Pols. 601 “Political Analysis and Theory Building”
Tuesdays 6:00-8:30, Saunders 637, Aug. 21-Dec. 7, 2018
Prof. Richard Chadwick - my webpage, Dept bio., email: chadwick@hawaii.edu,
Office: Saunders 616, phone (808) 956-7180

Catalog description: “POLS 601 Political Analysis and Theory Building (3) Survey of theory-
building, approaches and validation techniques.”

My description: Not quite so dry; my iteration of this inquiry into theory and analysis of politics has two
basic dimensions, one cultural and the other motivational. In the cultural dimension—political
anthropology if you will—we have the subcultures of political philosophy, political practice, and political
science—quite literally, subcultures. This course is in part an introduction to analyzing each
subculture and their mutual relations through readings, presentations, discussions, and exercises.
But it's also about the social psychology—the motivations—of the participants: the political scientists'
pursuit of knowledge about and understanding of politics, the political practitioners' drive to shape
their's and others' political futures, and the political philosophers' passion for inventing new ways of
debating about and transcending current beliefs and attitudes regarding what is real (e.g., “fake news"
issues), what is possible (e.g., “collusion” issues) and what is desirable (“basket of deplorables” vs.
“Antifa” for instance), just to name several of the many contemporary political dust-ups.
As you can tell from the parenthetical examples, we will not shy away from discussing contemporary
affairs—approached not as partisans of course, nor as mere political voyeurs, but as students
engaged in deepening and applying their critical thinking skills to political theory, political data, and
political culture.

Assignments
I expect you to write six short commentaries (about 3-5 typewritten pages each) and one longer
commentary (about 10-15 typewritten pages, double spaced) at the end of the semester. Three
should describe your understanding of each subculture (their aspirations, norms, and challenges),
three should discuss you impression of what socially motivates the practitioners in each subculture,
and a final paper reasoning out your own perspective on this subject matter in general. My aim is for
you to use these writing assignments as a way not only of developing and summarizing your views but
also recording your own inquiry and analysis interests, your own critical thinking, whether that be in
the skeptical direction or appreciative direction, or both, or something else.

Grading: Papers: 6 short 10% each. 1 long 20%. Attendance: 20%. Cumulative, cut points: A 90%,
B 80%, less than 80% I (Incomplete, to be made up)

Texts
Some material is pretty dry, which is to say, academic. The three paradigms outlined above (political
science, philosophy and practice) are represented, insofar as our profession is concerned, by these
four book. Smith represents the practical application of analytic methods applied to politics in
preparation for policy pursuits. Haidt represents a perspective on the moral psychology of politics,
political civility, and political ideology—an exemplar of political philosophy with obvious relevance for
our inevitable discussion of the Trump imbroglio. Alford and Shively exemplify the political science
paradigm, one mostly (with a few exceptions) the quantitative research branch, the other more
general.

Smith, The Craft of Political Analysis for Diplomats
Shively, The Craft of Political Research, 10th edition (also use in Pols. 390)
Alford, The Craft of Inquiry: Theory, Methods, Evidence
Haidt, The Righteous Mind
These are only a small and hardly representative sample of our literature and the topics available. Further, I cannot know until we meet and discuss your interests and backgrounds, how conversant you are with one or another of these paradigms, you should take the schedule below as tentative.

Available Alternatives or Supplements

As is my habit, I treat the schedule below as suggestive and not definitive; and I’m happy to entertain suggestions for other reading in addition or in lieu of those I’ve included below. I’d also like to hear as many challenges as you can muster to the overall framework I’ve laid out.

I haven’t said anything about focusing on how to win an election, political biographies, the rise of African American leaders or power élites in America. These are subjects of my upper division undergraduate course about political leadership in the United States.

You should be aware that as graduate students, you may take a few upper division undergraduate courses for graduate credit with the approval/permission of your adviser or our department’s Graduate Chair. In any case you would be welcome to sit in on my political leadership course occasionally when the topic overlaps with your interests. Check out the syllabus online for the schedule, location and time.

Schedule

All the colorful underlining below are live links to material you can download or read online. You aren’t expected to read everything mentioned nor limit yourself to the material suggested. However, a reasonable amount would be two-three sources and some outside reading related to your specific interests.

Week 1 – Overview lecture and discussion of political science, practice, and philosophy.

• Lecture(s) powerpoint (will be online on Laulima beginning on the first day of class) on the TDC/FS paradigm (theory-data-culture-faith-skepticism).

• Suggested reading: online, David Moore’s Critical Thinking chapters 1 (pages 1-19), preferably before class. What do you think of his reasoning, his typology (induction as probability, deduction as necessity, and abduction as plausibility)? (Don’t worry; this article is not representative of course content; it’s just something that I think you should be familiar with since these distinctions are commonplace but unheralded in our literature, and something some in the IC think pretty important.)


• Analytic levels. David Singer’s levels of analysis framework of international politics. Start with the conclusion. Basically, he’s taking stock of his profession, the subfield of international relations studies. For a much clearer focus on the meaning of “levels,” see his review of Kenneth Waltz’s Man, the State, and War. “Levels” in the political science literature refers to hierarchical aggregation of people into organizations.

• The idea of human “systems.” See David Easton on his “systems theory” of politics. Check out his graph on p. 385 (the second page of the article); we’ll discuss it. You might also look at my own comments on the nature of human systems theory.

• Empirical political science. Shively, The Craft of Political Research, especially chapter 1 and later the section on Donald T. Campbell and Julian Stanley on the post-test only control group design (p. 25). Here’s the link to their original work you can download. Read on if interested.
The only empirical, natural data models they had were time series designs shown on figures 3 and 4, pp 38, 62.

- **Theory formation.** Let’s start with a more in-depth description of abductive reasoning. Here’s a review of the originator’s explication of the idea, Charles Peirce, and the modern context.
- In the sociological literature there is, in fact, a model for research that is clearly abductive. It’s Barney Glaser and Anselm Strauss’ grounded theory. Use a search engine on “grounded theory and abductive reasoning;” you’ll be surprised.

**Weeks 4-5. Political Practice** (what to do):
- **Application.** Pick up a copy and read Quintus Cicero, *How to Win an Election*. It’s available in our campus bookstore under Pols. 382 if not under 601. It’s a quick read and you can practice your Latin with it (you’ll see what I mean when you open the little book). Do you see any parallels to our own processes for acquiring political office.
- **Interpretation.** For discussion, sample Saul Alinsky’s *Rules for Radicals* online. Compare his pages 12-14 with Hillary Rodham’s (Yes, Hillary Rodham Clinton long before she was a Clinton) concluding paragraph in her [68 page senior thesis](https://example.com). There’s another passage from another time where she warns about radicalization. By contrast, a video clip. Quintus Cicero by comparison would appear to be the Saul Alinsky for the Roman elite of his day.
- For some future session, let’s search for a variety of politicians’ gaffes and indiscretions—shouldn’t be too hard on the web!
- **Rationality and decision making.** Sample (read, skim; just scroll down) chapter 1 of Thomas Saaty’s *Decision-making for Leaders: The Analytic Hierarchy Process for Decision in a Complex World*. Scroll down to the table of contents and click on chapter 1. Read chapter 2 if you have time and interest. I have the book and will lend it if you wish to read further. You can download his “app” (for free) at [superdecisions.com](http://superdecisions.com). Saaty also has a bio on Wikipedia. Here’s a sample from his book to whet your appetite (it's at the end of chapter 1):

  There are two fundamental approaches to solving problems: the deductive approach and the systems approach. Basically, the deductive approach focuses on the parts whereas the systems approach concentrates on the workings of the whole. The analytic hierarchy process, the approach proposed in this book, combines these two approaches into one integrated, logical framework.

- **Political rationality.** Although the technical details are much less sophisticated and less generalized than Saaty’s model, Bill Coplin and Mike O’Leary’s book, *Everyman’s Prince: A guide to understanding your political problems*, contains several decision making models that appear to be consistent with Saaty’s. [Here’s a web summary](http://example.com). I wrote a spreadsheet with his “Probe” model for “constituency” related decisions which will be available on Laulima. You’re welcome to try your hand at using it.
- **Data collection and evaluation for decision making.** Neither Saaty nor Coplin and O’Leary provide guidance for collecting and evaluating information to be used for decision making. Smith’s *The Craft of Political Analysis for Diplomats* (see also [abductive reasoning](https://example.com) which, knowingly or not, Smith seems to practice) provides data collection and evaluation protocols apparently widely used among analysts in the State Depart. Read the first two chapters (15 pages in all); come to class with questions.
- Autobiographical and biographical studies; sample Nixon, *Leaders* (from p. 343):
Some argue that the right wing bias. Others argue its obsession withscan-ness or inability to pre-emotional angle of ever-tribute to its distortion.

It appears that little has changed since the 1970s in that regard, judging from modern diatribe—except that its more inclusive of right wing excesses. I have this and many other books in my office of a similar nature and am happy to lend them for 2 weeks.

**Weeks 6-7. Political Philosophy**

- There’s a [listing of different types of political philosophy](https://stanford.edu) on the Stanford University website, worth bookmarking.
- Online, read Polybius, *Histories. Book VI, sections 2 through 9*. He discusses the rise and fall of government types and the sequence or order in which they appear and disappear, as well as their strengths and weaknesses, what’s desirable and possible.
- Getting back to Nixon’s *Leaders*, read chapter 1 online courtesy of Amazon (you can scroll down to page 1 after the table of contents). I bought a copy and can lend it if you’d like to read more. This book represents a biographical approach to political history, the first level of analysis referred to in earlier readings above. If you recall Easton’s systems model, it represents one approach to filling Easton’s “decision making” box and Coplin’s “constituency” model wherein the constituency in this case is the is USA “national interest.” Putting the two together gives structure to addressing the age-old question, do leaders make history or does history make leaders. In the center of Easton’s model you could also put Saaty’s analytic hierarchy process for decision making. Lots to discuss….
- Listen to Haidt on YouTube (a little more than an hour in total), take notes:
  - Foundations of Morality: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vs41JmGaxc](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vs41JmGaxc)
  - *Can a divided America heal? | Jonathan Haidt - YouTube*
  - Jonathan Haidt Sees a Big Shift in University Politics...
  - Motivated reasoning: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uogEbb0WOJE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uogEbb0WOJE)
- Haidt’s book, *The Righteous Mind*, elaborates on the first theme above (foundations of morality). More on university politics: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1_zLGFTSZ0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1_zLGFTSZ0)

This schedule completes the first half of the course. We’ll take some time at this stage to discuss your interests in going into more depth the various paradigms currently in use and some of the issues perennially debated. I’ll then put together a reading list addressing those interests as well as continue with further developing and applying the metaparadigm I used to organize the above.

To be continued....