SYO 4300: Politics and Society (Online)
Dr. Daniel Tope
Office: Bellamy 429
Office Phone: 850-644-2135
Email: dtope@fsu.edu
Dedicated E-office hours: Mondays 9:00-11:00am

Online Mentors/TA’s
Kristin Allen kba15@my.fsu.edu (Group 1)
  Dedicated E-office hours: Friday 10-12pm
Quentin Kilpatrick qkk12@my.fsu.edu (Group 2)
  Dedicated E-office hours: Weds 1-3pm
Keith Richard kgr12@my.fsu.edu (Group 3)
  Dedicated E-office hours: Mon 1-3pm
Emily Saras esaras@fsu.edu (Group 4)
  Dedicated E-office hours: Friday 9-11am

Please note: We encourage the use of the class discussion board for posting general administrative, technical, or substantive questions or comments at any time of the day or night (see the General Info tab on Blackboard). As the semester gets going, these postings should be your first point of reference when you have a question or concern. Questions and answers will be open for everyone to read and archived for later reference. Note that we do not monitor the discussion board or our email 24/7. You should reasonably expect a reply to your electronic communications within 48 hours, except for weekends and holidays. Please note that we are on Eastern Standard Time (EST); all due dates for assignments refer to EST.

Course Description:
This class will examine major theoretical questions about power, politics, and the state from a sociological perspective. The course will introduce students to the major ideas and debates within the field of political sociology, and provide some theoretical tools for analyzing power and politics. The readings will cover a wide range of research on the dynamics of political processes and institutions. We will address major topics in the field, including historical questions concerning state formation and nationalism, social movements, globalization, political culture and participation, and civil society. In addition, we will cover important research on voting and political participation, campaign finance, terrorism, and the place of the United States in a global society. Welcome to the course! I hope you find it challenging, informative and enjoyable.

Course Objectives (weekly objectives are listed on the course Blackboard site):
- Students will become familiar with core concepts and theories in political sociology, including research on power, the state, and the relationship between politics and the economy.
- Students will develop an understanding of how perspectives grounded in pluralism, elitist, class, institutionalist, and rational choice theories inform political sociology.
- Students will develop a basic understanding of the research methods used in the sociological study of politics.
- Students will become familiar with contemporary debates in political sociology.
Required Reading:
1. Power, Politics, and Society: An Introduction to Political Sociology (2012) by Dobratz, Waldner, and Buzzell. (You may purchase a hardcopy from bookstores in Tallahassee, various websites such as amazon.com, or an e-book from the publisher, Pearson)
2. Supplemental reading posted on course Blackboard site or available online.

Software requirements: You must be able to access the internet, read PDF documents, view streaming audio and video, as well as use basic word processing and spreadsheets. If you do not have a high-speed internet connection at home you need to set aside time in your schedule to access the online material from a computer with a sufficient connection speed. Slow connection speeds at home are not a valid excuse for failing to complete a course requirement on time.

*Please note that you are responsible for checking the course website at least once a week. We will regularly post changes or updates under "Announcements."

Class Format: Although this class will not meet face-to-face, there are several ways that you will be connecting with the instructor, mentors, and each other over the semester. First, we will have regular interaction via the discussion boards. The first few days of class, we will post online bios in order to get to know one another. Approximately every other week, we will have a discussion that focuses on the topics of our current readings. You’ll have these discussions within assigned groups of students. The course material to be discussed on these boards will vary over the weeks. For example, sometimes our discussion questions will focus on the textbook, while other weeks’ discussions will incorporate external websites or films that have been made available to you via the course website. These discussion boards will be monitored by the instructor and/or teaching assistants.

In addition to our bi-weekly discussions, we will have a discussion board for more general questions and concerns that will remain open for the duration of the semester. This is the place where you can ask questions about the material you’re reading and have them answered by the instructor and/or teaching assistants. This is also where we will bring course-related observations to share and discuss with one another, such as current events.

The instructor and teaching assistant(s) also will be available to you via email. Each week, you will receive emails from the instructor and/or your teaching assistant that provides details about the week’s assignments. When you contact us, you should reasonably expect a response to your emails within a 48 hour period (excluding weekends and holidays). The instructor and teaching assistants have each designated a two hour block of time for online office hours; if emailing during these times, you can expect rapid responses. You can also expect throughout the semester to receive emails from your instructor or teaching assistant with course-related current events (e.g., links to newspaper articles).

In lieu of lectures, we will provide notes and outlines or power point slides to accompany the assigned readings. All of these will be made available to you from day one. For some of the topics covered in our weekly discussions, we will also provide you with links to external websites that you will be expected to visit to gain further insights into the issues. On a few occasions, we will also provide access via the course website to videos that relate to the week’s discussion.

Grading:
Grades will be based on a 420 point scale. The points for each assignment are listed below. More information on each will be provided through course announcements and under the “Weekly Assignments” tab. The final exam and quizzes will not be proctored.
1. Online bio (10 points) – So that we can get to know a bit about one another, you’re asked to create a short bio to post on the website. The bio will count as your first-day attendance.

2. Exams (5 exams; 150 points total; 30 points each) – This course has five required exams each worth 30 points. The exams will consist of 30 multiple choice questions. All exams will be available to take on the first day of class so that students who want to work ahead may do so, but exams must be completed by 11:59 PM on the day they are due to receive credit. You are free to use your textbook, any notes, assignments, or readings during the exam. Links to each exam are posted on the course Blackboard site. The link is located in the corresponding week’s folder under the weekly assignments tab. You must complete the exam in one sitting, and multiple attempts are not allowed. You will have 75 minutes to complete each exam. Plan ahead to give yourself enough time. Please see the course schedule for exam dates. Exams will not be accepted late without a documented (university approved) excused absence.

3. Graded Discussions (4 discussions; 120 points total; 30 points each) – We will have 4 online, asynchronous graded discussions over the course of the semester worth 30 points each. Your posting should be about 1-2 paragraphs long and include the creative and relevant use of sociological concepts. Your post should also use appropriate grammar. In addition to the original comment, each student must make a reasoned reply or reaction to at least two postings during each class discussion. It is fine to disagree and offer counter arguments with supporting evidence. Simply dismissing course material as wrong or irrelevant with no reliable counter-evidence is not a reasoned response and is thus unacceptable. Your task is to engage with the material. Our class will be divided into several groups for the discussions. Links to each discussion board are posted on the course Blackboard site. The link is located in the corresponding week’s folder under the weekly assignments tab. Your initial post will be due by 11:59 PM on Friday and should address the initial question posted. Your second post will be due by 11:59 PM on Sunday and should include at least two responses to two different classmates’ initial posts.

4. Online Activity and Writing Assignments (1 online activity and 2 writing assignments; 90 points total; 30 points each) – Students will complete an online data activity and two writing assignments. These assignments will allow students to explore sociological issues with empirical data and other special issues related to politics and society. Directions for each activity are posted on the course Blackboard site. Directions are located in the corresponding week’s folder under the weekly assignments tab.

5. Final Exam (50 points total) – The final exam is cumulative and will consist of 40 multiple choice questions and 10 short answer questions. The final week of classes will be dedicated to preparing for the exam. Students will be allowed one attempt and must take the final exam during the exam window from April 18th at 8am until April 27th at 11:59pm.

Note: FSU does not allow a final grade of “A+.” The specific grade ranges are below:  
A =92-100; A- =90-91; B+ =88-89; B =82-87; B- =80-81; C+ = 78-79; C=72-77; C- =70-71; D+=68-69; D=62-67; D- =60-6; F=<59

Academic Honor Policy
Students are expected to abide by the Academic Honor Policy of the Florida State University, including the statement on Values and Moral Standards published in The Florida State University General Bulletin. The Academic Honor Policy outlines the University's expectations for students' academic work, the procedures for resolving alleged violations of these expectations, and the rights and responsibilities of students and faculty throughout the process. Any student who plagiarizes, cheats on exams, or otherwise behaves in a dishonest way may be reported to the university.
administration for further disciplinary action as specified in the Academic Honor Policy. Any form of academic dishonesty will result in a "zero" for that particular assignment or an "F" for the course, at the instructor’s discretion. Please note that students are expected to do their own individual work for this course.

Website: http://dof.fsu.edu/honorpolicy.htm. (From this site, you’ll need to click onto the Academic Honor Policy pdf file.)

**Work Policy**
Students must complete assignments (i.e., discussions, exams, final exam, and research activities) at the times indicated on the syllabus. Only students presenting a valid, “university approved” excuse will be permitted to make up coursework that was missed. Please note that medical illness refers to conditions that are serious in nature and require treatment by medical professionals and/or surgical or other treatments. It is also necessary that you contact the professor *as soon as possible* after missing an assignment due to an emergency or medical illness. In most cases, it is reasonable to expect that you would email the professor within 1-2 days of missing an assignment.

If due dates for course assignments coincide either with the observation of religious holidays or the representation of FSU at official functions, such as intercollegiate debating or varsity sports events, you must contact your instructor in advance of the due date for the assignment for which alternative arrangements will be made.

Please note that in this course, you can always work ahead. All tests and discussion boards are posted on the course website. Therefore, you can work ahead if you know of an upcoming event (i.e. a wedding, trip, etc.). However, once the due date passes, you will not have access to assignments. This is done for your convenience. Please take advantage.

**Incomplete Grades**
Missing work or uncompleted assignments are insufficient reasons for a grade of Incomplete. An Incomplete grade will not be given except under extenuating circumstances at the instructor’s discretion. This is FSU policy. Note that College of Social Science guidelines require that students seeking an “I” must be passing the course.

**Americans with Disabilities Act**
Students with disabilities needing academic accommodation should do the following: (1) register with and provide documentation to the Student Disability Resource Center; (2) bring a letter to the instructor indicating the need for accommodation and what type. This must be done during the first week of class. For more information about services available to FSU students with disabilities, contact:

Student Disability Resource Center, 108 Student Services Bldg., Florida State University
Tallahassee, FL 32306-4167, (850)644-9566 (voice), (850)644-8504 (TDD)
E-mail: SDRC@admin.fsu.edu

Website: http://www.fsu.edu/~staffair/dean/StudentDisability/
*Please note that this syllabus is a general guide for the course and subject to change.*
# COURSE SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Readings and Links</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Week 1 ● January 6 - 9 ● Course Introduction</strong></td>
<td><strong>Online Bio for First Day Attendance Due Jan. 8 by 10am</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>See link in week 1 folder</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 2 ● January 11 - 15 ● Power: The Key Concept in Political Sociology</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discussion Board 1: Initial post due Jan. 15 at 11:59PM; Responses due Jan. 17 at 11:59PM</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Students will learn about the key sociological concept of power. They will also develop an understanding of how different theoretical traditions have conceptualized this idea.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read Dobratz et al. pp.1-33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Piven and Cloward &quot;Rule Making, Rule Breaking, and Power&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>Everything is Okay Protest Montage <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAQrsA3m8Bg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qAQrsA3m8Bg</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended Gramsci &quot;Hegemony, Intellectuals and the State&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 3 ● January 18 - 22 ● The Nation-State</strong></td>
<td><strong>Exam 1 (Chapters 1&amp;2): Due Fri. Jan. 22 at 11:59 PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will gain an understanding of the concept of “the modern nation-state.” They will also build an understanding of how different theoretical schools of thought perceive the nation-state.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read Dobratz et al. pp.36-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>Theories of Power Overview <a href="http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/theory/alternative_theories.html">http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/theory/alternative_theories.html</a></td>
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<td>They Rule <a href="http://www.theyrule.net/">http://www.theyrule.net/</a></td>
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<td>The Social Construction of the Democratic Nation State <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FMNFvKEy4c">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FMNFvKEy4c</a></td>
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<td>Welfare States Handout</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Week 4 ● January 25 - 29 ● Politics, Culture, and Social Processes</strong></td>
<td><strong>Discussion Board 2: Initial post due Jan. 29 at 11:59PM; Responses due Jan. 31 at 11:59PM</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students will learn about the relationship between culture, political beliefs, and political activity.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Read Dobratz et al. pp.71-109</td>
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<tr>
<td>Recommended: <em>The Big Sort</em> by Bill Bishop on The Daily Show <a href="http://thedailyshow.cc.com/videos/uuzykw/bill-bishop">http://thedailyshow.cc.com/videos/uuzykw/bill-bishop</a></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Political Compass Ideology Internet Quiz (Take for fun!) <a href="http://www.politicalcompass.org/index">http://www.politicalcompass.org/index</a></td>
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### Week 5 • February 1 - 5 • Political Economy

**Students will learn about the ways that politico-economic forces influence citizens’ everyday lives.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Read Dobratz et al. pp.114-147</th>
<th>Exam 2 (Chapters 3&amp;4): Due Fri. Feb. 5 at 11:59 PM</th>
</tr>
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</table>


Money is Speech video
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dBYu2cZ48&feature=youtu.be

Wealth Inequality in America
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QPKKQnijnsM

How Class Works


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### Week 6 • February 8 - 12 • Social Institutions and Social Relations

**Students will gain insights into how the nation-state and different governmental units influence our day to day lives (often through major institutions such as education and health care entities). They will also come to understand the role of trust in maintaining a legitimate government.**

|-------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|

Recommended: Mills "The Sociological Imagination"

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### Week 7 • February 15 - 19 • Political Participation

**Students will learn about how political sociologists conceptualize different forms (such as institutional and non-institutional) of political participation.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Read Dobratz et al. pp.189-222</th>
<th>Exam 3 (Chapters 5&amp;6): Due Fri. Feb. 19 at 11:59 PM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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The Fight-And the Right-To Vote Bill Moyers
http://vimeo.com/109919311

Q & A Bill Moyers with Richard Hasen, author of *The Voting Wars*
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<tr>
<th>Alabama Voter Literacy Test Example (see BB)</th>
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**Week 8 ● February 22 - 26 ● Elections and Voting**

Students will gain an understanding of how sociologists study a particular form of political participation – voting and electoral politics.

- Read Dobratz et al. pp.226-264
- Discussion Board 3: Initial post due Feb. 26 at 11:59PM; Responses due Feb. 28 at 11:59PM
- Ballot Watch http://apps.frontline.org/votingrights/

**Week 9 ● Feb 29 – Mar 4 ● Movements: Politics by Other Means**

Students will gain an understanding of how sociologists study a particular form of political participation – social movements.

- Read Dobratz et al. pp.269-298
- Exam 4 (Chapters 7&8): Due March 4 at 11:59 PM
- Recommended: Locher “The Emergent Norm Perspective”
- Watch Film *Soundtrack for a Revolution* (available through Blackboard)

**Week 10 ● March 7 - 11 ● SPRING BREAK**

No Assignments -- Enjoy the break!

**Week 11 ● March 14 - 18 ● Movements: Politics by Other Means**

Students will gain an understanding of how sociologists study a particular form of political participation – social movements.

- Anderson “Demystifying the Arab Spring”
- McAdam and Tarrow “Ballots and Barricades: On the Reciprocal Relationship between Elections and Social Movements”
- Green et al “Social Movements and Party Politics: The Case of the Christian Right”
- Recommended: Milkman, Luce, and Lewis “Changing the Subject: A Bottom-Up Account of Occupy Wall Street in New York City”
- TBA

**Week 12 ● March 21 - 25 ● Violence and Terrorism**

Students will gain an understanding of how sociologists study a particular form of political participation – terrorism.

- Read Dobratz et al. pp.303-339
- Discussion Board 4: Initial post due March 25 at 11:59PM; Responses due March 27 at 11:59PM
- Turk "Sociology of Terrorism"
Women, War, and Peace  
http://www.pbs.org/wnet/women-war-and-peace/  
(Watch the first episode "War Redefined" available through Blackboard)  
Recommended: Read "Muslims in America"

### Week 13 ● Mar 28 - April 1 ● Globalization

Students will learn about competing definitions and theoretical perspectives of globalization, as well as the relationship between globalization and the nation-state.

- Read Dobratz et al. pp.344-377
- Exam 5 (Chapters 9&10): Due April 1 at 11:59 PM
- Watch Film No Logo (available through Blackboard)

### Week 14 ● April 4 - 8 ● Comparative Societies

Students will develop a basic understanding of how sociologists research different countries. Particular emphasis will be given to comparative levels of democracy and political economy across a range of countries.

- Watch Film The End of Poverty? Available through this link https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pktOXJr1vOQ
- Writing Assignment Comparative Societies Assignment: Due Sat. Apr.9 at 11:59 PM

### Week 15 ● April 11 - 15 ● Humor and Politics

Students will use their knowledge of political sociology to examine the relationship between humor and politics.

- Writing assignment Humor and Politics Due Sat. April 16 at 11:59PM

### Week 16 ● April 18 - 22 ● Prepare for Final Exam

Use this week to prepare for the cumulative final exam. The final exam link will only be available between April 20th at 8AM and April 27th at 11:59PM.

**Registrar: April 22nd Last Day of Class**

### Week 17 ● April 25 - 29 ● Final Exam Week

Cumulative Final Exam Opens April 18th at 8 AM - Closes April 27th 11:59 PM

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**Recommended Reading:**

- Bill Bishop. *The Big Sort: Why the Clustering of Like-Minded America is Tearing us Apart*
- David Brady. *Rich Democracies, Poor People: How Politics Explain Poverty*
- Larry Bartels. *Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age*
- Bill Dohmoff. *Who Rules America?*
Thomas Frank. *What’s the Matter with Kansas.*
Martin Gilens. *Affluence & Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America.*
Lawrence Jacobs and Theda Skocpol. *Inequality and American Democracy.*

**Additional Resources:**
Center for Responsive Politics.  www.Opensecrets.org
Who Rules America?  http://www2.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/
Opensecrets.  www.opensecrets.org
ANES.  http://www.electionstudies.org/