

Professional Development in Political Science

Spring 2026 – POS 6015

Professor: Hannah M. Alarian (she/her/hers)

Email: halarian@ufl.edu

Office: Anderson Hall 004

Office Hours: T 12:30–2:30pm, on [Calendly](#)

Class: F 12:50 PM – 2:30 PM

Location: Anderson 216

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Course Description

Professional development for a graduate career in Political Science. Covers the research process, emerging issues, developing a professional scholarly identity, and careers. Required course for graduate students in their first year. Although this is a 0-credit course, please note that you may be charged 1 credit if you are not enrolled in other courses.

Required Texts

There are no required books for this course.

Course Goals

Through full participation in this course, the graduate political science student will:

1. Demonstrate awareness of prominent speakers at the UF campus and wider profession.
2. Understand new research topics in political science.
3. Refine skills required for participation in civil, professional discourse that is essential to academic and non-academic careers

Course Assessment

(1) [Seminar attendance: 30%](#)

(2) [Seminar participation: 20%](#)

(3) [Take-Home Assessments: 25%](#)

(4) [Research Seminar in Politics \(RSP\) Attendance: 25%](#)

Seminar attendance –30%

Students are expected to attend each seminar meeting in its entirety. Seminars will be scheduled 3-4 times per semester, for 1.5-2 hours each time. Attendance evaluation includes timeliness. Prompt attendance is expected as a demonstration of professional commitment. Acceptable reasons for seminar [absences](#) are discussed below.

Seminar participation – 20%

This seminar relies heavily on student participation. Students should attend seminars ready to discuss the topic and any reading assigned.

Students are also expected to be active participants during the seminar. This includes listening carefully, taking notes, and engaging in questioning and discussing each topic. The quality of participation is assessed—not necessarily the quantity. I understand some students may feel uncomfortable speaking in class, but the class and I benefit from hearing a wide range of perspectives. If you are a frequent contributor to class discussion, I urge you to be considerate of your classmates and encourage an open conversation for those who wish to speak.

Participation will be assessed according to the following components. Broadly, a grade of Satisfactory indicates strong performance or needs development in most categories. An Unsatisfactory is Unsatisfactory in some or nearly all categories.

	Strong	Needs Development	Unsatisfactory
<i>Listening</i>	Actively and respectfully listens to peers and instructor	Respectful but not engaged by comments of others	Projects lack of interest or disrespect for others (including browsing other materials during class, not taking notes, or leaving without explanation)
<i>Preparation</i>	Arrives fully prepared with all assignments completed, and notes on reading, observations, and questions	Sometimes arrives with only superficial preparation	Arrives unprepared and with little evidence of having completed or thought about assigned material or topic
<i>Quality of contributions</i>	Comments are relevant and reflect an understanding of assignments and topics and insights about assigned material	Comments occasionally show lack of preparation or understanding	Comments reflect little understanding of either the assignment or topic
<i>Impact on class</i>	Comments frequently help move discussion forward	Comments keep the conversation on track, but do little to move it forward	Comments do not advance the conversation or are actively harmful to it
<i>Frequency of participation</i>	Actively participates at appropriate times	Participates when called upon, but no more	Seldom participates and is generally disengaged

Take-Home Assignments – 25%

Each assignment will be submitted on Canvas and will be worth 12.5% of your total assessment. See policies on [Grade Adjustments](#) and [Late or Make-up Assignments](#) below. Additionally, review the policies on [Grading](#) and [Academic Integrity](#).

Assignment 1: Academic Identity Exercise.

Select one article you are in the process of developing to complete this exercise. **There is no expectation that this article is already complete.** We often write abstracts to submit our articles for conferences prior to their completion. This article should also not be currently under review, already published, or co-authored.

Complete the following three tasks as if you are submitting the article for publication. You will be required to submit:

1. A title page, including the title, abstract, and author names/affiliation (5%);
2. An ordered list of journals (3-5) that would be a good fit for this article (2.5%);
3. A cover letter for one of these journals selected for publication (5%)

Each task should conform to the expectations described in the Professionalization seminar.

Assignment 2: Academic Biography

Prepare a brief professional, academic biography. The biography should be prepared to be included on a website, NSF grant, scholarship, invited talk, or described in a cover letter for an academic job. The biography should be no more than 250 words and conform to the expectations of the field. You may wish to review biographies provided on websites of scholars you admire as you craft yours.

Research Seminar in Politics (RSP) Attendance – 25%

Students are expected to attend **two** Research Seminar in Politics (RSP) scheduled at the class time (12:50-2:30pm on Fridays) in their entirety. RSPs will be scheduled throughout the semester by the RSP coordinator and will be communicated via your university email.

Grading Scale

Percent	Grade
74.0 – 100.0	S
0.0 – 73.9	U

Class Policies

Syllabus

This syllabus is a living document. This means it is subject to change. All potential changes will be communicated to you in our class meetings and on Canvas.

Email

Your UFL email account is the official email address the University uses for official correspondence. Important communication regarding this course may also take place via email, and your UFL email address will be used. All students need to check their email at least once per day. Make checking it part of your daily routine.

Grade adjustment policy

I do not round or adjust grades. This policy treats all students equally.

Absences

Excused absences are accorded only in accordance with the university attendance policy.

Late or Make-up Assignments

No late or make-up assignments will be accepted without prior approval. If an assignment is submitted late without prior approval, it will receive a 0. Generally, at least one week's notice is required for assignment extension requests.

Contacting the Professor

Students should use their university email to contact me. You may also contact me via Canvas. Students should plan to visit my office during office hours, which are available through [Calendly](#).

Referencing the Professor

Often, students have questions about proper naming or titling etiquette for communicating with their professors. To remove this confusion and reduce email anxiety, you may use any of the following acceptable references in all communication with me throughout our course.

- Professor Alarian
- Dr. Alarian
- Prof. A.
- Dr. A.

Email/Messaging Hours

You may email me at any time that is convenient for you. I will respond within one business day between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Please resend your message if you do not receive my reply after 48 hours. Although I may sometimes reply outside these designated hours, responses cannot be guaranteed after 5 p.m. on weekdays, weekends, or holidays. Please plan accordingly to have your questions answered in advance of assignment and exam deadlines.

University Policies and Resources

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, please see this [link](#).

Semester Schedule

Date	Topic/Assignment
January 30 NOTE LOCATION CHANGE	<p>Academic Conferences and Presentations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim, Seo-Young Silvia, Hannah Lebovits, and Sarah Shugars. "Networking 101 for Graduate Students: Building a Bigger Table." <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 55.2 (2022): 307-312 • Pole, Antoinette, and Sangeeta Parashar. "Am I pretty? 10 tips to designing visually appealing slideware presentations." <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 53.4 (2020): 757-762
February 13	<p>Non-Academic Positions <i>Special Roundtable</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading TBD
March 6 NOTE TIME DIFFERENCE	<p>Academic Publishing and Networking <i>Special Guest Dawn Teele</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review manuscript preparation guidelines for authors for the following journals: APSR, JoP, and AJPS • Garand, James C., Dan Qi, and Max Magana. "Department Research Productivity in 19 Scholarly Political Science Journals (1990–2018)." <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 56.3 (2023): 417-429.
March 13	Assignment 1: Academic Publishing Exercise. Due by 5pm
April 10	<p>The Academic Job Market Boot Camp</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ayoub, Phillip M. "Reverse Research Design: Research Design in the Undergraduate Classroom." <i>PS: Political Science & Politics</i> 55.2 (2022): 424-428. • Gentry, Bobbi G., Kyla K. Stepp, and Jeremiah J. Castle. "Expect the Unexpected: Choices and Challenges in the Political Science PhD Job Market." <i>GRADUATE SCHOOL</i> (2022): 223. Available through apsa.net here.
April 17	Assignment 2: Academic Biography Exercise. Due by 5pm.