

SYLLABUS POLITICAL SCIENCE 590

Advanced Public Policy Workshop

July 17, 2014

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Fall semester 2014: Wed 330—550, 1155 BSB (in Communications department)

Goals of Seminar

1. Professor and advanced graduate students will help doctoral students develop a dissertation prospectus;
2. this may involve discussing outlines of a prospectus, or it might involve discussing the background literature in preparation for the Ph.D. prelim on the dissertation topic;
3. in some cases the student may have passed the prospectus stage but may profit from further discussion of the dissertation project;
4. possibly a student may present a research paper developed in the second or third year that might foreshadow a dissertation commitment.

Work Product

Students are expected to submit about 25 pages of written material, although the exact amount is negotiable. This is likely to be a 5 page paper at the beginning of the seminar and a 20 page product at the end of the semester, perhaps resembling a draft of a prospectus. The first five page paper is viewed as a tentative statement, and not symbolic of student brilliance. The idea is to get general comments working towards the final paper. Possibly in the middle of the class, a student may ask for intermediate comments from the others.

Seminar Content

Much of the class consists of student presentations. We may do power point for the longer, end product presentations. Students and professors will endeavor to discuss the presentations in a helpful and critical way. It will be best if written material is sent to the others by email before class.

Attention will be given to threads of discussion that may go from one class to another. For instance we will start from the discussion of the concept of “protest” and how it may be studied as expressed in an email discussion among graduate students this summer. This may become a thread recurring among classes; one or two other discussion threads may emerge.

Students are interested in how a protest differs from a social movement, and are interested in the relationship of the internet to politics, and the relationship of internet activity to protests. Therefore there will be 2.5 classes about these topics, for which the following books have been assigned, available from Amazon or from the UIC bookstore:

Putting Social Movements in Their Place: Explaining Opposition to Energy Projects in the United States, 2000-2005. Cambridge University Press. This study examines opposition to the location of refineries and nuclear power plants by 20 local communities in the United States. The authors do an empirical analysis, but seem confused as to whether these separate local political actions are social movements or something else. I regard this as a major source for Dianne Selden’s dissertation

The Logic of Connective Action: Digital Media and the Personalization of Contentious Politics. W. Lance Bennett & Alexandra Segerberg. Cambridge University Press. They examine the use and effects of social media, particularly twitter, in recent protests in England and America. Interpersonal networks are viewed as the basic sociopolitical units. Read 179-191 first about Occupy America for fun reading; the initial theoretical chapter is rough going; it is a different world view from most political scientist.

The instructor will be prepared to give a lecture on each book, but there will be plenty of discussion. The instructor may also comment regarding allied topics in political science after student presentations.

Student research need not be about protests. However, this is an overlapping topic and provides a layer of continuity for the seminar.

Grade requirement:

The principle grade requirement is a 20-25 page paper turned in by December 10. Of course students are professionals who attend class whenever possible. It is expected that all students will do a good job in this class and that exceptions at this level of graduate study are rare.

Students concerned by conflicts with religious holidays should consult with the instructor who will follow UIC regulations on the matter. Students concerned by a disability situation should consult with the instructor who will follow UIC regulations for such situations.

The following schedule is tentative and adjustments may be made, especially regarding faculty or other guest appearances.

August 27 Organizing class. Lecture and discussion of protest.

September 3. Finish “protest.” Three initial presentation by students particularly prepared before the class. I would ask for a five page paper.

September 10. Three initial presentations by students, including report on the book *Rightful Resistance in Rural China* [70,000 protests a year] by Huan Chang.

September 17. Consideration of *Putting Social Movements in Their Place*. Discussion of pp 1-97. Three presentations by students.

September 24. Possible faculty guest: Dennis Judd. He has expertise on publication of dissertations. Discussion of the McAdam and Bouchet book, 98-207.

October 1. Possible faculty guest: Sultan Tepe, winner of UIC graduate student mentoring award.

October 8. *The Logic of Connective Action*. Lecture and discussion of internet and politics, pp 1-113. Meggan Trevey will be invited to comment on relevance to her interests.

October 15. *The Logic of Connective Action, 114-215*. Likely some carry over about internet and protest. Otherwise TBA.

October 22. TBA

October 29 Experiment: students will decide on September 10 and topic for this class.
Note to outsiders: most or all of the students are in the third or fourth year of graduate study and thus are already social science professionals.

November 5 TBA

November 12, 19, 26. **Presentation of final work. Two students per meeting the expected number.**

December 3. Unfinished business, conclusions, student requests. **Please turn in 20-25 page paper by December 10.**