

# Introduction to Politics / POL 110 (section A500)

**FALL 2024 / 7-week semester**

**Borough of Manhattan Community College - City University of New York**

**Prof. Arto Artinian, Ph.D.**

**Location:** Fiterman, Rm. 605

**Class meeting Time:** Monday/Wednesdays, 12:30-1:45pm

**Office Hours:**

- ONLINE: *Tuesday, 12-2 pm.*
- Link to Zoom for virtual office hours (this link will also be posted on our Blackboard class page):  
<https://bmcc-cuny.zoom.us/j/97136018181?pwd=MTJqbXRjY2xoTXFjVWVVRNGxodjBPuT09>  
Meeting ID: 971 3601 8181  
Passcode: 314838
- IN PERSON office hours: *Monday, 2-3pm*, Rm. N651, Main Building

**Email:** aartinian@bmcc.cuny.edu

## 1. Overview

This course introduces you to the systematic study of politics. There is a great deal more to politics than elections and politicians. Our readings and conversations will focus on fundamental political concepts such as power, ideology, race, class, gender, various psychological mechanisms, and the state. We will carefully study various classic readings from Aristotle through Marx, W.E.B. DuBois, to Frantz Fanon, and Audre Lorde, Simone de Beauvoir, and Freud. We will study the interplay of the above political concepts in events such as the debates of the Black Freedom

Movement, anti-colonial struggles, the ongoing controversy over the surveillance of electronic communications, and other pertinent topics of contemporary politics.

## 2. Required Texts

**There are no books that need to be purchased for this class. All required readings will be distributed via our class website on the BMCC OpenLab platform.**

**You can access our class website here:** <https://openlab.bmcc.cuny.edu/pol-110-a500-fall-2024-7-week-semester/>

## 3. Course requirements

### 3.1 Assignments and Evaluation

Your writing assignments and overall evaluation in this class will include reading responses, quizzes, and an exam. All assignments, exams and the quiz will be announced and placed on our Blackboard site.

\* **First Exam** — 40% of final course grade

\* **Second Exam** - 40%

\* **Study Questions homework assignments** - 20%

### 3.2 Exams

We will have two exams, worth a total of 80% of the final grade. The exams are take-home, open-book. The first exam can be rewritten for a higher grade. Both exams will be announced, distributed and submitted on our Blackboard page. **Note: failing both exams means automatically failing the course for the semester**

### 3.4 Study Questions Homework Assignments

Throughout the semester, you will be asked to write short papers summarizing important concepts that were discussed in previous classes and in assigned readings. These assignments are to be completed at home, typed, and handed in at a specific date. The papers will not be graded, but if you submit them, you will receive credit. No late submissions will be accepted for any reason. (20% of final grade)

## Course Goals

Students in this course will use a range of sources and methods to interpret and analyze political affairs; define and discuss key political concepts, using them to make judgments about political questions; compare contexts and eras, constructing plausible generalizations; and discuss, compare, contrast, and evaluate political arguments. The assignments you complete will reflect your progress toward these goals, and will allow you to progress toward BMCC's general education goals in the areas of communications skills, social and behavioral sciences, arts and humanities, and values.

### Single Stop

[www.bmcc.cuny.edu/singlestop](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/singlestop), room S230, 212-220-8195, [singlestop@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:singlestop@bmcc.cuny.edu). If you are having problems with food or housing insecurity, finances, health insurance or anything else that might get in the way of your studies at BMCC, come by the Single Stop Office for advice and assistance. Assistance is also available through the Office of Student Affairs, S350, 212-220-8130, [studentaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:studentaffairs@bmcc.cuny.edu).

### Counseling Center

[www.bmcc.cuny.edu/counseling](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/counseling), room S343, 212-220-8140, [counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:counselingcenter@bmcc.cuny.edu).

Counselors assist students in addressing psychological and adjustment issues (i.e., depression, anxiety, and relationships) and can help with stress, time management and more. Counselors are available for walk-in visits.

### Office of Compliance and Diversity

<https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/about-bmcc/compliance-diversity>, room S701, 212-220-1236. BMCC is committed to promoting a diverse and inclusive learning environment free of unlawful discrimination/harassment, including sexual harassment, where all students are treated fairly. For information about BMCC's policies and resources, or to request additional assistance in this area, please visit or call the

office, or email [olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:olevy@bmcc.cuny.edu), or [twade@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:twade@bmcc.cuny.edu).

If you need immediate assistance, please contact BMCC Public safety at 212-220-8080.

## Office of Accessibility

[www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/accessibility), room N360 (accessible entrance: 77 Harrison Street), 212-220-8180, [accessibility@bmcc.cuny.edu](mailto:accessibility@bmcc.cuny.edu). This office collaborates with students who have documented disabilities, to coordinate support services, reasonable accommodations, and programs that enable equal access to education and college life. To request an accommodation due to a documented disability, please visit, call the office or email.

## BMCC Policy on Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Statement

Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's ideas, words or artistic, scientific, or technical work as one's own creation. Using the idea or work of another is permissible only when the original author is identified.

Paraphrasing and summarizing, as well as direct quotations, require citations to the original source. Plagiarism may be intentional or unintentional. Lack of dishonest intent does not necessarily absolve a student of responsibility for plagiarism. Students who are unsure how and when to provide documentation are advised to consult with their instructors. The library has guides designed to help students to appropriately identify a cited work. The full policy can be found on BMCC's Web site, [www.bmcc.cuny.edu](http://www.bmcc.cuny.edu). For further information on integrity and behavior, please consult the college bulletin (also available online).

## College Attendance Policy

At BMCC, the maximum number of absences is limited to one more hour than the number of hours a class meets in one week. For example, you may be enrolled in a six-hour class. In that class, you would be allowed 7 hours of absence (not class days). In the

case of excessive absences, the instructor has the option to lower the grade or assign an F or WU grade.

## Gender-Inclusivity

BMCC community members have the right to use and be referred to according to their preferred name, title, and/or personal pronouns. Everyone also has the right to use all spaces according to their self-identification, including restrooms and locker rooms. To learn more about how to change your preferred name and affirm your gender identity at CUNY (including requesting a new ID card and/or email address), go here: <https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/student-affairs/lgbtq/>

Anyone who has experienced harassment related to gender or sexual identification, who needs assistance, or who wishes to file a complaint, can contact the Office of Compliance and Diversity: <https://www.bmcc.cuny.edu/about-bmcc/compliance-diversity/>.

## 6. Overview of Topics for Discussion and Readings

Note: the topics and readings below are subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Exact topics and authors to be listed are found on our class website.

### Mapping out politics in everyday life:

- Work, exploitation, class, gender, race, power
- Theories of Power
- Political organization and hierarchy
- Education, Culture and Ideology

## Focus: Surveillance, Power, Privacy, and Democracy

- Surveillance in daily life
- Privacy: is privacy possible in the age of the internet, and its relationship with questions of democracy and freedom?
- The Police: origins and controversies. How can we analyze the police politically?
- Where did IDs come from? What are the politics behind it?

## Focus: Racism as a political factor: Civil Rights and Policing

- Origins of racism as a theory and political practice
- Effects of racist politics
- Anti-racist struggles
- Intersectionality:

## Some of the authors we will (and may) read during the semester include:

- Aristotle
- \* Machiavelli, Kant
- Karl Marx, Max Weber
- Antonio Gramsci, Frantz Fanon
- Louis Althusser, Michel Foucault, Giorgio Agamben
- \* Sigmund Freud
- W.B.E. DuBois, Patricia Hill Collins, Audre Lorde

- Malcolm X, Martin Luther King Jr. , the Black Panther Party, the Deacons for Defense
- Simone de Beauvoir