

# Lewis-Clark State College

## SS 499: Seminar in Social Science and History

### Course Information:

Modality: Hybrid (mix of Zoom and in-person classes)

Room: Activity Center West, 134

Day: Fridays 9:00AM-11:30AM

Instructor: Dr. Britzman

Email: [kjbritzman@lcsc.edu](mailto:kjbritzman@lcsc.edu) | Office: 306 Spalding Hall

Virtual office hours: Wednesdays 1:30PM-2:30PM or by appointment

### Course Description & Objectives:

In this interdisciplinary capstone seminar, students will use skills and knowledge developed during their undergraduate tenure to explore a central topic through a variety of social science disciplinary lenses. Prerequisites: : [POLS-200/PHIL-200](#), and [HIST-200](#) or [SS-385](#); and completion of at least 60 credits.

Sociologist Thomas Schmid wrote “A capstone course, by definition and metaphor, is the culmination of an educational career. In an ideal, fully integrated...curriculum, a capstone course would bring to fruition years of disciplined study and practice, offering every student the opportunities to synthesize prior knowledge [and] engage in free-flowing...discourse” (1993).

This is an integrative capstone course that will culminate your experience within the social science program. In this class, students will bring together their prior knowledge and practice to explore a current issue in society. This year’s topic will be polarization.

Americans often appear to be more divided than at any time since the Civil War. In this course, we will use different disciplinary lenses (anthropology, history, political science, and sociology) to examine the nature and roots of economic, racial, political, and social polarization.

Given the seminar style of the class, attendance and participation are crucial for student success.

The objectives of the course are for students to:

- Formulate questions, engage in systematic literature searches, evaluate previous studies, and critically analyze and interpret texts
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of different social science approaches and varying definitions of polarization
- Apply disciplinary approach to an analysis of a particular issue/time period related to our class theme
- Reflect on how previous coursework has contributed to their intellectual development and/or post-graduation plans
- Create a Google Drive portfolio to distribute to social science faculty members

- Develop a professional resume/CV
- Become familiar with possible positions of employment and/or graduate school opportunities

### Required Texts/Course Materials:

There are no required textbooks for this class. Instructions on what to prepare for each class session (such as readings) will be announced in class and on Canvas prior to each class session.

### Assignments and Grading:

#### Assignments

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>% of grade</b>	<b>Due date</b>
<i>Attendance and engagement</i>	20%	Ongoing
<i>Schedule builder</i>	2.5%	Week 2: January 28
<i>Topic proposal</i>	2.5%	Week 5: February 18
<i>Preliminary bibliography</i>	5%	Week 7: March 4
<i>Portfolio</i>	15%	Finals week: May 11
Annotated bibliography	10%	Week 10: March 25
CV/resume	5%	Week 13: April 22
Peer review	5%	Week 14: April 29
Reflection	10%	Finals week: May 11
Final paper	15%	Week 15: May 6
<i>Research symposium panel</i>	10%	Week 15: May 6

#### Grading Scale

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	92.50 - 100
A-	89.50 - 92.49
B+	87.50 - 89.49
B	82.50 - 87.49
B-	79.50 - 82.49
C+	77.50 - 79.49
C	72.50 - 77.49
C-	69.50 - 72.49
D+	67.50 - 69.49
D	62.50 - 67.49
D-	59.50 - 62.49
F	59.49 or lower

## Course Policies:

### 1. Late Work

In order to be successful in this course, it is necessary to attend class regularly, keep up with the assigned readings, and turn in all work on time. I recognize that life happens, and I ask that you notify me at least **24 hours before the due date** to discuss a deadline extension. Barring such an agreement, late work will be assessed a penalty of ten percentage points per day for each day past the due date. In general, you should plan ahead so that you will be able to meet class requirements and deadlines even if you have computer troubles, are sick, or are out of town in the days before an assignment is due.

### 2. Academic Integrity

University standards for academic integrity apply in this class. Any form of plagiarism or cheating will not be tolerated. When you hand in an assignment, make sure everything in it is your own work and that you have made the appropriate references where necessary. You are expected to know and understand the college's policies on this matter. If you have questions about these standards, please consult the student code of conduct on academic integrity (<http://www.lcsc.edu/student-affairs/student-code-of-conduct/prohibited-conduct/>).

We will discuss guidelines for written work in more detail in class, but when in doubt, do not hesitate to ask for clarification. The LCSC Writing Center (Library, room 172) is also a good resource for students who have questions about writing or would like assistance with their writing assignments. Full information about their services is provided at their website (<http://www.lcsc.edu/writing-center>).

### 3. Course Website

Our course website is Canvas. You will find the syllabus, additional course readings, assignment information, announcements, and your grades on the Canvas webpage.

### 4. Office Hours

If you have any questions about course policies, about the material covered in lectures or readings, or about social sciences in general, I encourage you to contact me. Monday through Friday I will always try to answer emails within 24 hours. I also encourage you to visit virtual office hours. If you have class or work conflicts at these times, let me know and we can set up an appointment (virtual or in person). I want to help you do well in this course, so please do not hesitate to ask me questions and be in touch.

### 5. Classroom Environment

Diverse backgrounds and experiences are essential to the critical thinking endeavor at the core of university education. I view the diverse backgrounds and experiences of our class as a resource, strength, and benefit. I expect you to feel challenged and sometimes outside of your comfort zone in this course, but it is my intent to present materials and activities that are inclusive and respectful of all persons, no matter their gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, citizenship and immigration status, veteran status, race, ethnicity, religious and political beliefs, and other background characteristics. Please talk with me right away if you experience disrespect in this class, and I will work to address it in an educational manner.

## 6. Accessibility and the Counseling Center

Students with learning disabilities will be accommodated in accordance with university guidelines. Additionally, if you are in need of counseling services please reach out the LCSC Student Counseling Center (Sam Glenn Complex, room 212; phone 208-792-2211).

## 7. Expectations for Virtual Classroom Sessions

This class be a mix of in-person and virtual remote sessions. In attending our virtual class sessions, you are agreeing to abide by the following basic norms of behavior, which are aimed at providing a productive learning environment for all students:

- **Join class sessions on time, and do not leave early for arbitrary reasons.** If you know that you need to leave a class session early one day for a legitimate reason, let me know before class (via email), but this should not be a regular occurrence.
- **Familiarize yourself with the various controls on Zoom** (muting and unmuting your mic, raising your hand, etc.) **so that you can actively participate in discussions.**
- **Strongly consider turning on your camera for our class sessions**, especially in breakout rooms and during full-class discussions. Zoom is admittedly awkward in various ways, but as humans, we've evolved to rely on visual cues in our communication, so doing our best to enable that kind of normal expression in our virtual class sessions will help them be more interactive and, in turn, effective.
- **Address your fellow classmates respectfully**, whether or not you agree with them.
- **Just as you would in a physical classroom, limit your distractions by turning off your cell phone and only having Zoom/Canvas open on your computer during our class sessions.** You may think you can multi-task well, but research demonstrates that none of us are very good at it. You are not encoding and retaining information if you are texting/typing while I'm lecturing or while we're engaging in a discussion. Along these same lines, if there is something you want to google, make a note of it to do after class.

**Bottom line:** Be engaged in the present moment and be considerate of your fellow classmates. It's a way of being that will serve you well in a variety of professional and personal settings throughout your life.

## Course Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class topic</b>	<b>Assignment due</b>
<b>Week 1</b>		
January 21	Syllabus review / introduction to class	
<b>Week 2</b>		
January 28	Political philosophy	Schedule builder
<b>Week 3</b>		
February 4	Theoretical approach - history	
<b>Week 4</b>		
February 11	Theoretical approach – social sciences	
<b>Week 5</b>		
February 18	Anthropology	Topic proposal
<b>Week 6</b>		
February 25	Sociology	
<b>Week 7</b>		
March 4	Check-in class session	Preliminary bibliography
<b>Week 8</b>		
March 11	Political science (international politics)	
<b>Week 9</b>		
March 18	Political science (U.S. politics)	
<b>Week 10</b>		
March 25	History	Annotated bibliography
SPRING BREAK (March 28-April 1)		
<b>Week 11</b>		
April 8	No class session	
<b>Week 12</b>		
April 15	Professional development session with Erin Cassetto	
<b>Week 13</b>		
April 22	Check-in class session	CV/resume
<b>Week 14</b>		
April 29	Peer review session	
<b>Week 15</b>		
May 6	Research symposium/panel discussion	Final paper

\*Final version of portfolio (with completed documents) due Wednesday May 11\*