court Packing.” <i>The Atlantic</i>. October 4, 2020. OR Doerfle, Ryan & Moyn, Samuel. “Reform the Court, Don’t Pack It.” <i>The Atlantic</i>. August 8, 2020.</p>			
<p><i>March 21: The courts as political actors</i> Are courts the source of major policy change? Why or why not? What is test case litigation and what is the impact of this strategy?</p>	<p>America From Scratch: Should we elect Supreme Court Justices?</p>		<p>Rothstein, Richard. “How, after 60 years, Brown v. Board succeeded—and didn’t.” <i>Washington Post</i>. April 2014. Ogletree, Charles. <i>All Deliberate Speed: Brown’s Past and Brown’s Future</i>. Symposium: A Look at Brown v. Board of Education in West Virginia. April 2005.</p>		<p>Frum, David. “Roe is the new Prohibition.” <i>The Atlantic</i>. June 27, 2022.</p>
<p><i>March 26: Peer Review & Writing Workshop</i> Come to class with a draft of your movement goals memo</p>					
<p><i>March 28: No Class For Easter Break</i></p>					

Part III: Forces in American politics

Day	Background	Political science	CRM	M4OL	
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<p><i>April 2: Public opinion</i> How is public opinion conveyed in American politics? Does the public have stable opinion of policy issues? What role does public opinion play in our movements?</p>	<p>Ep 33: Public Opinion Ep 44: Shaping public opinion</p>		<p>Lee, Taeku. <i>Mobilizing public opinion: Black insurgency and racial attitudes in the civil rights era</i>. University of Chicago Press, 2002. Ch , pg 1-9; 12-15</p>	<p>The Daily. "Why polling on Gun Control gets it Wrong." <i>The New York Times</i>. June 7, 2022.</p>	<p>Mehta, Samira. "There is no one religious-view on abortion." <i>The Conversation</i>. June 2022.</p>
<p><i>April 4: Representation</i> What is representation? What are theories about how representation works in a republican democracy? Should we have requirements about representation in elected bodies?</p>	<p>America From Scratch: Women in Legislatures</p>		<p>Taylor, Keeanga-Yamahtta. "Joe Biden, Kamala Harris, and the Limits of Representation." <i>The New Yorker</i>. August 24, 2020.</p>		<p>Sweet-Cushman, Jeannie. "How the Underrepresentation of Women in Pennsylvania Politics Affects Public Policy." <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>. July 2017.</p>
<p><i>April 9: No class—Extra credit opportunity at Elections Crash Course event</i></p>					
<p><i>April 11: Elections</i> How are elections structured? What impact do elections actually have on the policy process?</p>	<p>Ep 36: Election basics Ep 37: Gerrymandering</p>	<p>Episode 748: This American Life</p>	<p>Anzia, Sarah. "How the Timing of Elections Shapes Turnout, Election Outcomes, and Public Policy." <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>. November 2015.</p> <p>Boatright, Robert G. "Do Primary Elections Promote Extremism in U.S. Politics." <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>. September 2020.</p> <p>Young, Jeremy C. "What Emotional Politics More than a Century Ago Says About Winning U.S. Elections." <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>.</p>		

<p><i>April 16: Voting</i> What factors shape when and how people vote? How has access to the franchise changed over time? Is voting an effective form of communication about policy preferences?</p>	<p>Ep 38: How voters decide</p>	<p>Lepore, Jill. "How we used to vote." <i>The New Yorker</i>. October 2008.</p>	<p>Shelby County v. Holder. Oyez Stevens, John Paul. "The Court & the Right to Vote: A dissent." <i>The New York Review</i>. August 15, 2013</p>		
<p><i>April 18: Interest groups</i> What are interest groups? What role do they play in American politics?</p>	<p>Ep 42: Interest groups Ep 43: Interest group formation</p>	<p>Mounk, Yascha. "American is not a Democracy." <i>The Atlantic</i>. March 2018.</p>			<p>Giorno, Taylor & Datta, Srijita. "Abortion rights groups consistently spent more money and political contributions than their counterparts. So what happened?" <i>Open Secrets</i>. July 5, 2022.</p>
<p><i>April 23: Peer Review & Workshop Day 3</i> Come to class with a draft of your political analysis memo</p>					
<p><i>April 25: The media</i> What role does the media play in American democracy? How has this changed over time? How did media framing of CRM and M4OL impact each movement?</p>	<p>Ep 44: Media Institutions Optional: Ep 8, Hush Rush from The Last Archive</p>			<p>Goss, Kristin. <i>Disarmed: The missing movement for gun control in America</i>. Vol. 103. Princeton University Press, 2010. Ch 4. Pg 105-108, 123-144 Spitzer, Robert. "How the NRA evolved from backing a 1934 ban on machine guns to blocking nearly all firearm restrictions today." <i>The Conversation</i>. May 2022.</p>	<p>Rohlinger, Diana. "Understanding the media strategies of America's pro-life and pro-choice movements." <i>Scholar Strategy Network</i>. April 2015.</p>
<p><i>April 30: Social Media, Conspiratorial thinking, and Misinformation in American politics</i></p>	<p>Ep 9: Epiphany from The Last Archive</p>	<p>Hofstadter, Richard. "The Paranoid Style in American Politics." <i>Harper's Magazine</i>. December 1964.</p>		<p>Lopez, German. "Pizzagate, the fake news conspiracy theory, led a gunman to DC's Comet Ping Pong, explained." <i>Vox</i>. December 8, 2016.</p>	
<p><i>May 2: Wrapping up and reflecting</i> What has political science failed to explain about our movements? Where are these movements today??</p>				<p>Goss, Kristin. <i>Disarmed: The missing movement for gun control in America</i>. Vol. 103. Princeton University Press, 2010. Ch 7.</p>	<p>Optional: Luker, Kristin. <i>Abortion and the Politics of Motherhood</i>. Univ of California Press, 1984; Ch 9</p>

COURSE POLICIES & RESOURCES

You can find more information on all of the following policies on [Gonzaga's Academic Policy and Procedures](#) page. A full list of course policies is available on the course site.

Academic accommodations

As COVID-related challenges persist, students with qualifying disabilities and/or medical conditions, as per [CDC recommendations for higher education](#), are eligible for and may request reasonable accommodations through established procedures. Students should contact the [Disability Access Office](#) to begin the process. In addition, Gonzaga University seeks to provide equal access to electronic content consistent with applicable federal and state laws, such that when possible “Accessible Documents” will be created with the proper formatting tools to maximize communication of content regardless of what device or adaptive equipment he or she is using; see [Electronic Information Technology Accessibility \(EITA\)](#).

Academic integrity policies

All members of the Gonzaga community are expected to adhere to principles of honesty and integrity in their academic endeavors, and this course will abide strictly by procedures and guidelines of the University's Academic Integrity Policy, which can be found in full [here](#) or at the [Academic Integrity Policy Resources webpage](#). Students and faculty are governed by this policy. Familiarize yourself with its scope and procedures. Ignorance of the policy shall not serve as a defense against any violations.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Translator Policy¹

AI tools like ChatGPT, they can be an amazing assist much like a calculator is for math classes. There is a good possibility that using tools like these are going to become an important skill for careers in the not distant future. The best way to use it for idea generation, synthesis, rephrasing, essentializing and gathering information about the typical understanding of a topic. However, you should guide, verify and craft your ultimate answers.

Students are allowed to use advanced automated tools (artificial intelligence or machine learning tools such as ChatGPT or Dall-E 2 and translating services) on assignments in this course if that use is properly documented and credited. For example, text generated using ChatGPT-3 should include a citation such as: “Chat-GPT-3. (YYYY, Month DD of query). “Text of your query.” Material generated using other tools should follow a similar citation convention. You may use generative AI programs, e.g. ChatGPT, to help generate ideas and brainstorm. You should note, however, that the material generated by these programs may be inaccurate, incomplete, biased or otherwise problematic. ***You are responsible for what you submit in your assignments.***

The Gonzaga's policy on plagiarism still applies to any uncited or improperly cited use of work by other human beings, or submission of work by other human beings as your own. See this article for proper APA formatting of such citations: [How to cite ChatGPT](#).

There are some important dynamics and ideas to keep in mind as you use AI tools:

- A. AI can be a valuable tool for augmenting human decision-making and critical thinking, but it is not a replacement.
- B. AI is a tool, just like a pencil or a computer. However, unlike most tools you need to acknowledge using it. Pay close attention to whatever information you use in your own work that is produced from Ai, and explain how/what you used at the end of assignments. My recommendation is to screen shot and save everything (i.e., what prompts you used, what answers were produced, where, why, and how). This is new territory, but basic attribution rules still apply. Cite everything, otherwise you are likely violating academic integrity policies.
- C. If you provide minimum effort prompts, you will get low quality results. You will need to refine your prompts to get better outcomes. This will take time and practice.
- D. AI is vulnerable to discrimination because it perpetuate existing biases present in the data it is trained on. For example, if an AI system is trained on data that contains a bias against a certain group of people, the system may make decisions that are unfair or discriminatory towards that group.
- E. There are several reasons why AI systems can perpetuate discrimination:
 - i. Bias in the training data: If the training data contains biases, the AI system may learn and replicate those biases in its decision-making.
 - ii. Lack of diversity in the training data: If the training data does not include a diverse range of examples, the AI system may not perform well on diverse inputs, which may lead to discrimination.
 - iii. Lack of transparency: Some AI systems can be difficult to understand and interpret, making it challenging to detect and correct for biases.
 - iv. Lack of accountability: Without proper oversight and accountability, it can be difficult to identify and address discrimination in AI systems.

¹ Compiled from multiple entries from a [crowdsourced suggestions](#) for how to discuss AI on college syllabi.

- v. It is important to keep in mind that these biases can be unconscious, unintended and hard to detect, but they can have serious consequences if they are not addressed.
- F. Assume it is wrong, unless you already know the answer and can verify with trusted sources. It works best for topics you deeply understand.
- G. Use your best judgement to determine if/where/when to use these tools. They don't always make products easier and/or better.
- H. Large language models and chatbots are "look back" machines. They don't advance knowledge (yet). ChatGPT-3 uses data from 2021 and earlier (a lot has changed since 2021).

Procedure for when I suspect AI usage is not properly documented

We are all learning about the capability, etiquette, and patterns of how AI will affect our work. I will use my best judgement—which includes my knowledge of the patterns of AI writing, the typical diction, grammatical structure, and organization of college-level writing, and an assessment of the level of detail in student writing compared to the level of detail addressed in class and readings—along with AI detection software to monitor appropriate usage of AI in our class. If I suspect that proper citation is missing for a submission that relied on AI, I will do the following:

1. Notify the student (likely via email) that the assignment appears to rely on AI without proper citation.
2. The student will then have two options:
 - a. Resubmit the assignment with proper citation or to rewrite the assignment in their own words.
 - b. Attend office hours to engage in an in-depth discussion of their writing and research process. I will ask the student questions based on the submitted assignment to probe their understanding of the submitted work.
3. If the student chooses option A, then I will regrade the assignment based on the new submission.
4. If the student chooses option B, and demonstrates a satisfactory familiarity with the concepts, sources, and ideas included in the original assignment, then I will grade the original assignment as it was submitted.

If a student submits multiple assignments that reflect the characteristics of AI writing, I will refer the matter to the Academic Integrity Council.

Attendance policy

I believe that students can contribute in a myriad of ways: writing excellent reflection papers, asking questions of their peers, raising their hand in class, attending office hours, and reaching out to the instructor via email, just to name a few. Contributing to the intellectual dialogue and conversations in our class is a foundational expectation of the course but is not explicitly included in the grading scheme because of how subjective assessing participation can be. Attending class is a core component of the learning opportunity of our course, thus in-person attendance is mandatory, unless students are observing a religious holiday, experiencing illness, or managing a personal emergency. I expect students to communicate anticipated absences at least 48 hours in advance. Attendance is not explicitly part of the final grade; however, missing a substantial portion of classes will reflect in students' preparation to complete the assignments well. I will reach out to discuss attendance if I notice that chronic absenteeism is becoming an issue.

Technology policy²

An important goal of our class is to practice engaging in constructive discussion and disagreement. This is only possible when we are all actively engaged in class. Digital devices can be incredible tools, but they also can steal our attention away from our immediate surroundings. In this class we will have a technology policy that is designed to support your attention to one another and to the course material. I have developed this policy for three reasons.

1. A significant body of research demonstrates that when students engage in off-task behavior on their devices, **it hurts the learning of the peers sitting near them**. In one study, students who were *not* using a device in a class lecture, but were seated *within view of a peer with a device*, performed 17% worse on an exam based on that lecture material than students who were not within view of someone else's device. Hence the first purpose of this policy is to ensure that your devices are not harming the learning of your peers.
2. This class depends upon everyone's active engagement. My job is to provide you with exposure to the course material, and organize class so that you develop your own ideas about what that material means. Your ideas will become richer when they are articulated and engaged in dialogue with the ideas of your peers. If you are focused on your device, instead of our work, **you are depriving the entire class of your ideas and questions—both of which we all want to hear**. Your attention contributes to *all* of our learning.
3. Finally, since so much of the course depends upon discussion, I want to make sure that we all **show respect for one another by listening to each other**. We all have likely had the demoralizing experience of trying to speak with someone who was focused on their phone, and feeling hurt by their lack of attention to us. In this class I want us to respect everyone's voices by being present and listening to each other.

² This technology policy borrows heavily from James Lang's work on distracted teaching and learning.
<https://www.jamesmlang.com/blog/sample-technology-policy>

In order to achieve all of these objectives, the device policy for the course is as follows:

1. You *may* use laptops to read the texts and take notes in the course as you wish and as needed. If you use a laptop, **close any tabs that are not related to the course**. Remember, off-task behaviors can hurt the learning of your peers. To alleviate the stress to take detailed notes every class, **two students will be assigned to take notes** for each class. These notes will be posted on the course Canvas site.
2. Please keep your phone out of sight unless you have a specific, urgent need for it. If it is out, **keep it face down so you are not continually seeing new notifications that steal away your attention**. Those continued flashes of light have been engineered to hijack your attention and can hurt both your learning and the learning of your peers.
3. There will be **times in class when I want everyone to put their devices away and focus on some activity**: a quick writing exercise, a discussion circle, a worksheet. In those activities, we will all be device free.
4. Finally, in order to show to everyone that we are listening respectfully to one another, please **remove any air pods or ear buds** at the start of class.

If anyone has an accommodation that would make any of these policy items challenging in any way, please let me know by e-mail prior to Tuesday's class. I will make sure I modify the policy accordingly. *I am very happy to do this*. If you have any other hesitations or concerns about the policy, for any reason at all, please let me know that as well. I want to ensure that this policy supports our work while meeting your needs as a student. We will revisit this policy at the midterm, to check and see whether it is still working for everyone.

Class recordings

Please read the university policy on Class Recordings. Only the instructor may cause a class meeting to be recorded for those students. You shall not make audio or video recordings of class meetings without the prior written authorization of the instructor. By remaining registered in this course, you agree to your voice and image being recorded, and you agree to use any recordings of our class meetings **ONLY** for the educational purposes of this class (or other sections of this class taught by the same instructor). You agree to delete recordings of our class meetings no later than the end of this semester. You do not have permission to use or share recordings (video or audio) of our class meetings beyond the reach of our class for any purpose, including, but not limited to, posting to any digital application or platform, such as social media. You may not duplicate or distribute recordings of class sessions. In short, your instructor and your classmates intend to appear in these videos only for the purposes of carrying out our teaching and learning in this class. Your compliance with the terms of this syllabus regarding use of class session recordings is subject to the Student Code of Conduct; violations will be reviewed according to the provisions in the Administration of Student Code of Conduct.

Religious accommodations

In compliance with Washington State law, I will reasonably accommodate students who, due to the observance of religious holidays, expect to be absent or endure a significant hardship during certain days of their academic course or program.

IMPORTANT RESOURCES

While I am always happy to be your first stop for any support you may need or questions you might have during the semester, Gonzaga does offer a wealth of resources for students. The following is a non-exhaustive list of some of the resources available to you for navigating the many academic, personal, and health challenges you may encounter during your time at Gonzaga:

Mental Health Support: College can be a wonderful time of growth and new experiences, but it can also be challenging. Accessing mental health support is a great resource for navigating the challenges of college (and life in general!). The Center for Cura Personalis (CCP) and Health and Counseling Services have an array of resources for students. You can see their full range of services on the [CCP](#) and [HCS](#) websites.

Research Support: Our librarians are some of the most underutilized resources on campus! They can help you locate resources, find data, or brainstorm research ideas. You can make an appointment by visiting the [library's appointment page](#).

Writing Support: For specific information on social science style writing, check out [GovWrites](#) (a free resource from the Harvard Government Department). For more general help with grammar, proofreading, and overall clarity, consider making an appointment with the Gonzaga [Writing Center](#).