



Hope College

Department of Political Science

PORTFOLIO AND EXIT CONVERSATION

1. The portfolio should consist of your work in political science or political science-related fields on issues that have cumulated through out your experience in the department. This should include required papers, take-home examinations, videos, and work done in internship settings. This portfolio should be a display of your effort to increase your understanding of the discipline as you work toward a Political Science degree undertaken in a variety of settings and done across a period of time.
2. Along with your work, you should include a brief self-assessment about the growth that you have experienced during your time at Hope College and your plans upon leaving Hope (that is, where you were as a Freshman, how far you have come, and what you intend to do in the future).
3. Your portfolio should also include a professional resume, which could be used in a job search.
4. *Please note that the portfolio **must** be turned in to the Political Science office **at least** a day or two prior to the conversation, so that faculty may review it.*
5. In addition to a discussion of certain materials within your portfolio, the portfolio discussion will cover three major areas of your core requirement:
 - a. National Government/Introduction to Political Institutions and Politics,
 - b. Scope and Methods (Introduction to Political Science), and
 - c. International Relations.

It is imperative that you use the conversation question sheet provided for each class, as a way to prepare for the discussion!

6. Students are **STRONGLY ADVISED** to take their Capstone Seminar (Senior Seminar for political science majors) in their senior year at Hope. Allowing for special exceptions, **NO** student should be taking the Capstone Seminar when the student in question has not completed National Government/Introduction to Political Institutions (CLEPping out of National Government constitutes having taken the course), Scope and Methods (Introduction to Political Science), and International Relations.
7. Although there are exceptions, most Washington Honors Semester students who are juniors would be better prepared for this experience were they to take their Senior Seminar once they return to campus. Those junior majors wanting to take a core requirement while in Washington, DC might better consider the all-school seminar with a focus on Values and Politics. The all-school Senior Seminar will be offered by all professors taking the program to Washington, D.C.

DOs AND DON'Ts

DO remember that the portfolio and exit conversation are trying to prepare you for the future. You're not a Freshman anymore. Even though the faculty strives for a comfortable environment, they still expect and demand that you take this exercise seriously and professionally.

DO prepare for the exit conversation. The professor will not be expecting Ph.D. quality answers, but will expect you to have a complete and thorough explanation or insight of what you have learned throughout the years. Remember, the professor doesn't need to know your entire career at Hope!

DO make sure that your portfolio is not just a folder with papers crammed into it. This is not high school. Even though appearance is not the point of the portfolio, professionalism is. Take the time to organize your papers. Presentation can be everything. However, don't get too frilly. Your portfolio should not look like a kindergarten lunch box.

DON'T let yourself get carried away during the exit conversation. The professors all have a Ph.D. So if you don't know precisely, don't guess. Quit while you are still ahead!

DON'T be too timid. Remember the professors just want to know what you know. The insights that you can offer will only help your cause. Be bold, but accurate.

DON'T forget to relax and have fun. This exit conversation is suppose to prepare you for future interviews, but it's not an interrogation.

REMEMBER you can only hurt yourself by being unprepared or unorganized.

Finally...

KEEP IN MIND it's not so much what you know, but what you *understand* that counts.

Portfolio Check-List

This check-list is to provide you with an idea of what your portfolio should consist of. The list below should be used at your discretion.

_____ **Binder or folder.**

Some kind of organizer that will allow you to present your material clearly and professionally.

_____ **A table of contents.** (optional)

_____ **Page dividers.** (optional)

Dividers may complement the table of contents. It will allow you or the interviewers to gain easy access to your material.

_____ **Professional Resume.**

The resume should be complete and professional. There is a sample resume within this packet. Please feel free to replicate the format.

_____ **Introduction page(s).**

Write a brief summary of your Political Science career at Hope College. Give insight as to how your political science education has grown from your Freshman year to the present. How has the department courses applied to your academic future? Where do you see yourself in the future and how do you plan on getting there? Has Hope College prepared you for the future? Your future does not have to be planned like a time-line, however, the faculty would like to have an idea of what you think you have learned throughout the years. Any insight that you have to offer in regards to your academic career will be beneficial to you and the department faculty.

_____ **Presentation Material.**

A collection of papers, essays, projects, etc. that you have cumulated throughout your political science career at Hope. The material should include anything that you feel will demonstrate your proficiency in political science.

** The grades that you received for each paper do NOT have to be given. Since the portfolio consists of work gathered throughout the years, photocopies and printouts will be acceptable.

Summary
Essays for National Government
Fall Version 2006

This is a list of questions that an upper class Political Science major should be able to address before they graduate. With the exception of the questions that are asterisked, these questions are all dealt with in your textbook. Each national government instructor focuses on these areas to a different degree. Particularly for those students who want to be politically "literate" or to major or minor in political science reflection on these issues will prove valuable.

1. The Presidency: U.S. Presidents are expected to lead. What factors make it more or less difficult to perform leadership functions. How might war powers, spending powers, informal powers (symbolic and moral leadership, e.g.), and other powers illustrate the ambiguous nature of presidential power? What makes a president great? What role does personality or character play in achieving Presidential success? Does greatness depend on the events and/or time period during which a president occupies the Oval Office, as others contend? Are additional factors involved? What do you think? Cite several examples of great and not so great presidents and suggest the reasons for why their presidencies were successful or unsuccessful.

2. Congress: The 1990s were a turbulent and revitalizing period for Congress. Yet power has ebbed and flowed within this institution several times during the 20th Century. How has Congress changed since 1994? How did this change compare with other changes that have taken place during the 20th century? For example, discuss the changing amounts of power held by the Speaker and/or Leadership of the House and the Senate vs. the power of ordinary Representatives, Senators or Committee Chairs.

3. The Constitution: The framers of the Constitution not only separated executive, legislative and judicial powers, but also inter-mingled their powers through the check and balance system. How has separation of powers and checks and balances worked in the area of executive and legislative relations? Use the area of spending, war powers, treaty powers vs. the area of executive agreements and other powers to illustrate these points of conflict and cooperation. Why was a new Constitution needed in 1787? What problems did it try to resolve? Who were the federalists and anti-federalists? What concerns did each stress in the effort to ratify the new constitution? Are many of the founders concerns still important today? What do critics of the founders have to say about the American founding? What tensions currently exist in the constitution between rule by a majority and minority rights?

4. Judiciary: The Supreme Court is supposedly a neutral arbiter of questions that arise of a Constitutional nature within our political system. Its power to declare acts unconstitutional makes it a major player in the political system and yet the granting of this power to the court can be found nowhere in the Constitution. How then did the Court come to have this power? What are the sorts of public policy changes the court has implemented using this power? Do you think that the Court is truly a neutral arbiter, or is it a politicized institution supporting first one side and then the other side of the political debate? Give examples to explain your position. Should the Court be influenced by

politics? Why or why not? What access points or "political stages" are available for interested parties to try to influence the Supreme Court through politics?

5. The Political System: You are a consultant to a third world nation who has been requested to help construct a democratic form of government for this country. The basic alternatives that you intend to discuss with this country's leadership include a parliamentary form of government and a government where separated powers check and balance one another. You know that each has certain strengths and weaknesses. What characteristics will you tell them distinguish your own government from other governments, and, in particular, from the governments of Parliamentary systems? Which of these characteristics would you advise should be transferred to this new nation and why? Would the things you decide to transfer work in this new environment or not? Are there extra-institutional conditions that have been present in your country during its first two hundred years that have made your own government function as well as it has?

6. Parties: Why are parties important in a democracy? What functions do they serve? Are our parties declining or increasing in importance? Explain your answer by giving factors that are contributing to their decline or to their rebirth. What is the importance of ideological perspectives in American politics? Would you say that U.S. Democratic and Republican parties are made up of liberals or conservatives or does a more complex mix exist? How do ideological divisions within our two major political parties influence campaign strategies and electoral outcomes? Are these divisions widening or narrowing?

7. Interest Groups: Can't interest groups fulfill the functions of political parties? Explain, giving special importance to comparisons and contrasts between interest groups and parties.

8. Campaigns and Elections: The late folk humorist Will Rogers once noted that money is the "mother's milk" of American politics. How important is money for parties and interest groups in American national elections? Who gives money? To whom? For what purpose? Have reforms been attempted before? Are new reforms needed? What other problems exist in the American system of campaigns and elections? Discuss possible reforms you would support and why. Assess the media's role in modern campaigns and the degree to which they have displaced political parties in the electoral process.

9. Ideology: The six ideological perspectives discussed in your text each provide diverse lenses through which to view your political system. What insight does each provide that is distinctive to itself? For example, what is there about libertarianism that distinguishes it from every other perspective? What emphasis or insight does Marxism or feminism provide? Take a policy area of your own choosing. Demonstrate how each of at least two of the major perspectives and one minor perspective might shed light on this policy area that the other two perspectives do not provide.

10. Bureaucracy: The federal bureaucracy has been a much-maligned institution. Is that justified? First define bureaucracy. Explain what its major functions are as part of your definition. Give examples of some of the major criticisms and complaints that have been made about bureaucracy, from both a citizen's and professional's point of view. What unique problems do bureaucratic institutions present for democratic government? What changes have been suggested for the purpose of streamlining bureaucracy in recent years? Is bureaucracy just a scapegoat for current popular frustration with government or does it deserve the bad rap that we give it? Is there nothing good that

has happened in areas such as environmental protection, Social Security, or Emergency Relief that might be attributable to a combination of well-meaningness and efficiency on our federal bureaucracy's part? Explain your answer.

11. Women and Minorities: Do you think that the laws and the manner in which they have been implemented are fair to women/minorities? How does the United States compare with other advanced countries with reference to the political status of its women and or minorities? Discuss the efforts of women and/or minorities to gain increased civil rights during the 20th century. Have these two categories of citizens improved or lessened their rights in the 20th century? Explain.

12. Media: Some have referred to the media as an unaccountable fourth branch of government. What role do you see the media playing in American political and social life? What checks currently exist on the media? Should there be more? Some maintain that the media is biased. Do you agree or disagree? Explain why you think the media is either biased or unbiased?

13. Religion: What role has religion played in American political history? What does our Constitution have to say about Religion? Compare and contrast our own political history vis à vis this topic with the role of Religion in countries you have studied in Comparative politics. Does the attempt to merge religious conviction with political life have similar outcomes regardless of what religion is being talked about?

14. Foreign Policy: Imagine that you have been appointed Secretary of State for the U.S. What kind of foreign policy initiatives would you develop? Utilize your exposure to American Foreign policy in national government and International Relations to develop a set of criteria you might use to make such decisions. What do you know about the history of American Foreign Policy that might make it more difficult for the American Foreign Policy community to gain a consensus for what those criteria should be, and what forms involvement should take? Utilize several different contemporary illustrations to indicate how you might explain decisions in a way that was convincing to Americas citizens in a post cold war world.

15. During the last two decades the connection between what is happening to the economies of other countries and what is happening in our own economy has become more and more apparent. As the world has become more and more economically interconnected the U.S. both benefits from and in some ways is made more vulnerable to things that happen to other countries economies. The rest of the world is influenced in a similar fashion by our own political and economic behavior. Use several contemporary examples to exemplify this interconnectedness. For example, you might explain how our own policies in regard to our budget deficit impact the Japanese economy. Or, how Japanese trade policies contribute to our balance of payments deficits? Or, how budding industries in third world nations affect American citizens and American businesses? Or, how world trade agreements such as GATT and NAFTA have both help and hurt America's economy or its citizens? Are certain groups of American citizens are benefiting more than others? Are we all benefiting equally? Why? Why not?

Political Science 251
International Relations
Long-Term Learning Objectives
Jack Holmes
Fall 2006 Version

These objectives are what the department expects students to retain over the period of their lifetime learning process. These items are not all that will be covered in unit and final exams. They are the bulk of what will be expected in the oral exercise at the start of the seminar. It is possible that additional knowledge will be expected of students who take the course later than normal in their college career.

1. Students should understand the modernization process as it worked historically in Europe and as it is working today in what is called the Third World. What aspects of the process are hard for Americans to understand? How do other peoples and countries view this process differently? Why did Europe undergo the process first and what parts of the world are having what kinds of problems related to it today? Are we headed to a Pacific Century in the 21st century? What is your personal view of the process and how it will affect International Relations during your lifetime? What choices are facing the U.S. as a country and you as an individual regarding the international political economy? How does the U.S. influence modernization through the policies of international institutions such as the World Bank and IMF?
2. What is the role of the way different peoples think about complex questions of macro problems in the political, military, and economic realms in international relations? How did this affect the most modernized parts of the world through two world wars in this century? How is it affecting relations among European, Asian, and American cultures today? How does it relate to problems between the modernized and modernizing parts of the world today? Is there any chance that ideological differences will be overcome to the point that the peoples of the world might have common points of reference when addressing major global problems? If so, how might the process be expedited? If not, what does it mean for the rest of your lifetime?
3. What are the major problems that have faced international relations in the last half-century? How do they relate to issues of military strategy and how do they relate to issues of the global political economy? Your goal in answering this question is not to see how many details you can remember, but how intelligently you can talk of some of the macro issues of military strategy and the global political economy. What has the breakup of the former Soviet Union and other empires before it done to the overall international system? How could one argue at the time you retire from your work career in about five decades that the most important event of the 1960s was not Vietnam or civil rights, but rather the start of a trend of creating several countries from empires that have fallen? What are the good and the bad sides of such a trend?
4. What are some of the most important considerations that a nation must keep in mind as it formulates and executes its foreign policy? Which country were you in the diplomatic games? How did that affect the way that you needed to think in order to do your work as a diplomat? What do you

believe are the most important problems that the world must solve in coming decades? Do you believe that the student diplomats in the diplomatic games were more or less able to solve problems than would have been professional diplomats? Is simulation a better way of teaching than lecture? Is it even possible for American students to think as foreign diplomats? How do actions of individuals get reflected in foreign policy?

5. What are International Law, International Organizations, and International Systems? Why are they important? How could one call this the peace unit of International Relations? How can one argue that this unit was about building institutions at the international level while modernization is building them at the national level? Is there any real chance that the United Nations might evolve into a world government of sorts? Could International Law become strong enough to overcome the need to fight wars? Is there any chance that International Systems will create an informal structure that might avoid war?

6. What is the argument between realists and structuralists? How do people disagree over whether to view international relations from a long or short-term perspective? Do you see it as helpful or harmful to see so many new countries in international relations?

7. How does what individuals do relate to international relations? Why might it be impossible to impose an order from above even if most leaders thought that this was a good idea? How, if at all, will the concepts you learned in International Relations impact upon you as progress through your career?

8. International Relations probably is the one college course which is taught in the most different ways. Do you have any ideas as how you might approach it? What questions might you add to this list?

9. Pick a country that you studied in detail in your comparative government course and focus on one or two issues of particular interest to that country. Note the human, economic, and social ramifications of the problem.

10. What are the different major viewpoints regarding the modernization process in political and economic terms? How do these viewpoints affect policies and people on various levels? Where do disadvantaged groups such as women and the poor fit into the process? Are the rich getting richer and the poor poorer? What might be done to improve the situation?

11. What are the comparative contributions of each of the five units of this class to your understanding of international relations?

Introduction to Political Science (Scope and Methods)
Important Questions
Fall 2006 Version

1. What are the most important approaches that can be taken to the study of political science? How and why do political scientists disagree about these approaches?
2. What is the scientific method? How would you use it to formulate a research agenda and test some of its major points?
3. What are the advantages and disadvantages of using computers for research?
4. How do you go about finding sources in the library? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the various types of sources you might find? Be sure to talk about Internet sources.
5. If you are going to test for statistical relationships, what are some of the different tests that you might use and why? Where would you find information on these and why is such information important?
6. What are the skills that you would look for when hiring a research assistant for a job?