This seminar provides an introduction to Political Sociology. Given the expansive nature of this subfield, we will only be able to focus on a few aspects of Political Sociology. In designing this course, I have (1) tried to avoid material that is already being offered by our Sociology and Political Science departments and (2) focus on inequalities in political and economic power. In analyzing these concepts, we will bring in relevant research on the welfare state (including health care reform), race, public opinion, mass media, and social movements. The class will be taught as a seminar, and the readings will be a mix of classic and contemporary texts. Conceptually, the class is divided into two broad categories. The first half of the class focuses on power and the state, while the second half of the classes focuses more on civil society and the extent to which non-state actors (e.g., mass media, the mass public, social movements) can effectively challenge existing relations of power and the state.

To make the course more customizable, you will be given the chance to explore your own research interests through a paper. You are encouraged to tailor the paper to your own interests, but it must still fall within political sociology.


In addition to these books, there are also readings posted on Blackboard. The asterisks next to some of the readings are additional readings that graduate students are responsible for doing, but they are optional for undergraduates. These asterisk readings can be referenced in class, but they will not be the focus of our discussions. These readings must be completed by the date indicated on the syllabus.

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<tr>
<th>Undergraduate Grade</th>
<th>Graduate Grade</th>
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<td>Class Discussion</td>
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<td>Essay II</td>
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**Class Discussion**
You are expected to contribute to class discussion *each class.* Please be mindful that quality of discussion is not the same as quantity. You will receive a zero in participation on days that you
are absent or silent, and sharp deductions will be made to your grade for arriving late to class. Distracting or disrespectful behavior (this includes inappropriate uses of electronic devices, having your cell phone ring, appearing disengaged, incivility) will result in a 15-point reduction for each of the first two offenses. The third offense will result in automatic course failure.

**Lead Day**
You will be responsible for formally leading discussion at least once this semester. You are responsible for providing a basic lesson plan on Tuesday, guiding class with your discussion questions. Feel free to provide a min-activity, reference contemporary events, or provide some outside media. I am happy to provide any feedback on your plan.

**Essays (2) (Undergraduates Only)**
There will be two exam-based, take-home essays. You will synthesize the readings into a written-response.

**Final Paper (Graduate Students Only)**
You will be responsible for producing a 15-20 page paper (double-spaced, 12-point font, not including tables/references). This paper can either be more of a research grant proposal or an empirical research paper. The topic of the paper must be in political sociology. You must have approval from me on your topic by 10/14.

**Presentation (Graduate Students Only—but Undergraduates Attend)**
You will be responsible for producing a presentation to the entire class. This is intended to be a formal presentation, providing visuals (e.g., PowerPoint) to the audience, and last 12-15 minutes.

**Appealing Grades**: Wait at least 24 hours. Provide a written statement explaining why you think you have been graded unfairly. Since grades are based on results (what you actually wrote or said), do not invoke personal effort in your grade complaint. Any grade complaint that references how hard you worked or studied will be immediately rejected. Upon re-reading your request, I reserve the right to keep your grade the same, raise your grade, or lower it. All appeals of grades must be made within 5 working days following the return of the exam.

**Plagiarism and Cheating** (includes recycled papers or using this paper in another class) results in automatic course failure.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities**
Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact me (the instructor or teaching assistant) for a confidential discussion of their individual needs for academic accommodation. It is the policy of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln to provide flexible and individualized accommodations to students with documented disabilities that may affect their ability to fully participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. To receive accommodation services, students must be registered with the Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD) office, 132 Canfield Administration, 472-3787 voice or TTY.
Grades Scored Between
97% and 100% = A+
94% and less than 97% = A
90% and less than 94% = A-
87% and less than 90% = B+
84% and less than 87% = B
80% and less than 84% = B-
77% and less than 80% = C+
74% and less than 77% = C
70% and less than 74% = C-
67% and less than 70% = D+
64% and less than 67% = D
60% and less than 64% = D-
0% and less than 60% = F

INTRODUCTION
W. Lawrence Neuman. Political Sociology (p. 305-310).

THE NATURE OF POWER (AND ITS LIMITATIONS)

9/2 Group 1
John Gaventa. *Power and Powerlessness*. (p. 125-136; 165-204; 252-261)

9/4 Group 2
American Journal of Sociology, 94, 53-78.

ELITE AND CORPORATE POWER
9/9 Group 3
William Domhoff. Defining and Testing the Class Dominance Theory (p. 7-45).

9/11 Group 4


9/16 **Guest Speaker on Writing Grant Proposals: Dr. Werum**
(Vacation Day for Undergraduates—read Mark Smith)

9/18 **Group 1**

**THE WELFARE STATE**

9/23 **Group 2**

9/25 **Group 3**


10/7 **Group 4**

10/9 **Group 1**

10/14 **Group 2**

**MASS MEDIA**
10/16 **Group 3**

***Due: Essay***

10/21 **FALL BREAK**

10/23 **Group 4**

10/28 **Group 1**

10/30 **Group 2**

11/4 **Group 3**

**SOCIAL MOVEMENTS**

11/6 **Group 4**

11/11 **Group 1**

11/13 **Group 2**
Todd Gitlin. The Media in the Unmaking of the New Left (p. 333-344).


11/18 **Group 3**
Rhys Williams. From the “Beloved Community” to “Family Values.” (247-265).

11/20 **Group 4**

11/25 **Group 1**

11/27 **THANKSGIVING BREAK**

12/2 **Group 2**


12/4 **Group 3**
American Journal of Sociology 98:368-87.

***PAPERS/ESSAYS DUE***

12/9  PRESENTATIONS (Members of Groups 1 and 2)
12/11 PRESENTATIONS (Members of Group 3 and 4)