

Political Science 305-A Fall 2018: Contemporary Political Theory Appendix to syllabus: Evaluation guidelines

See the course syllabus for further important information

Course Grades Obtained by Undergraduate Students

Descriptor	Alpha Grade	Grade Point Value
Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
Satisfactory	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
Poor	D+	1.3
Minimal pass	D	1.0
Failure	F	0.0

Your final grade is made up of the following components, and will be awarded on a 0.0-4.0 scale with each component appropriately weighted. Final grades will be assessed purely arithmetically on this basis, with your numeric grade converted to a letter grade as per the table above. The only exception is that marginal final grades may be rounded up or down based on the professor's assessment of the whole term's work (e.g. if the grade sheet spits out 3.5 then I will decide whether this should be a B+ or an A-).

Grade weighting

- 10% of grade for attendance and participation (see checklist below).
- 10% of grade for each of five short papers (see separate appendix for guidelines).
- 20% of grade for each of two blogposts (see separate appendix for guidelines).

Attendance and participation (10%)

Good **attendance** includes not just showing up, but being present (literally and mentally) ready to start the class at 0930, and not packing up or actually leaving prior to the end at 1050. It's also good to be clear on what constitutes being a good **participant** in class: are these statements true of you?

Etiquette

- I don't interrupt others while they are speaking.
- I don't use my cell phone in class, including to text.
- I don't have private conversations or pass notes to my friends during class.
- I don't read my next class's article, or the newspaper, or my Facebook page, while class goes on around me.
- I either respond to a specific person, or speak to everyone in the class, not just to the teacher, or my friend, or my course pack.
- I refer to speakers by name when I can.
- I do not assume that one person can represent a whole group or school of thought (even if they think they can!).

Interactive style

- I listen to all seriously presented ideas carefully, even if I don't agree.
- I am willing to ask for clarification if something is unclear.
- I ask relevant questions that reflect good preparation.
- I give someone credit for a good point, or if they have made me change my mind.
- I try to tie my contributions to points that have already been made.
- I conclude my comment by summarizing my main point or posing a clear question.
- I tie my contributions to class readings when appropriate.
- I don't ignore the thread of discussion and say what I planned to say all along.
- I do not ramble or tell lengthy anecdotes with no obvious point.
- I am critical of ideas before people.

Know thyself

- I am participating in discussion to work out some unresolved questions, not to demonstrate the futility of political thought, university, or life in general.
- I'm not obsessively and uncritically attached to a single slogan, method, or school of thought.
- I do not see disagreement in the classroom as the end of the world. I don't rush to defend someone who has provoked legitimate criticism, nor do I freak out if someone criticizes my ideas.
- I don't hold back from voicing my opinion because I feel that I am too advanced for the class OR because I feel that everyone else in the class knows more than me.
- I acknowledge that aspects of my own experience might shape my response to a particular argument in ways that are not yet fully clear to me.
- I recognize that other people have experience I do not share, and that they may not have told me about.
- I take seriously ideas that seem frighteningly or ludicrously radical, unfamiliar, or heretical OR that seem unduly conservative, parochial, or timid.