



GOVT-102 Political Action and Public Policy, Summer 2019

Section 1: Faculty Information

Instructor: Simon Heuberger, sh6943a@american.edu

Coordinator: Page Hogan, collegecredit@american.edu

NSLC Headquarters: 1-800-994-NSLC or 1-800-944-6752

NSLC Website: <http://www.nslcleaders.org>

AU College Credit Option Website: <http://www.american.edu/registrar/nslc/>

About the Professor

I am a PhD candidate and Adjunct Lecturer in Political Science at American University in Washington, DC, with concentrations in American Government and Quantitative Methods. My research focuses on the psychological underpinnings of public opinion and the statistical advancement of survey methodology tools. I also conduct data analysis on causal inference and work as the official replicator for Political Analysis. I'm from Germany but have lived all over (UK, Australia, Egypt, Nigeria). If you would like to know more about me, please feel more than free to visit [my website](#).



Questions? Please always feel free to contact me directly at sh6943a@american.edu and we will set up a time to talk over the phone or to Skype. I usually respond within 24-48 hours. The turnaround time for assignment feedback is 2-3 days.

Office Hours

I will be holding online office hours throughout your time completing the course every Wednesday and Thursday, 10-11 am EST. Please notify me at least 24 hours before if you plan on being there. If you would like to discuss a subject or assignment but cannot make these times, please feel free to reach out to me individually and I will accommodate you as best I can.

Section 2: Course Information

Course Description

The course examines why and how individuals organize to influence government in the development of public policy. Students are introduced to interest group politics, effective advocacy, the tools of political communication, and policy development and analysis. The course will examine critical domestic policy areas, such as energy, environment, education, health, justice, and economic stability.

Course Format

After the NSLC campus experience, you will participate in the course via AU's online platform, Blackboard. You will utilize multimedia and inter-active approaches to learning – including watching videos, reading popular and scholarly articles, and engaging in asynchronous online discussions. We do not have regular live sessions, so you can work through the material at your own pace, abiding by periodic deadlines set by me (more on that below).

During the course, you can log in and complete the readings whenever works best for your schedule. There will be a folder for each week which will contain the material you need. There are deadlines for when you must post on the discussion board (detailed below in this syllabus). Additionally, it is very important to adhere to the deadlines for the quizzes and written assignments. Remember that you can always complete the quizzes and turn assignments in early!

Assignment deadlines are in this syllabus and will be posted on Blackboard. Rubrics for assignments are in this syllabus, and they will also be available on Blackboard, on the individual assignment submission pages.

We will communicate almost exclusively via email, so you are expected to check your AU email regularly, or forward it to an account you check regularly.

Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

1. Define social and political movements
2. Describe how social and political movements form
3. Explain a real-world movement, including the problem it seeks to address, its tactics, and its successes or failures
4. Make arguments about why some movements are successful and why others fail
5. Design a strategic action plan for a real-world movement of your choice in which you will make suggestions about how it can best accomplish its goals

Required Textbooks & Course Material

You will not need to purchase any materials for this course: I will post all readings and other required materials on the Blackboard site. If applicable, there is also a web link in the syllabus below. To replicate

a classroom environment as closely as possible, you will have the opportunity to interact with me and your classmates in online discussion forums. This is where you come in! The more engaged you are, especially in the forums, the more interesting the course will be!

Assignments & Rubrics

The following table shows the assignments you will need to complete and the percentage of your final grade each assignment will be.

Assignment	Frequency	Percentage
Discussion Board Participation	Weekly	30%
Quizzes on Readings	Weekly	10%
750-Word Blog Post	Once	20%
1,500-Word Strategic Action Plan	Once	40%

The following rubrics show what I will be looking for when I grade your assignments.

Discussion Board Rubric				
Categories and Weights	Exemplary (A)	Good (B)	Acceptable (C)	Unacceptable (D-F)
Focus on Topic 20%	There is one clear, well-focused topic. Questions posted link together at least two ideas in a thoughtful, analytical, and critical manner.	The discussion question is too general, though the main idea is clear. Discussion questions are somewhat analytical and link two ideas together, but the connection is somewhat weak.	Main idea of discussion question is somewhat clear but there is a need for more supporting information. Discussion questions do not clearly link two ideas together or are not analytical.	The main idea is not clear. There is a seemingly random collection of information. Student clearly missed the mark with the discussion question.
Support for Topic 20%	Relevant, telling, quality details give the reader important information that goes beyond the obvious or predictable for both the discussion question and the responses.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but one key issue is unsupported in either the discussion question or responses.	Supporting details and information are relevant, but several key issues are unsupported in both the discussion question and the responses.	Supporting details and information are typically unclear or not related to the topic.
Grammar and Spelling 20%	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 3-5 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes more than 5 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.
Sources 20%	Both discussion questions and responses link back to course materials. Any outside	Either the discussion questions or responses contain some errors in	Both discussion questions and responses contain some errors in	Neither the discussion questions or responses refer back to sources or the sources mentioned

	sources are clearly cited and facts are credible.	selecting and citing relevant sources.	selecting and citing relevant sources.	are irrelevant to the question at hand.
Response to Others 20%	Responses to discussion question are clearly written and relate to the discussion question / refer to the course materials, present new ideas and post new questions.	Response is missing one of the following: relation to the discussion question / 1-3 spelling or grammar errors / refer to the course materials / present new ideas and post new questions.	Two of the following is missing: relation to the discussion question / 4-6 spelling or grammar errors / refer to the course materials / present new ideas and post new questions.	Response to post is a check in response or opinion with little to no relevancy to post.

Rubric for Written Assignments (Blog Post and Strategic Action Plan)

Categories and Weights	Exemplary (A)	Good (B)	Acceptable (C)	Unacceptable (D-F)
Describing Information 25%	Description of information is clear and correct. All elements of assignment completed.	Description of information is somewhat clear or misses minor components. All elements of assignment completed.	Description of information lacks clarity and misses major components. Some elements of assignment completed, while others are missing.	Information is factually inaccurate or irrelevant. Most or all of the elements of the assignment are missing.
Analyzing and Synthesizing 30%	Synthesizes factual information with own analysis. Analysis raises new and interesting points for discussion.	Contains more summary than analysis. Analysis somewhat functions to raise new ideas.	Includes very little or no analysis. Analysis does little to raise new ideas or questions.	Contains no analysis. Does not offer new ideas or questions.
Supporting Evidence and Sources 30%	Relevant evidence supports the analysis. Evidence clearly links back to course materials. Any outside sources are clearly cited and facts are credible.	Evidence is relevant, but does not fully support the analysis. Evidence links back to course material but connections somewhat weak. Any outside sources are clearly cited and facts are credible.	Evidence is irrelevant or key issues in the analysis are not supported. Verges closer to opinion rather than analysis. Unclear links to course material. Outside sources are not clearly cited, but facts are credible.	Evidence extremely unclear or missing. Very clearly an opinion rather than analysis. No links back to course material or outside sources not credible.
Grammar & Spelling 15%	Writer makes no errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 1-2 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes 3-5 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.	Writer makes more than 5 errors in grammar or spelling that distract the reader from the content.

You should review all the instructions and rubrics before you submit each assignment. If you have questions about an assignment or rubric, contact me.

Assignment Deadlines

Each Thursday, by 6:00am EST, you will need to post **one** analytic question of your own that engages with the readings to the weekly discussion board forum. The link to the discussion board forum will be in the folder for that week, or you can access it via the “Discussions” tab in the left hand navigation.

Each Saturday, by 6:00am EST, you will post answers to at least **two** of your classmates’ discussion questions. For Weeks 1-3, by Saturday 6:00am EST, you will also complete the weekly quiz on the readings (although it may be better to complete the quiz as you are reading or soon after; your choice).

Additionally, I recommend you spend some time each week working on your larger written assignments:

- The blog post will be due by Monday, August 19, 6.00 am EST.
- The final assignment (the strategic action plan) will be due by Monday, August 26, 6.00 am EST.

Note: The 6.00 am EST due time is set to accommodate people who like to work into the night. You can of course (and are in fact encouraged to) submit your work way before that early-morning hour.

You will submit all assignments on Blackboard. Assignments will be returned to you, with a grade and feedback, through Blackboard as well.

Because this is a short course, it is very important to keep up on assignments. Late assignments will penalized 1/3 of a letter grade each day it is late (in other words, a B+ becomes a B, a B- becomes a C+, etc.).

Section 3: Course Content by Week

Week 1 – Introduction to Social Movements	
Readings	Assignments
<p>Chapter 21, “Social Movements” in Sociology: Understanding and Changing the Social World http://open.lib.umn.edu/sociology/chapter/21-3-social-movements</p> <p>Horn, J. (2013). Engendering social movements: Evolution, definitions, debates and resources. <i>Gender and social movements overview report</i>: 18 – 34. Brighton: BRIDGE Gender and Social Movements, Institute of Development Studies.</p> <p>Video: “Social Movements” from Khan Academy https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y7YPTD7QwR4 (7:34)</p>	<p>Discussion Board Post: Post one analytical question of your own: Thursday, August 1, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Respond to two of your classmates’ discussion questions: Saturday, August 3, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Complete the quiz on the readings: Saturday, August 3, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Expected time commitment: ~5 hours</p>

Week 2 – Real-World Case-Studies	
Readings	Assignments

<p>Case study selections from Goodwin and Jasper’s “The Social Movement Reader: Cases and Concepts” (PDFs of chapters will be posted on Blackboard)</p>	<p>Discussion Board Post: Post one analytical question of your own: Thursday, August 8, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Respond to two of your classmates’ discussion questions: Saturday, August 10, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Complete the quiz on the readings: Saturday, August 10, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Expected time commitment: ~5 hours</p>
---	--

Week 3 – Movement Success and Failure	
Readings	Assignments
<p>Washington Post: “The Four Habits of Highly Successful Social Movements” https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/ezra-klein/post/the-four-habits-of-highly-successful-social-movements/2011/08/25/gIQAeifVNL_blog.html?utm_term=.e59660095170</p> <p>Harvard Business Review: “What Successful Movements Have in Common” https://hbr.org/2016/11/what-successful-movements-have-in-common</p> <p>Ted Talk: “Why do some movements succeed and others fail?” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IOt1dLVyHjQ (5:50)</p>	<p>Discussion Board Post: Post one analytical question of your own: Thursday, August 15, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Respond to two of your classmates’ discussion questions: Saturday, August 17, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Complete the quiz on the readings: Saturday, August 17, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Blog post on a social movement of your choice: Monday, August 19, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Expected time commitment: ~10 hours</p>

Unit 4 – Strategizing Social Movements	
Readings	Assignments
<p>Review examples of strategic action plans and toolkits for creating your own at https://www.racialequitytools.org/plan/action-plan/action-plan-examples#</p>	<p>**No quiz or discussion board. Work on final project**</p> <p>Final Project: Strategic action plan for your social movement: Monday, August 26, 6.00 am EST</p> <p>Expected time commitment: ~15 hours</p>

Section 4: Grading & Performance Measures

Grading Scale

100-95	A	Outstanding
91-94	A-	Excellent
86-90	B+	Very Good
82-85	B	Satisfactory; competent
79-81	B-	Fair, adequate but room for improvement
77-80	C+	Basic adequacy, needs more work
72-76	C	Lacking competency, needs substantial improvement
68-72	C-	Mediocre, concerning
64-67	D	Inadequate
Below 64	F	Failing

Decimal points at or above 0.5 will round to the nearest whole number.

Section 5: Course Technology

In this course, you will use the Blackboard Learning Management System: You will use their AU credentials to log in at <https://blackboard.american.edu>. AU's Blackboard Support team recommends using Chrome or Firefox to optimize your experience and avoid incompatibility issues that can occur when accessing Blackboard with other browsers. Do not use Internet Explorer.

You should immediately report any problems with Blackboard to their course instructor, and also contact the Blackboard Support Center at blackboard@american.edu or call (202) 885-3904 for 24/7 support.

Section 6: American University Policies and Support Services

Withdrawal Dates

The deadlines for withdrawing from the course or changing your grade type to pass/fail are as follows: 7/12/2019.

Note: There are no refunds within 30 days, before the start of each course. For more info on AU policies relating to course changes, visit: <http://www.american.edu/sis/nslc/registration.cfm>.

Academic Integrity Code

Standards of academic conduct are set forth in the university's [Academic Integrity Code](#). By registering for this course, students have acknowledged their awareness of the Academic Integrity Code and they are obliged to become familiar with their rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code. Violations of the Academic Integrity Code will not be treated lightly and disciplinary action will be taken should violations occur. This includes cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism.

SafeAssign: In this course, one or more assignments may be submitted to the instructor using the SafeAssign plagiarism detection tool, which is integrated into Blackboard. SafeAssign uploads the submitted work to the AU SafeAssign database for comparison against other student papers, as well as academic articles and internet resources, to generate an "Originality Report" that identifies areas of potential overlap. In addition to discouraging academic dishonesty, this tool can create opportunities for students to learn how to properly cite and paraphrase sources. Neither Blackboard nor AU claim any copyright ownership of work submitted through SafeAssign.

Student Conduct Code

The central commitment of American University is the development of thoughtful, responsible human beings in the context of a challenging yet supportive academic community. The Student Conduct Code is designed to benefit the American University community and to assist in forming the highest standards of ethics and morals among its members. By registering for this course, students have acknowledged their awareness of the [Student Conduct Code](#) and they are obliged to become familiar with their rights and responsibilities as defined by the Code.

Sharing of Course Content

Students are not permitted to make visual or audio recordings (including livestreams) of lectures or any class-related content or use any type of recording device unless prior permission from the instructor is obtained and there are no objections from any student in the class. If permission is granted, only students registered in the course may use or share recordings and any electronic copies of course materials (e.g., PowerPoints, formulas, lecture notes, and any discussions – online or otherwise). Use is limited to educational purposes even after the end of the course.

To supplement the classroom experience, lectures may be audio or video recorded by faculty and made available to students registered for this class. Faculty may record classroom lectures or discussions for pedagogical use, future student reference, or to meet the accommodation needs of students with a documented disability. These recordings are limited to personal use and may not be distributed, sold, or posted on social media outlets without written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized downloading, file sharing, or distribution of any part course materials, or using information for purposes other than student's own learning, may be deemed a violation of American University's Student Conduct Code and subject to disciplinary action (see Student Conduct Code VI. Prohibited Conduct).

Academic Services

Library Resources

All Bender Library resources can be accessed at <http://www.american.edu/library/>. The library offers online tutorials and access to research librarians.

Information of particular relevance to online learners can be accessed at <http://www.american.edu/library/services/online.cfm>.

Library Tutorial: <http://subjectguides.library.american.edu/infolit>

Citation Style Resources

You can use any citation style you like, as long as you use one consistently.