

POLS 405: CAPSTONE
Maymester 2006
The Politics of Development

Professor: Dr. Angela Halfacre
Class Times: M-F 8:30-12
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Office Hours: 1-4 Mondays
12:15-1:15 Thursdays
and by other appointment.

Course Description

This capstone seminar provides students with a culminating and integrative experience at the end of the political science major course work. The seminar provides students with the opportunity to conduct research and further develop critical analysis skills.

To meet these goals, students will examine the politics of development. In order to focus our research expectations, we will specifically explore the current literature examining the reactions of communities to development and development types. Some have argued that private neighborhoods (or subdivisions) and/or community associations have replaced local governments in the provision of services and management of the environment (e.g., Nelson, 2005), while others argue that residential development and local government responsibilities are increasingly blurred (e.g., Raymond and Fairfax, 2002). We will focus our analysis at the regional level, and gather data about private neighborhoods and their approaches to governance, conservation, and community. Through participant observation, content analysis of neighborhood documents and local media, photographic documentation, and interviews with elite respondents, we will assess the range of conservation subdivision approaches in the Lowcountry region of South Carolina. At the close of the course, teams will present findings in a research poster session, produce a comprehensive overview of the greater literature, and situate our regional case study within this literature.

Course Requirements

This is primarily a reading and research seminar. All students are expected to read intensively and discuss the readings critically. The principal products of the class are a thoroughly read bibliography, presentation and critical thinking skills, and an independent research project. Each student will participate actively and knowledgeably in class discussion.

Participation, Annotated Bibliographies, and Content Analysis. Students should strive to participate in a quality fashion. By quality, I mean the ability to summarize critically the readings you have done, to elaborate and defend a position in argument, and to listen to others and respond to their arguments.

You cannot do well in this capstone without participating, and you cannot participate well without preparation and thought. None of us has a flawless mind or a silver tongue. The point is to participate. It is nice, now and then, to excel at it, but the point is to practice it in order to improve. The atmosphere will be collegial, so that we can all make mistakes of interpretation or analysis without being punished for it.

Students are also required to complete the assignments included in the syllabus that are for class as well as work with other students to present background material on their research interests. Students will identify a research strand and present material on their research topic as we develop it. Annotated bibliographies and content analysis of identified data will be required to inform our research.

The capstone should also be dynamic in form. Students are welcome to participate in the creative development of the class. Feel free to suggest ways of improving the seminar.

Research Project. The major assignment of the course is a team research project examining communities in the lowcountry of South Carolina. Specifically, all teams will examine the range of residential development in this region.

Students in the class will be organized into three geographically based research teams. Collection and analysis of original quantitative and qualitative data (e.g., participant observation, etc.) is central to this assignment. Your literature review will focus on the topic of interest to each of you; I will assist you with identifying key previous research.

Students will also be required to present their findings to the rest of their colleagues on June 1, 2006. Each team will be allotted up to 20 minutes for their class poster presentations. At the close of this session, we will conduct a workshop to compile our results in a comprehensive report.

Further details about this assignment will be provided in class. Completion of this project is intended to aid the students in finishing independent research papers and posters.

Evaluation

Evaluation of student performance will be based on:

Class Participation	20%
Content Analysis	20%
Annotated Bibliography	20%
Poster Presentations and Research Paper Contribution	40%

Absence Policy

Absences for class will not be excused unless the student provides verifiable documentation of accident, illness, or college or legal obligation. Unexcused absences from the class will result in a score of zero for that day's participation. An alternative assignment for excused absences will be by arrangement with the instructor.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism and/or cheating will not be tolerated in this course. Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of someone else's ideas or language as your own. Cheating is defined as giving or receiving unauthorized assistance on any graded assignment. If the student does not feel that he or she has an adequate understanding of plagiarism, cheating, or the consequences thereof, it is highly recommended that the student visit the instructor in her office.

Please see the Department of Political Science citation guidelines at <http://polisci.cofc.edu/referenceguide.html>.

Required Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the College of Charleston Bookstore. These books are our main texts; we will read the majority of each of these.

I encourage you to work with your team members to share books (to limit cost); we will discuss this approach on the first day of class.

Barlett, Peggy F. 2005 *Urban Place: Reconnecting with the Natural World*. MIT Press. ISBN 0262524430

Berg, Bruce. 2006. *Qualitative Methods for the Social Sciences*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Nelson, Robert H. 2005. *Private Neighborhoods and the Transformation of Local Government*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute Press.

Neuendorf, Kimberly A. 2002. *The Content Analysis Guidebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Peters, Robert L. 1997. *Getting What You Came For: The Smart Student's Guide to Earning a Master's or Ph.D.* New York: the Noonday Press.

And selected readings from a list distributed to each student by the instructor.

Capstone Topics

The instructor reserves the right to revise the course outline below as necessary.

Tuesday, May 16

Topics: Capstone Overview, Methods Considerations, and The Study of Development

In Class: Literature Review Development and Article Topic Selections (Conservation Subdivisions/Development, Community Associations, Conservation and Planning)

Wednesday, May 17

Topics: Research Range -- Community Associations and Conservation Subdivision Literature

Readings: Nelson, Chapters "Introduction", "Introduction to Part I", "Collective Ownership of Housing", "Neighborhood Environmentalism", and "Neighborhood Association Governance"
Berg, "Introduction", "Designing Qualitative Issues", "Ethical Issues", "Writing Research Papers: Sorting Noodles from the Soup"

In Class: Team Designation and Community Assignments

Thursday, May 18

Topics: Research Agenda and Methods

In Class: Annotated Bibliography and Critical Analysis Reports; Outlining Our Research Agenda; Content Analysis Training; Research Design Development

Readings: Berg, "Interviewing Techniques", "Unobtrusive Measures in Research", "Historiography and Oral Traditions", "Case Studies", and "An Introduction to Content Analysis"
Neuendorf, "Defining Content Analysis", "Beyond Description: An Integrative Model of Content Analysis"

Friday, May 19

Topic: Conservation Subdivisions -- The Case of Spring Island, SC

FIELD TRIP TO SPRING ISLAND, SC. Details discussed in class. Please allow from 7am until 2pm for this experience. Some students may wish to conduct additional field work that afternoon...

Hosts: Dr. Chris Marsh, Lowcountry Institute
Nancy Shilling, Friends of the Rivers

Saturday, May 20

Suggestion: Possible Fieldwork Date

Sunday, May 21

Suggestion: Possible Fieldwork Date

Monday, May 22

Topics: Regional Efforts and the Politics of Planning

Special Guest: Dan Pennick, County of Charleston Planning Director (9-10:30)

Readings: Neuendorf, "Message Units and Sampling", "Variables and Predictions", "Measurement Techniques", "Reliability", and "Results and Reporting"

In Class: Content Analysis Scheme Development

Tuesday, May 23

Topic: This Capstone and Your Future

Readings: Peters, Chapters "This Book Can Help," "What is Graduate School Like?," "Do You Need to Go?," "Should You Work First?," "Choosing a School: the Thesis Adviser," "Choosing a School: Secondary Aspects," "The Masters Degree: History and Hurdles," "The Doctorate: History and Hurdles," "Managing Yourself," "The Thesis Topic: Finding It," "The Thesis Proposal," "Oral Presentations: The Key to Being a Star," "The Social Milieu," and "Bringing It All Together: The Job"

In Class: Conservation and Private Neighborhoods Literature Discussion and Outline of Paper Development.

Wednesday, May 24

Topic: Community Association Discussion.

Host: Christopher Morgan, City of Charleston Interim Planning Director (10:30-12)

DUE In Class: Annotated Bibliographies

Thursday, May 25

Topic: Sustainable Development -- The Case of Dewees Island, SC

FIELD TRIP TO DEWEES ISLAND, SC. Details discussed in class. Please allow from 7am until 1pm for this experience. Some students may wish to conduct additional field work that afternoon... There will be a \$12 cost for this field experience.

Host: John Knott, The Noisette Company

Friday, May 26

Topic: Conservation Easements -- The Case of the Lowcountry Open Land Trust (LOLT) and Selkirk Plantation, Wadmalaw Island, SC

FIELD TRIP TO SELKIRK PLANTATION, WADMALAW ISLAND, SC. Details discussed in class. Please allow from 8am until 12:15 for this experience. Some students may wish to conduct additional field work that afternoon...

Hosts: Lisa Wilson, Anna Nygaard, and Lewis Hay, LOLT

Saturday, May 27

Suggestion: Field Work or Literature Review Drafts

Sunday, May 28

Suggestion: Field Work or Literature Review Drafts

Monday, May 29

MEMORIAL DAY HOLIDAY

Tuesday, May 30

RESEARCH TEAM COLLABORATION AND WORKSHOP – *Final* Field Work Opportunity.

Wednesday, May 31

POSTER AND PAPER WORKSHOP

All draft literature reviews should be completed. Bring electronic versions to class.

All photo documentation, site assessments, and content analysis of Community Covenants and Restrictions/Local Press should be completed and perfected. Bring all raw data and draft results to class (in electronic form).

Thursday, June 1

POSTER SESSION AND NEXT STEPS...