

SYLLABUS



COURSE CODE: POL 230
COURSE TITLE: Current Events
SEMESTER: Spring 2005
PLACE/TIME: Room MC 102, Tues & Fri, 10:45-12:05 pm
PROFESSOR: Bruce Sabin

bruce@webbercareers.com
<http://www.brucesabin.com>

TEXTBOOK: No textbook is required for this class. Articles and other materials will be available through the website and class meetings.

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

This course is a comparative study of major current political events with past and present political, social and economic principles.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completing this course, students should be better able to:

- 1) think critically about current events.
- 2) apply business principles to political issues.
- 3) perform academic, social science research.
- 4) write well-formed, justified and persuasive arguments.
- 5) determine the credibility and value of information sources.
- 6) explain the process by which issues become political salient.
- 7) create and critique strategies for political and policy advocacy.

GRADE DISTRIBUTION:

3 Topic critiques	4% each	Participation	15%
2 Source critiques	2.5% each	Research Project 1	20%
Presentation 1	3%	Research Project 2	10%
Presentation 2	2%	Mid-term exam	10%
2 Letter	5% each	Final exam	10%

Syllabus is subject to change

Check course website for your current grade status.

CLASS SCHEDULE (The schedule is subject to change.)

Jan 11

14 email address due, turnitin.com registration due (1 point each)

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18 Topic: **Social Security**

21

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25

28

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Feb 1 Topic: **American Financial Equality**

4

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8

11

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15 Topic: **Globalization**

18

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22

25 No class meeting; work on research projects

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29 Topic: **Preemptive war**

March 4

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8 Research Project #1 due on 8th
presentations all week

11

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15 Topic: **Taxes**

18

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21-25 Spring Break

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29

April 1 No class on 1st due to Career Expo 2005

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5

8 Research Project #2 due on 8th

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12 letters due on 12th

15 Group Presentations

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19

22

Possible topics:

Globalization

Julia Galeota, from “Cultural Imperialism: An American Tradition,” *The Humanist* (May/June 2004)

Philippe Legrain, from “In Defense of Globalization,” *The International Economy* (Summer 2003)

The Five Wars of Globalization, Moises Naim, *Foreign Policy*, January/February 2003

Thomas Friedman, from “States of Discord,” *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2002)

Robert Kaplan, from “States of Discord,” *Foreign Policy* (March/April 2002)

José Bové, from “Globalisation’s Misguided Assumptions,” *OECD Observer* (September 2001)

Is Globalization a Positive Development for the World Community?

YES: Thomas L. Friedman, from “DOScapital,” *Foreign Policy* (Fall 1999)

Christian E. Weller, Robert E. Scott, and Adam S. Hersh, from “The Unremarkable Record of Liberalized Trade,” Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper (October 2001)

Preemptive war

Endy Zemenides, from "The Doctrine of Preemption: Precedents and Problems," *The Officer* (April 2004)
Neta C. Crawford, from "The Slippery Slope to Preventive War," *Ethics and International Affairs* (2003)
A New Grand Strategy, Benjamin Schwarz and Christopher Layne, *The Atlantic Monthly*, January 2002
George W. Bush, from "The National Security Strategy of the United States of America" (September 2002)
John Steinbruner, from "Confusing Ends and Means: The Doctrine of Coercive Pre-emption," *Arms Control Today* (January/February 2003)
Bruce Berkowitz, from "Is Assassination an Option?" *Hoover Digest* (Winter 2002)
Margot Patterson, from "Assassination as a Weapon," *National Catholic Reporter* (September 6, 2002)
<http://www.brookings.edu/printme.wbs?page=/pagedefs/8bb07884d9afff3d655d189b0a1415cb.xml>

Social Security

The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), from *Meeting the Challenge of Global Aging: A Report to World Leaders from the CSIS Commission on Global Aging* (CSIS Press, 2002)
Phillip Longman, from "The Global Baby Bust," *Foreign Affairs* (May/June 2004)
Peter G. Peterson, from "Reforms That Aging Industrial Countries Must Undertake," Luncheon Address to a CSIS Policy Summit on Global Aging (January 25–26, 2000)
Leon F. Bouvier and Jane T. Bertrand, from *World Population: Challenges for the Twenty-First Century* (Seven Locks Press, 1999)

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/infocus/social-security/>
<http://www.cato.org/research/articles/gokhale-041130.html>
<http://www.socialsecurity.org/pubs/articles/bp46.pdf>
David Brooks, "Real Reform for Social Security," *NY Times*, Dec. 11, 2004
<http://www.freerepublic.com/focus/f-news/1299095/posts>
<http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/ssb/v63n2/v63n2p38.pdf>
<http://www.ssa.gov/policy/docs/policybriefs/pb2004-01.pdf>
<http://www.brookings.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb126.pdf>
<http://www.brookings.edu/printme.wbs?page=/pagedefs/3ddcf3345142ff3e44b889500a1415cb.xml>
<http://www.brookings.edu/printme.wbs?page=/pagedefs/525f9be42aabff3e7efadc4e0a1415cb.xml>
<http://www.bls.gov/opub/mlr/1994/09/art4full.pdf>

Media Bias

Bernard Goldberg, from *Arrogance: Rescuing America from the Media Elite* (Warner Books, 2003)

Eric Alterman, from *What Liberal Media? The Truth About Bias and the News* (Basic Books, 2003)

Bernard Goldberg, from *Bias: A CBS Insider Exposes How the Media Distort the News* (Regnery, 2002)

Jim Hightower, from *There's Nothing in the Middle of the Road But Yellow Stripes and Dead Armadillos: A Work of Political Subversion*

Gun Control

Carl T. Bogus, from "The Strong Case for Gun Control," *The American Prospect* (Summer 1992)

John R. Lott, Jr., from *More Guns, Less Crime: Understanding Crime and Gun-Control Laws* (University of Chicago Press, 1998)

Capital Punishment

Robert W. Lee, from "Deserving to Die," *The New American* (August 13, 1990)

Eric M. Freedman, from "The Case Against the Death Penalty," *USA Today Magazine* (March 1997)

Tax Cuts

Amity Shlaes, from *The Greedy Hand: How Taxes Drive Americans Crazy and What to Do About It* (Random House, 1999)

Paul Krugman, from "The Tax-Cut Con," *New York Times Magazine* (September 14, 2003)

Liam Murphy and Thomas Nagel, from *The Myth of Ownership: Taxes and Justice* (Oxford University Press, 2002)

www.library.unt.edu/govinfo/subject/flattax/fltxques.html

American Financial Equality

Jeff Madrick, from "Inequality and Democracy," in George Packer, *The Fight is for Democracy* (Perennial, 2003)

Christopher C. DeMuth, from "The New Wealth of Nations," *Commentary* (October 1997)

Paul Krugman, from "The Spiral of Inequality," *Mother Jones* (November/December 1996)

The Big Crunch, Jeffrey Kluger, *Time*, April/May 2000

<http://www.pewhispanic.org/site/docs/pdf/The%20Wealth%20of%20Hispanic%20Households.pdf>

Is Wal-Mart Evil

Modernization's Challenge to Traditional Values: Who's Afraid of Ronald McDonald?, Ronald Inglehart and Wayne E. Baker, *The Futurist*, March/April 2001

School Vouchers

William H. Rehnquist, from Majority Opinion, *Susan Tave Zelman, Superintendent of Public Instruction of Ohio, et al. v. Doris Simmons-Harris et al.*, U.S. Supreme Court (June 27, 2002)

David Souter, from Dissenting Opinion, *Susan Tave Zelman, Superintendent of Public Instruction of Ohio, et al. v. Doris Simmons-Harris et al.*, U.S. Supreme Court (June 27, 2002)

How Much Should College Cost?

Education Pays 2004

http://www.collegeboard.com/prod_downloads/press/cost04/EducationPays2004.pdf

pages 10-15 (maybe through 26)

Backlash Brews Over Rising Cost of College

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2003/0617/p15s01-lehl.html>

Still a Bargain

www.studlife.com/news/2002/10/08/News/Rising_Cost.Of.College.Still.A.Bargain.Experts.Say-292135.shtml

Tuition Aid Trap

<http://www.cato.org/dailys/10-09-03.html>

John Kerry

<http://www.cato.org/research/articles/mccluskey-040419.html>

<http://chronicle.com/jobs/2004/12/2004121501c.htm>