

## University of West Georgia

Fall 2019

Introduction to Political Science Inquiry

POLS 2601 – 01

Meets: MW 09:30 am–10:45 pm in Library Main Floor Classroom

### FACULTY CONTACT INFORMATION

**Dr. J. Salvador Peralta**

Office: Pafford 323

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**Professor Craig Schroer**

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**Professor Anne Barnhart**

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**Dr. Peralta is the faculty of record for this course. Additional office hours for all three faculty are available by appointment.**

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Students are introduced to various quantitative and qualitative research methods used in the social sciences, especially Political Science. They learn how to find, evaluate, and ethically use appropriate information to conduct political science research. They construct research questions and write research papers using case studies, comparative methods, and statistics.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Students will determine the nature and extent of the information needed to conduct research by developing a clear and appropriately narrow research focus that is in accordance with the requirements of the assignments.
2. Student will identify, distinguish among, and locate a variety of types of sources relevant to political science research; and will accurately identify the main ideas and arguments in the texts they have selected for use in their research projects, evaluating them for reliability, validity, accuracy, authority, timeliness, point of view or bias, and restate them in their own words.
3. Student will create and carry out a research project that is: consistent with generally recognized standards in political science, and effectively integrates specific information from the materials they have located.
4. Students will cite sources correctly using the APSA format.

### UNIVERSITY POLICIES: Common Language for Course Syllabi:

<https://www.westga.edu/administration/vpaa/common-language-course-syllabi.php>

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

#### Texts

There is no textbook that you need to purchase.

There will be required readings available online through the library's databases

(JSTOR, etc.), or the course website in CourseDen. These readings will be announced in class and on CourseDen. Students are expected to do all required readings.

### **Exams**

There will be no exams for this class, but there will be other assessments such as homework and in-class activities, two research projects, and weekly forum posts on current political issues. Since this course is about political science research method, you are expected to be well-informed about current events. Please see Table 1 for details.

### **Attendance**

You cannot participate, contribute, and learn if you are not in class. Therefore, on-time attendance is required for this course. **Students who miss more than 4 class sessions will incur a penalty worth 10% of their Final Grade or the equivalent of a letter grade.** Please be aware that I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.

### **Participation**

The structure of weekly class sessions will include a mixture of lectures, discussions, individual and small group in-class activities, and library research labs. So please come to class prepared and ready to participate in whatever activities are planned for the session. Participation entails attending class, joining in-class discussions, being prepared with questions and comments about the readings, **timely completion of homework, and participation in-class activities.**

### **Homework and In-class activities**

There will be ten (10) in-class activities this semester worth 10 points each for a total of 100 points. Some of these will be homework assignments, some in-class activities, and all will be announced in-class, and guidelines posted online.

### **Research Projects**

You are required to develop two research projects for this course. The requirements for each assignment will be discussed in class and posted online. All assignments will be due at 9:30am on their scheduled date (see Table 1) **in print and electronically.** That is, in addition to handing in a printed copy on its due date, all assignments must be posted in Google Drive. We will use the Google Drive files to provide feedback.

To ease anxiety over the completion of the two required research projects, each one is divided into several parts. The goal of this process is to show you how a research project unfolds from beginning to end, and to help you accomplish all necessary tasks in a timely manner. Please see Table 1 below for more details.

**Table 1. Grade Calculation and Assignment Due Dates**

Requirement	Word Count	Due Date	Point Value
<b>1st half of class (Research Project One)</b>			
In-class activities (6@10pts each)		TBA	60
Annotated bibliography Draft	250	Wed. Aug. 28	100
Annotated bibliography Final	250	Mon. Sep. 9	200
Blog post Draft	500	Wed. Sep 18	100
Blog post Final	750-1000	Wed. Oct. 2	200
Weekly forum posts on current political issues (5@10pts each; 1 is a bonus)	200-250 each Wed.	weekly	50
Total points first half (and before the last day to withdraw on 10/9)			710
<b>2nd half of the class (Research Project Two)</b>			
In-class activities (4@10pts each)		TBA	40
Policy Issue summary Draft	250	Mon. Oct. 21	100
Policy Issue summary Final	250	Mon. Nov. 4	200
Policy Issue Paper Draft	1000-1250	Wed. Nov. 13	100
NCUR Abstract	250-300	Wed. Nov. 20	100
Policy Issue Paper Final	1000-1250	Mon. Dec 9	300
Weekly forum posts on current political issues (5@10 pts each; 1 is a bonus)	200-250 each Wed.	weekly	50
2nd half points			890
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>			<b>1600</b>

Please note that **NO curves** or adjustment of scores will be made. Extra credit will be awarded for attendance to special events such as lectures, films, or extra writing assignments. Additional information about the assignments will be discussed as the semester progresses.

### **Late Policy:**

Late submission of any requirement is not allowed. However, legitimate reasons may preclude a student from submitting an assignment on time. In those cases, a student may be allowed to submit an assignment late but (a) must present well-documented evidence to support a request for late submissions, and (b) will incur a penalty worth 10% of the value of the assignment for every class session late. This means an assignment due Wednesday September 18 that is turned in on Monday October 2 would have 30% taken off (10% for Monday September 23, 10% for Wednesday September 25 and 10% for Monday October 2 = 30%).

### **Grading Information and Policy**

Grading structure and point scale

1440 points - 1600 points	90% - 100%	A
1280 points - 1439 points	80% - 89%	B
1120 points - 1279 points	70% - 79%	C
960 points - 1119 points	60% - 69%	D
< 960 points	< 60%	F

**Academic Integrity Policy:** Please see the [Common Language for Course Syllabi](#) for official information on UWG's Academic Integrity Policy, and note that I will enforce this policy. To be clear, if I become "reasonably confident that a student has knowingly engaged in academic dishonesty," then: (a) the student will earn a zero in the assignment, and (b) I will submit an Academic Dishonesty Report to the appropriate administrative office at UWG. Moreover, I reserve the right to extend additional penalties depending on the severity of the offense.

### **CLASSROOM POLICIES**

Civility is very important in the conduct of politics, and it is of paramount importance to foster a positive learning environment in the classroom. Therefore, (1) since we will deal with controversial issues on a regular basis, and since it is vital to the success of this class to maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect and civility – **personal attacks will not be tolerated**. (2) Please arrive on time. (3) Please turn cell phones to airplane mode during class.

### **COMMUNICATION**

#### **Email**

All e-mail communication will proceed through UWG email. When you communicate with us please copy: [jperalta@westga.edu](mailto:jperalta@westga.edu), [barnhart@westga.edu](mailto:barnhart@westga.edu), and [craig@westga.edu](mailto:craig@westga.edu).

#### **Response Time and Netiquette**

We will adhere to the following protocols: (1) If you ask direct questions via email, we will generally reply within two working days or 24-48 hours (weekends and holidays are not working days).

(2) Communicating in an online environment requires special consideration and care, so please abide by basic Internet etiquette or [netiquette](#) when communicating online. For example, e-mails must be properly addressed, include a relevant subject heading, and use appropriate language, tone, and grammar: avoid using acronyms (text message abbreviations); please do not shout (i.e. write using ALL CAPS or large fonts).

## **DISCLAIMERS**

No student can claim any rights based upon any omission, ambiguity, vagueness, or incompleteness contained in this syllabus. The instructor retains the right to amend this syllabus without prior notice.

### **Fair Use:**

All “Website” content and “Course Materials” for this course are intended for the sole use of the enrolled members only; for the purposes associated with it; and may not be retained, altered, shared, or further disseminated without explicit authorization from the copyright holder.

## **Support for courses**

### **CourseDen D2L Home Page**

**CourseDen Help** (8 AM – 5 PM)

678-839-6248 or 1-855-933-8946

or email: [online@westga.edu](mailto:online@westga.edu)

### **24/7/365 D2L Help Center**

Call 1-855-772-0423

### **University Bookstore**

### **Student Services**

### **Center for Academic Success**

678-839-6280

### **Distance Learning Library Services**

### **Ingram Library Services**

### **Accessibility Services**

678-839-6428

[counseling@westga.edu](mailto:counseling@westga.edu)