

PLACE, POLITICS AND CITIZEN MOBILIZATION  
POSC 209, WINTER 2014

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Office Hours: MW 2:00-3:00  
by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Political Science 209! In this course we will investigate citizen mobilization for political change based in a specific geographic place. Due to the nature of this kind of political action, this is primarily a course on local politics, although national politics are an important part of the overall context. Because disputes grounded in a specific place often include environmental factors, we will also examine environmental politics. We will explore concepts of power, identity, citizenship and democracy while we examine different types of citizen mobilization. In addition, we will study the types of methods often used in this area of political science: cases and historical inquiry. As a class, we will conduct our own original research on a case of community mobilization.

TEXTS

*Reveille for Radicals* by Saul Alinsky  
*The Long Haul* by Myles Horton  
*The Public and Its Problems* by John Dewey  
Readings on Moodle

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Participation

Although I do not include participation in the grade, you cannot succeed in this class unless you attend class regularly prepared to participate by asking questions, sharing observations and information, and exploring opinions. There will be short lectures that include material primarily not in the readings, but class discussion of cases and other readings will add an important dimension to understanding the material. In addition, we will be conducting research that is interdependent, and which will require your presence in class. If you miss class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed so you can return to class prepared. That said, please do not come to class ill. Email me to make arrangements for you to get caught up when you are feeling better.

## Reading

Your reading assignments are due on the date they are listed on the course schedule. The type of reading assigned varies widely in this course, from narratives that read like a story to dense and abstract writings on aspects of democracy. I will do my best to give you guidance on how to approach the various readings. Please ask if any of the readings raise problems for you. I expect excellent comprehension, retention and reflection to be evident in course discussions and in your workbook.

## Assignments

Your grade will be based on informal writing in your workbook, two short (5 page) papers, and a research project followed by a research paper.

Papers and other assignments are due in class on the date specified. Late papers will be graded down two points for each day they are late.

## GRADES

	%	points
Workbook (4 x 40)	27	160
Short papers (2 x 70)	23	140
Research project	23	140
Research paper	27	160
Total points		600

The grading standards as follows:

- A Achievement outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements in every respect.
- C Achievement meeting the basic course requirements in every respect.
- D Achievement worthy of credit even though it does not fully meet the basic course requirements in every respect.

I encourage you to talk with me about your assignments. I am happy to answer any questions you have about either the course materials or your progress in the course.

## CLASSROOM POLICIES

Class policies are intended to foster a stimulating and fruitful intellectual community for everyone. Because our time in class is valuable, I will enforce the following rules/expectations:

1. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns in the class. You can email, make an appointment, come to office hours, or talk to me before or after class. I am here to help you. If you have a problem or question in the course, the sooner you contact me, the more effectively it can be handled.
2. It is the nature of topics in politics to entail conflicting opinions. Even those who take the time to arrive at deeply thoughtful conclusions often disagree. Class discussion will encourage free expression for everyone and hold to a standard of respect for all class members.
3. Any student with a documented disability who needs to arrange accommodations should talk to me at the beginning of the semester.
4. In order to nurture the classroom as a learning community for everyone, side conversations, electronics and other diversions will not be tolerated. I will strictly enforce this rule in order to protect the class environment so all students can have a calm, productive, and stimulating learning environment. Laptop computers are a convenience but also a tempting distraction. During class discussion and at other times I may ask that the screens be folded down.

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

An act of academic dishonesty is a serious offense in a college community. By seeking credit for work which is not his or her own, a student takes unfair advantage of fellow students, who accept their limitations, and of teachers, who trust that the work received is the student's. Dishonesty in academic work, particularly in the form of plagiarism, also defeats the process of self-discovery which is the heart of a liberal education. People establish their integrity and personality only as they learn to distinguish what is significantly their own from what belongs to another, only as they learn to value their own work, including its limitations, in relation to the work of others. As a scholar, finally, one should be generous in acknowledging the work of other scholars, for their work makes possible one's own.

At Carleton College, an act of academic dishonesty is therefore regarded as conflicting with the work and purpose of the entire College and not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor; all cases involving such dishonesty are referred to the Academic Standing committee for appropriate action. This action can vary from a grade of Unsatisfactory in the given piece of work to a recommendation of permanent dismissal from the College in cases of repeated or serious offenses.