

## **POLS 420-01 – Scope of Political Science (Fall 2023)**

Tuesday and Thursday | 9:30 am – 10:45 am

Thomas Hall 302

**Instructor:** Dr. Michael Morgan  
**Office Location:** Thomas Hall 307  
**Office Hours:** Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 10:00 am – 11:00 am, or by appointment  
**Office Phone:** 740-376-4660  
**Email:** mam003@marietta.edu

### **Contacting the Instructor**

Email is the best way to reach the instructor. The instructor typically responds to emails received Monday – Thursday within 24 hours and replies within 48 hours to emails received Friday – Sunday.

### **Course Overview**

This course serves as a culmination of the political science major and aims to tie together conceptual, theoretical, and applied efforts from prior coursework in the discipline. This course emphasizes the role of research in political science by requiring students to develop and refine an original research project. Experiencing the research process firsthand serves to enhance students' skills related to scientific inquiry, critical thinking, and empirical analysis. Specifically, the research project can serve as a writing sample suitable for a job application, a graduate or professional school application, and/or a presentation at an academic conference. Moreover, the research project provides an opportunity for students to further build proficiency in quantitative data management and analysis, which are skills increasingly sought after in the contemporary job market.

### **Institutional Student Learning Outcomes**

The instructor will assess the following learning outcomes through the final research paper.

#### **Critical Thinking**

- Students will construct a novel theoretical explanation for a political phenomenon based on empirical information from a variety of academic sources.

#### **Integrative Learning**

- Students will develop and implement a research design that considers political, economic, and social factors related to the selected phenomenon of interest.

### **Program-Level Student Learning Outcomes**

The instructor will assess the following learning outcomes through the final research paper.

#### **Discipline Knowledge**

- Students will apply theoretical perspectives and discipline-specific concepts to generate explanations of political phenomena.

#### **Political Analysis**

- Students will recognize the development of policies through the strategic interactions of political, economic, and social actors.

#### **Research Methodology**

- Students will evaluate a theoretical explanation for a chosen political phenomenon based on the collection and analysis of quantitative empirical data.

### **Required Text**

Baglione, Lisa A. 2019. *Writing A Research Paper in Political Science*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

## Recommended Text

Howard, Christopher. 2017. *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*. 1<sup>st</sup> ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

## Recommended Software

The instructor strongly encourages students to purchase a 6-month license of [Stata 18/BE](#).

## Course Assignments

The following assignments will constitute points earned throughout the semester:

Research Project (Sections)	120 points (20 points each)
Research Project (Final)	40 points
Research Presentation	25 points
Writing Assignments	100 points (20 points each)
Curriculum Reflection	15 points
<b>Total</b>	<b>300 points</b>

## Earning Grades

A considerable portion of points (160) comes from the development of an original research project focused on a political phenomenon that can be evaluated using quantitative methodology. Students will produce their projects in six sections (20 points each) and submit a complete draft (40 points) during the final exam period. Students will be required to follow professional writing conventions and cite sources using the American Political Science Association (APSA) citation style to earn full credit on these assignments. The instructor will post rubrics for each portion of the research project on Canvas.

An additional 25 points come from an oral presentation of the research project in the final weeks of the course. These presentations are to be reasonably extemporaneous and should be approximately 12-15 minutes in duration. Students will need to be prepared to respond to questions and critiques of their research and presentation from both the instructor and peers.

Another 100 points come from five writing assignments that require students to examine, describe, and discuss contemporary political science research articles. Students will need to identify and explain key elements of each manuscript and connect these examples of academic writing to class concepts and themes. The instructor will post articles and assignment prompts on Canvas approximately one week before each submission deadline.

The remaining 15 points come from a student reflection paper that is to be submitted during the final class meeting. This assignment will include five open-ended prompts provided by the instructor that allows students to reflect on their personal experience at Marietta College and discuss how the General Education curriculum has developed core academic skills as well as how the curriculum, in conjunction with their chosen field(s) of concentration, has influenced their future career aspirations.

The instructor posts all assignment grades on the Canvas gradebook so that students can keep track of their progress throughout the semester.

## Assignment Deadlines

There is a substantial penalty for assignments submitted after the due date and time. Students that submit an assignment within 24 hours after the due date and time automatically lose 50% of the assignment's total points. **If a student submits an assignment more than 24 hours beyond the due date and time, they will not earn any credit for the assignment, regardless of the content of the submitted material.**

## Grading Scale

The instructor assigns final course grades using the following scale:

A	93-100%	B	83-86%	C	73-76%	D	63-66%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%
B+	87-89%	C+	77-79%	D+	67-69%	F	< 60%

## Classroom Expectations

The instructor expects all students to arrive on time, be active participants, and remain seated until the class is dismissed. It is disrespectful to the instructor and other students to arrive late, engage in disruptive behavior (e.g., sleeping, holding side conversations, using electronic devices for anything other than note-taking) or leave the room during the class period.

Participation is important in any class, and it is particularly so in this course. Students who complete assigned readings and attend regularly should be prepared to contribute to classroom discussions by asking questions and making comments related to course content. Everyone should feel comfortable challenging the views and opinions put forth by the readings, the instructor, and the other members of the class if such points and counterpoints are articulated respectfully.

## Class Attendance

Students must recognize that many classroom activities cannot be replicated and that absences can be detrimental to their academic performance. To encourage regular attendance, each student begins the semester with 10 bonus points but loses 5 points for each unexcused absence. This means that a student earns a 5-point reduction on their final grade for each unexcused absence beyond the two-absence threshold. Absences occurring due to participation in co-curricular events, religious observations, or documented illnesses will be considered excused.

If an absence occurs, it is the responsibility of the student to get notes from the class and to compensate as much as possible for the absence. If the absence is excused, the student must work with the instructor to determine an appropriate timeline to complete any missed work. **Students who do not complete missed work by the instructor's deadline will earn a zero for missed assignment(s).**

## Plagiarism Analysis

Please note that by enrolling in this class you are agreeing to submit your papers online to a plagiarism-prevention program called Turnitin.com. You should note that Turnitin – always without your name and any personal information – will retain your paper as part of their database so that students who plagiarize from it can be detected. Only the faculty member of your course and the campus Turnitin administrator will have access to your name.

## **Academic Integrity**

Dishonesty within the academic community is a very serious matter because dishonesty destroys the basic trust necessary for a healthy educational environment. Academic dishonesty is any treatment or representation of work as if one were fully responsible for it when it is, in fact, the work of another person. Academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, theft, improper manipulation of laboratory or research data, or theft of services. A substantiated case of academic dishonesty may result in disciplinary action, including a failing grade on the project, a failing grade in the course, or expulsion from the College.

## **Academic Accommodations**

Students who believe that they need academic accommodations due to a diagnosed disability or condition should present documentation to Lindsay Morgan, Director of Accessibility Services (Thomas Hall 212). Students must meet with the Director of Accessibility Services to verify their eligibility for any accommodations. The Director will determine appropriate accommodations and will communicate with the student's instructors. See the Accessibility Services [website](#) for more information.

## **Mental Health and Emotional Well-Being**

Students are encouraged to make self-care a priority. Students are urged to utilize counseling services (740-376-4477) and other campus resources if struggling with distress or mental health issues. Faculty and staff welcome students to reach out if struggling with mental health issues.

## **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Marietta College is an equal opportunity educator and employer that values diversity. In our educational, admissions, and employment policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other activities, Marietta College does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, national or ethnic origin, disability, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, religious affiliation, veteran status, or any other protected status.

## **Additional Resources**

Detailed information about college policies as well as academic and health and wellness support may be found on the Student Support Information [website](#). Information regarding academic success centers on campus can be found [here](#).

## **Important Dates**

- 09/01 – Final day to add classes
- 09/08 – Final day to drop classes without a "W"
- 10/23 – Midterm Grades Submitted
- 10/30 – Final day to drop classes with a grade of "W"

## Course Schedule

The schedule below is subject to change based on the pace of the class.

The instructor will announce any alterations to the course schedule.

### Course Overview: No Readings

Thurs 08/24

### The Research Project: Chapter 1

Tues 08/29

### The Research Question: Chapter 2

Thurs 08/31

Tues 09/05

### The Annotated Bibliography: Chapter 3

Thurs 09/07

Tues 09/12 – WA 1

Thurs 09/14 – Annotated Bibliography

### The Literature Review: Chapter 4

Tues 09/19

Thurs 09/21

Tues 09/26

Thurs 09/28 – WA 2

Tues 10/03 – Section 1

### Four Day Break (No Class)

Thurs 10/05

### The Theoretical Argument: Chapter 5

Tues 10/10

Thurs 10/12

Tues 10/17 – WA 3

Thurs 10/19 – Section 2

### The Research Design: Chapter 7

Tues 10/24

Thurs 10/26

Tues 10/31 – WA 4

Thurs 11/02 – Section 3

### The Analysis and Discussion: Chapter 8

Tues 11/07

Thurs 11/09

Tues 11/14 – Section 4

### The Introduction and Conclusion: Chapter 9

Thurs 11/16 – WA 5

Tues 11/21 – Section 5

### Thanksgiving Break (No Class)

Thurs 11/23

### Project Presentations: No Readings

Tues 11/28

Thurs 11/30

Tues 12/05

Thurs 12/07 – Curriculum Reflection

### Final Project

Thurs 12/14 – 12:00 pm