

# **POLS 1001**

## **Introduction to Political Science**

Maye Kassem

Spring 2021

Mondays 3:30-4:45: Prerecorded General Lecture via Panopto

Thursdays 11:30-12:45: Discussion Session via Zoom

### **Contact Information**

Instructor: Maye Kassem (Email: [mayekasm@aucegypt.edu](mailto:mayekasm@aucegypt.edu))

Location: online

Teaching assistant: Menat Allah Abdallah (Email: [menatj@aucegypt.edu](mailto:menatj@aucegypt.edu))

Office Hours: by appointment on Zoom.

### **Course Aims and Description**

Welcome to the class, and for most of you, to the POLS Department! The goal of our introductory course in political science is to introduce you to the study of politics and the "political" from the perspective of the discipline. As such, we will explore some of the major concepts and themes which arise in the analysis of political power, choice, and ideology, to name a few. We will also engage with understandings of the modern state, political participation, and democratization, as well as international relations and political economy. The selected themes and topics are broad for a reason: politics is a vast field and this course surveys that terrain.

For some of you, this course will be your only step in the process of learning about political science; however, for the majority, it will be the first of several steps along the road to your degree. Regardless of where your path leads, the focus of this course is to refine and enlarge some of the skills of critical inquiry, debate, and scholarship. In specific terms, our goal is to teach you to read, to write, to converse and utmost to argue politics in a systematic way.

The course is structured around a weekly asynchronous general lecture (Mondays) via Panopto, which all 1001/2003 sections will watch, along with a weekly synchronous discussion (Thursdays) with your instructor via Zoom. Political science faculty members, who belong to different subfields of the discipline, teach this course collectively and will alternate in delivering the mass lectures on Mondays. The smaller discussion groups will enable students to explore and have more in-depth understanding about the topic covered in the weekly lecture and assigned materials. The expectation is that each student will come prepared for both the common asynchronous lecture and the synchronous discussion section. In order to do so, it is important to have read the assigned materials before watching the Monday lecture. Attendance will be taken at each discussion session.

## Learning Objectives

The learning objectives for this semester are as follows:

- Students will develop an understanding of core political science concepts and theories within multiple disciplinary subfields.
- Students will critically analyze contemporary problems in the countries under consideration in light of the conceptual frameworks presented in class.
- Students will demonstrate critical reading and thinking skills, including the ability to evaluate and form an argument.
- Students will express their ideas in writing, including the ability to conduct research and marshal evidence relevant to their research topic.
- Students will engage respectfully and in weekly discussion sections and effectively present their ideas orally.
- Students will demonstrate an understanding of important social and ethical questions through the lens of politics, allowing them to engage more in their communities.

## Required Texts and Materials

All readings will be available online on the course website.

Each week students will be required to complete and take notes on the **required texts** assigned. Completion of the required texts is necessary for active participation in the class. These texts will make essay research and writing easier and are essential for this course.

In addition to the required texts are **recommended texts** that address other aspects of the debates, histories, or traditions covered in that week. These texts are not compulsory and do not necessarily have to be addressed in student papers, but addressing some of them will be beneficial for essay research and writing. Students must do all of the assigned readings in order to succeed in the course.

## Assessment

### GRADE DISTRIBUTION

- **Participation** 10% -- Based on Thursday's zoom sessions and the online discussion board).
- **Assignments (x2)** 30% -- One of these must be a written paper, while the second can be either a paper or another format, such as an audiovisual presentation or a podcast.
- **Exam 1** 20%
- **Exam 2** 20%
- **Exam 3** 20%

Please note the following:

- All grades are decided in individual sections, with each instructor designing their own assignments. However, exams are common.
- Each examination is not comprehensive, but only covers the section of the course that precedes it.
- All grades are **final** and **non-negotiable**.
- Plagiarism and cheating will result in an “F” for the assignment and possibly further action, including an “F” for the course as a whole and reporting to the Academic Integrity Committee. Please consult the relevant AUC policies [here](#).

## Grade Scale

A	93+	C+	77-79	F	59 and below
A-	90-92	C	73-76		
B+	87-89	C-	70-72		
B	83-86	D+	67-69		
B-	80-82	D	60-66		

## Grading Policies

The instructor reserves the right to refuse any late assignments. If the instructor accepts a late assignment without a justified excuse, a full **3.5% will be deducted for each day the assignment is late**. The grade that you receive at the end of the semester is the sum of grades received for your completed coursework and participation. This is **not negotiable**.

## Online Learning Format

The common lectures will be delivered by Panopto on Mondays. A link to them will be available through Blackboard or the course website by the scheduled meeting time. It is imperative that you watch these lectures, because the class discussions on the following Thursdays will be based on them as well as on the readings. The other asynchronous part of class will be to participate in the online discussion board, which will be done through Slack. Each week some students will be in charge of starting the discussion in the online forum as well as in the Zoom session, but each student is responsible for participating in the discussions each week.

The second component of the course will be the discussion sections on Thursdays. These will be live (or synchronous) and done through Zoom. You are expected to attend, and to also be on time and prepared.

## Online etiquette

Since there will be a number of us present for class discussions, we need to respect some ground rules. First, I ask that everyone mute their microphone until you have been called on. This will limit the amount of distracting background noises. Second, if you need someone to repeat something, please use the chat function for that. Finally, when you would like to speak, please use the raise hand function to signal that so I can call on you in turn.

Privacy concerns are extremely important. To maintain our privacy as a class and as individuals, please do not record sessions (this goes for audio, video, and screenshots). The default is for cameras to be on, but if there is a good reason why you cannot have your camera on, get in touch with me.

## Absence Policies

No attendance mark is assigned in this course. However, the following policies will be strictly adhered to:

- Students are expected to watch the Monday lectures (the aptly named Panopto software allows your instructor to see who has and who has not) AND take part regularly in class discussions (through Zoom on Thursday), showing knowledge of – and engagement with – the essential readings. Students who are physically “present” in class but are unable or unwilling to contribute to the class discussions or are otherwise distracted (for instance by doing other things online), will have marks deducted or be considered as absent at the discretion of the instructor.
- Students unable to attend class for justifiable reasons should contact the instructor ideally before class, and in any case no later than seven days after the missed class. Only serious and documented family or health emergencies and documented participation in formal AUC activities will be accepted as valid justifications. The procedure for correct documentation of such absences is outlined in the university-wide attendance policy.
- As per AUC policy, attendance is vital for participation, if a student misses the equivalent to three weeks worth of class (three discussion sessions) then there will be repercussions on your grade.

## Academic Integrity

Students are expected to commit to the principles of academic integrity.

Teaching is based on a relation of mutual trust between the teacher and the students. When we research, we use other people’s work to help develop our own: this is an essential part of academic practice. However, when you use someone else’s work, you must cite it. This lets the reader know which parts of the work are your own, and which parts come from other sources. What that

means it that anytime you draw from someone's ideas or use their actual words, you must give the name of the author and the source in proper citation form.

All students are expected to be familiar with the AUC code of practice on academic integrity which is available online:

<http://in.aucegypt.edu/auc-academics/academic-integrity/academic-integrity-students>

Please pay particular attention to the regulations on plagiarism, collaborative work, and falsification of signatures. All breaches of the code of practice will be acted upon promptly and firmly, resulting at least in zero marks for the relevant piece of assessment and possibly in further action being taken by the instructor, depending on the severity of the offense.

If in doubt as to what constitutes plagiarism, do not hesitate to contact the instructor.

## **Disability Resource Center**

If you believe that you are differently-abled/have a disability that impacts your studies, or you have documentation of such, please contact the instructor as soon as possible. The instructor is happy to hear from you even if you do not have a formal proof; however, you may be asked to provide a note from the AUC Disability Services (<http://in.aucegypt.edu/student-life/student-well-being/disability-services>) when your condition requires substantial adjustments (e.g. to the structure of the exams, etc.).

## **Syllabus Change Policy**

This syllabus is only a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

## Course Schedule

<b>POLS 1001 / 2003</b> <b>Tentative Schedule – Spring 2021</b>			
<b>Week 1</b>	Mon, 1 Feb.	<b>Intro &amp; Political Science as a discipline</b>	<b>Dr. Sean Lee</b>
	Thursday, 4 Feb.	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 2</b>	Monday, 8 Feb.	<b>The State</b>	<b>Dr. Mostafa Hefny</b>
	Thursday, 11 Feb.	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 3</b>	Monday, 15 Feb.	<b>Nations &amp; Nationalism</b>	<b>Dr. Sean Lee</b>
	Thursday, 18 Feb.	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 4</b>	Monday, 22 Feb.	<b>International Relations</b>	<b>Dr. Marco Pinfari</b>
	Thursday, 25 Feb.	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 5</b>	Monday, 1 March	<b>EXAM 1</b>	
	Thursday, 4 March	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 6</b>	Monday, 8 March	<b>Political Ideologies</b>	<b>Dr. Amr Adly</b>
	Thursday, 11 March	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 7</b>	Monday, 15 March	<b>Political Theory</b>	<b>Dr. Chris Barker</b>
	Thursday, 18 March	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 8</b>	Monday, 22 March	<b>Human Rights</b>	<b>Dr. Marco Pinfari</b>
	Thursday, 25 March	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 9</b>	Monday, 29 March	<b>Development</b>	<b>Dr. Ibrahim Elnur</b>
	Thursday, 1 April	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 10</b>	Monday, 5 April	<b>EXAM 2</b>	
	Thursday, 8 April	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 11</b>	Monday, 12 April	<b>Religion &amp; Politics</b>	<b>Dr. Nesrine Badawi</b>

	Thursday, 15 April	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 12</b>	Monday, 19 April	<b>Political Violence</b>	<b>Dr. Sophie Haspeslagh</b>
	Thursday, 22 April	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
	Monday, 26 April	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
	Thursday, 29 April	<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
<b>Week 13</b>	Monday, 3 May	<b>TBA</b>	<b>TBA</b>
	Thursday, 6 May	<i>Nassim el-sham</i>	
<b>Week 14</b>	Monday, 10 May	<b>Democratization</b>	<b>Dr. Maye Kassem</b>
	Thursday, 13 May	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>Week 15</b>	Monday, 17 May	<b>Gender &amp; Politics</b>	<b>Dr. Sean Lee</b>
	Thursday, 20 May	<i>Discussion Session</i>	<i>Individual faculty</i>
<b>EXAM</b>		<b>EXAM 3</b>	