

**Angelo State University**  
**Department of Political Science and Philosophy**

**Spring 2022**  
**POLS 4361 Scope and Methods of Political Science**

Section 10  
Location: RAS 112  
Time: MWF, 11-11:50am

Dr. Bruce A. Hunt, Jr., [bhunt2@angelo.edu](mailto:bhunt2@angelo.edu)

Office Hours: TR, 8:30am-11:30am;  
MW, 1:30-2:30pm

Office Phone: 325-486-6112

Location: RAS 221

**Course Synopsis**

The aim of this course is to introduce you to different methods for conducting scientific research in political science, and to guide you through the various stages of the research process. This process begins with identifying an interesting political concept and question and then advances to setting up a valid and constructive approach to investigating possible answers to that question. We will also be exploring the nature and psychological demands of scientific inquiry in the political arena, as well as the strengths and limitations of prevailing methodological approaches in political science research. We will review some of the current trends in the discipline. The course culminates in your presenting and submitting a finalized version of your own sophisticated research paper that applies lessons learned throughout the course.

**Required Text**

*The Essentials of Political Analysis, 6e*, Pollock (EPA)  
Additional readings will be posted on the course Blackboard

**Course Goals**

There are 4 Student Learning Objectives listed at the back of this document that have been developed by the political science program and will be assessed in this capstone course. These focus on development of (1) skills relating to political science, (2) awareness of ethical dilemmas in political science research, and (3) comprehension of political phenomena. Your progress towards these objectives will be assessed through your performance on the end of chapter

exercises, the oral presentation, and final paper (see below). Importantly, assessment score data is *collected for program development and does not factor into your course grade*.

### **Course Format and Expectations**

*Readings and Exercises:* Our main task during class time will be to work through the first 8 chapters of EPA. Three additional readings have been assigned that will help us connect what is going on in the textbook to the broader discipline of political science. The course can be divided into two halves, before and after spring break. Before spring break, we will work through the basics of political analysis with little time spent on statistics. We will move into the basics of statistical inference after spring break, finishing with basic regression analysis as it is presented in Chapter 8 of EPA. There will be homework exercises assigned for these chapters.

*Class Discussion.* Some sections of class time will be devoted to lecture, while others will involve in-class exercises and/or focused discussion. Everyone is expected to come prepared to class ready to listen, to think, to write, and to participate in class discussion.

*The Research Paper:* For each student, the final goal of this course is the beginning of a sophisticated research paper that clearly identifies and investigates an interesting political question. Before spring break I will ask you to submit several (small) sections of this paper. After spring break, if your sections are approved, you will be tasked with taking your paper to the next level -- conducting a lit. review, integrating and revising all sections of your paper.

*Presentations:* The second-to-last week of class we will have research design presentations, during which you will present the current stage of your research paper.

### **Attendance Policy—Please Read Carefully**

Attendance is mandatory and roll will be taken each class. You are allowed 2 weeks' worth of “free” absences (6 absences)—these are for any reason—after which **I will subtract two points per absence** from your final grade point total. There are no “excused” or “unexcused” types of absences in this course, except in very serious and/or emergency circumstances. Please be present and on time as much as possible.

### **Grading**

#### **Grading Distribution**

5 Short Papers (4% each)	20%
4 Sets of Chapter Exercises	40%
Research Presentation	10%
Final Paper	30%

#### **Grading Scale**

A	100-90
B	89-80
C	79-70
D	69-60
F	59 & below

### ***General Policies related to this course:***

All students are required to follow the policies and procedures presented in these documents:

Angelo State University Student Handbook

Angelo State University Catalog

### ***Student Disability Services:***

ASU is committed to the principle that no qualified individual with a disability shall, on the basis of disability, be excluded from participation in or be denied the benefits of the services, programs or activities of the university, or be subjected to discrimination by the university, as provided by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments of 2008 (ADAAA) and subsequent legislation.

Student Disability Services is located in the Office of Student Affairs, and is the designated campus department charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing requests for reasonable accommodations based on a disability. It is the student's responsibility to initiate such a request by contacting an employee of the Office of Student Affairs, in the Houston Harte University Center, Room 112, or contacting the department via email at [ADA@angelo.edu](mailto:ADA@angelo.edu). For more information about the application process and requirements, visit the Student Disability Services website at [www.angelo.edu/ADA](http://www.angelo.edu/ADA). The employee charged with the responsibility of reviewing and authorizing accommodation requests is: Ms. Dallas Swafford

Director of Student Disability Services 325-942-2047 [dallas.swafford@angelo.edu](mailto:dallas.swafford@angelo.edu) Houston Harte University Center 112

### ***Title IX***

Angelo State University is committed to providing and strengthening an educational, working, and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from sex discrimination of any kind. In accordance with Title VII, Title IX, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE), and other federal and state laws, the University prohibits discrimination based on sex, which includes pregnancy, and other types of Sexual Misconduct. Sexual Misconduct is a broad term encompassing all forms of gender-based harassment or discrimination and unwelcome behavior of a sexual nature. The term includes sexual harassment, nonconsensual sexual contact, nonconsensual sexual intercourse, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, public indecency, interpersonal violence (domestic violence or dating violence), sexual violence, and any other misconduct based on sex.

You are encouraged to report any incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Office of Title IX Compliance and the Director of Title IX Compliance/Title IX Coordinator, Michelle Miller, J.D.

You may submit reports in the following manner:

Online: [www.angelo.edu/incident-form](http://www.angelo.edu/incident-form)

Face to Face: Mayer Administration Building, Room 210

Phone: 325-942-2022

Email: [michelle.miller@angelo.edu](mailto:michelle.miller@angelo.edu)

Note, as a faculty member at Angelo State, I am a mandatory reporter and must report incidents involving sexual misconduct to the Title IX Coordinator. Should you wish to speak to someone in confidence about an issue, you may contact the University Counseling Center (325-942-2371), the 24-Hour Crisis Helpline (325-486-6345), or the University Health Clinic (325-942-2171). For more information about resources related to sexual misconduct, Title IX, or Angelo State's policy please visit: [www.angelo.edu/title-ix](http://www.angelo.edu/title-ix).

### ***Religious Holidays:***

A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence. See ASU Operating Policy 10.19 Student Absence for Observance of Religious Holy Day for more information. It is policy that incomplete grades be reserved for student illness or personal misfortune. Please contact faculty if you have serious illness or a personal misfortune that would keep you from completing course work.

Documentation may be required. See ASU Operating Policy 10.11 Grading Procedures for more information.

### ***Student Conduct Policies:***

#### **Academic Integrity**

Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in all work. Any student found guilty of any form of dishonesty in academic work is subject of disciplinary action and possible expulsion from ASU.

#### **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a serious topic covered in ASU's Academic Integrity policy in the Student Handbook. Plagiarism is the action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc., and passing it off as one's own. Plagiarism is literary theft. Resources to help you understand this policy better are available at the ASU Writing Center.

#### **Copyright Policy**

Students officially enrolled in this course should make only one printed copy of the given articles and/or chapters. You are expressly prohibited from distributing or reproducing any portion of course readings in printed or electronic form without written permission from the copyright holders or publishers.

### **Readings, Assignments, and Tentative Due Dates (to be specified in class)**

Week 1 — Introduction, What is political knowledge?	Manent, “Seeing Things Politically” (BB)
Week 2 — What is political science?	Weber, “Science as a Vocation” (BB)
Week 3 — Does modern political science produce political knowledge?	Mittleman on Strauss and Weber (BB)
<b>Week 4 — EPA Intro &amp; Chapter 1, Concepts</b>	Reflection Paper Due
Week 5 — Chapter 2, Variables	
Week 6 — Chapter 3, Hypotheses	Chs.1&2 Exercises w/ Concept Assignment Due
Week 7 — Chapter 4, Research Design	
Week 8 — Chapter 5, Controlled Comparisons	Chs.3&4 Exercises w/ Research Question and Hypothesis Assignment Due
Week 9 — Chapter 6, Foundations of Statistical Inference	Research Design Assignment Due
Week 10 — Chapter 6, continued	
Week 11 — Chapter 7, Tests of Significance and Measures of Association	Literature Review Assignment and Chs. 5&6 Exercises Due
Week 12 — Chapter 7, continued	
Week 13 — Chapter 8, What is regression?	
Week 14 — Presentations	
<b>Week 15 — Workshop for Final Paper</b>	Chs. 7&8 Exercises Due

**Final Papers:**      Submit to Turnitin (BB)      Wednesday, May 11th, 12:30pm

## **Political Science Program Student Learning Objectives**

(SLO 1) Students will demonstrate critical reading and critical writing skills relating to Political Science subjects.

(SLO 2) Students will demonstrate technical and analytic skills that are appropriate to Political Science and applicable to their future academic and career aspirations.

(SLO 3) Student will demonstrate awareness of ethical and moral dilemmas relating to Political Science.

(SLO 4) To demonstrate comprehension of significant political phenomena at either the sub-national, national, or inter-national level.