

# Heidelberg University

## Fall 2011

POL 409  
*Capstone Seminar*  
T-R, 12:30-1:45 PM  
Aigler 205

Instructors: Profs. Marc O'Reilly, Tom Newcomb, John Bing  
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Office Hours:

O'Reilly: M-W-F 3-4 PM, T-R 3:30-4:30 PM, On Appointment  
Bing: On Appointment  
Newcomb: On Appointment

### **Modification of Syllabus:**

Please note that the instructors can modify the syllabus at any point during the semester. Should we do so, you will be notified in class and/or by e-mail. Dr. O'Reilly's web page (<http://people.heidelberg.edu/~moreilly>) will always have the most up-to-date version of the syllabus.

### **Disability Policy:**

Note that it is the responsibility of any student with a disability to inform Heidelberg University administrators, faculty, and staff who need to know this information. Any student requesting services and/or accommodations must submit documentation of a disability to the Academic and Career Support Center (ACSC). Documentation should meet the Disability Services requirements. Guidelines for documentation are available on the ACSC website and can be picked up in hard copy from that office. Documentation must be submitted before accommodations can be provided.

### **Course Content:**

This team-taught seminar serves as the capstone course in Political Science. Throughout the semester, students will have an opportunity to learn and/or review key concepts and issues within the discipline. To that end, each instructor has selected a work he considers of particular import

and relevance. Students will read these books, discuss them in a seminar format, and write a short review essay on each. The major assignment of the semester will be to write a lengthy research paper under the supervision of one of the instructors. Following the submission of a draft and conferencing with her/his mentor, each student will present, conference-style, her/his work to the class.

This course will not only prepare you intellectually for your post-graduation life. It will also spotlight career possibilities. In particular, the instructors will emphasize how to achieve a career of “purpose with distinction,” to quote the Heidelberg mission statement.

**Required Readings** (available at the Heidelberg University Bookstore):

- G. John Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan: The Origins, Crisis, and Transformation of the American World Order* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2011).
- Martin Luther King Jr., *Strength to Love* (Fortress Press, 2010).
- Richard Rorty, *Achieving Our Country: Leftist Thought in Twentieth-Century America* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1999).
- Additional photocopied readings may be assigned. They will be distributed in class, on reserve in the library, or available electronically.

**Course Requirements:**

**Review Essays:** Students will write **three (3) review essays**. Each 4-5 page (double-spaced) essay will summarize, as well as analyze, a book from the Required Readings list. Writing guidelines will be provided; these will include questions to answer in each essay. **OBJECTIVES:** Review essays allow you to ponder what you have read, compare the book under review to other works in Political Science, and provide your own -- informed -- point of view. **DEADLINES: 1<sup>ST</sup> ESSAY DUE OCTOBER 16; 2<sup>ND</sup> ESSAY DUE OCTOBER 26; 3<sup>RD</sup> ESSAY DUE NOVEMBER 10.**

**Paper:** Students must submit a **15-20 page (double-spaced) term paper** on some aspect of Political Science. Each student will select one of the instructors as her/his primary mentor. The two of you will meet to discuss the topic of your paper. Several weeks into the semester, each student will turn in a full draft of her/his paper, which the mentor will read and discuss with her/him. In addition, each student will read a couple of other papers written by classmates, after which she/he will write or type up comments. Students will provide constructive criticism so that papers can be improved. The instructors will provide students with advice on how to organize and write their papers. If students have questions regarding the assignment, they should raise them in class, speak to the instructors during office hours, or e-mail them. A student can turn in an early draft of her/his paper at any point during the term. **OBJECTIVES:** The paper allows you to improve your analytical and writing skills. By turning in a draft, you will have an opportunity to revise your work using student and instructor comments to guide you. By rewriting your paper,

you should be able to ameliorate it and thus earn a better grade than you would have otherwise.  
DRAFT DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 2. PAPER DEADLINE: DECEMBER 14.

**Oral Presentation:** Students must present their research to the class by way of a **10-15 minute presentation**. After each presentation, there will be a 5-10 minute question and answer session. Instructors will provide students with guidelines beforehand. **OBJECTIVES:** Presentations allow you to organize your thoughts effectively, try out your ideas before an audience, and improve your oratorical skills. **DATES FOR ORAL PRESENTATION: NOVEMBER 8, 15, 17, 22, 29, DECEMBER 1, 6.**

**Participation:** Students must attend class regularly (we will keep track of your attendance) and provide input -- in the form of questions and answers -- during seminar. *Each student, moreover, will lead discussion (with other students) when discussing the required readings.* Guidelines will be provided. Finally, students must respect classmates and the instructors as well as conduct themselves in a mature and responsible way. *Note that any unauthorized classroom use of an electronic device, such as a cell phone to send and read text messages, can result in temporary confiscation of the device as well as expulsion from the class and/or the course.* **OBJECTIVES:** Improve your oratorical, argumentative, persuasion, listening, and leadership skills and recognize the importance of proper comportment and etiquette in the classroom.

### **Distribution of Grades:**

Review Essays	30% (each essay will be worth 10%)
Paper	40%
Oral Presentation	20%
Participation	10%

Late essays and papers will be docked one grade (A to A-, for example) for every day past the deadline. Also note that any student guilty of cheating or plagiarism will receive an F for the assignment and can be dismissed from Heidelberg University. For what constitutes academic dishonesty, see Heidelberg's Academic Honesty Policy in the Student Handbook.

### **Grades:**

A = 93/100 and above  
A- = 90-92  
B+ = 87-89  
B = 84-86  
B- = 80-83  
C+ = 77-79  
C = 74-76  
C- = 70-73  
D+ = 67-69  
D = 64-66  
D- = 60-63

F = 59 and below

Note that when you simply receive a letter grade for an assignment, it will correspond to the following percentage:

A = 93  
A/A- = 92.5  
A- = 90  
A-/B+ = 89.5  
B+ = 87  
B+/B = 86.5  
B = 84  
B/B- = 83.5  
B- = 80  
B-/C+ = 79.5  
C+ = 77  
C+/C = 76.5  
C = 74  
C/C- = 73.5  
C- = 70  
C-/D+ = 69.5  
D+ = 67  
D+/D = 66.5  
D = 64  
D/D- = 63.5  
D- = 60  
F = 59 or 0

### **Class Outline and Reading Assignments**

#### **WEEK 1: Introduction.**

Thursday: Paper topics.

#### **WEEK 2: Careers.**

Tuesday: Guest: Andrea Wensowitch of Heidelberg's Academic & Career Support Center.

#### **WEEK 3: What is Political Science?**

Tuesday: Holocaust Awareness Week event.

WEEK 4: **1<sup>st</sup> Book, Part 1:** Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*.

WEEK 5: **1<sup>st</sup> Book, Part 2:** Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*.

WEEK 6: **1<sup>st</sup> Book, Part 3:** Ikenberry, *Liberal Leviathan*.

WEEK 7: **2<sup>nd</sup> Book, Part 1:** King, *Strength to Love*.

1<sup>st</sup> REVIEW ESSAY DUE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 16 AT 11:59 PM

WEEK 8: **2<sup>nd</sup> Book, Part 2:** King, *Strength to Love*.

October 21 is the last day to drop the course

FALL BREAK: OCTOBER 22-25

2<sup>nd</sup> REVIEW ESSAY DUE: WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26 AT 11:59 PM

WEEK 9: **3<sup>rd</sup> Book, Part 1:** Rorty, *Achieving Our Country*.

PAPER DRAFT DUE: WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 2 AT 11:59 PM

WEEK 10: **3<sup>rd</sup> Book, Part 2:** Rorty, *Achieving Our Country*.

WEEK 11: **Oral Presentations.**

Thursday: No Class (ISA-Midwest Conference in St. Louis).

3<sup>rd</sup> REVIEW ESSAY DUE: THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 10 AT 11:59 PM

WEEK 12: **Oral Presentations.**

WEEK 13: **Oral Presentations.**

THANKSGIVING BREAK: NOVEMBER 23-27

WEEK 14: **Oral Presentations.**

WEEK 15: **Oral Presentations.**

REVISED PAPER: DUE WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 14 AT NOON