

**PLS 395:  
INDEPENDENT STUDY  
SPECIAL TOPICS IN THE POLITICS OF THE GLOBAL SOUTH**

Nazarbayev University

Summer 2021

**BASIC INFORMATION**

**Professor:** Karol Czuba

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**OUTLINE**

The course is designed for students who have excelled in PLS 341 (Politics of Development) and/or PLS 343 (Politics of Sub-Saharan Africa) and wish to expand the knowledge of the topics covered in those courses as well as to continue developing their ability to conduct independent research. To this end, students enrolled in the course will undertake two projects. The first project will involve a review of the major scholarly works on either the politics of development or African politics that have been published in recent years. In this project, students will build on the knowledge of the classic literature on these topics that they have acquired in prior courses and develop a broad understanding of the current state of the art in relevant scholarship in Political Science and adjacent disciplines. In the second project, students will conduct an in-depth investigation of an important political phenomenon that has thus far attracted limited scholarly attention; given the relative paucity of scholarship on the subject, the project will require that students identify and analyze non-scholarly sources such as media articles and non-governmental organization reports. In contrast to the first project, involving a synthesis of existing scholarship, the second project will thus provide an opportunity for students to make their own contribution to the study of the politics of the Global South.

**OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

The course has two primary objectives. First, students will develop a broad understanding, rooted in the knowledge of earlier scholarship acquired in prior courses, of the major foci, perspectives, and trends in the scholarly literature on the politics of development or African politics. Second, they will conduct desk research on a topic located at the cutting edge of the study of the politics of the Global South and thus make a scholarly contribution of their own.

## ASSESSMENT

### OVERVIEW

#### Grading scheme

Literature review	50%
Desk research	50%

#### Submission deadlines

Literature review	June 30
Desk research	July 30

## PREREQUISITES

An A or A- grade in either PLS 341 or PLS 343.

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

#### Research support

University librarians are available to help you locate appropriate scholarly sources, learn to use reference management software, and perform other foundational research tasks. You can schedule an appointment with a librarian here: <https://nu-kz.libcal.com/appointments/>. Alternatively, you can reach out directly to April Manabat, the subject librarian for Political Science; her email address is [april.manabat@nu.edu.kz](mailto:april.manabat@nu.edu.kz).

#### Assignment formatting

All assignments should be double-spaced with one-inch margins in Times New Roman 12-point font. All citations should follow the American Political Science Association Style Manual (<https://connect.apsanet.org/stylemanual/>).

#### Assignment submission

You will submit all assignments on Moodle. Every assignment should be submitted by 11.59 pm on the day that assignment is due.

I strongly advise you to keep rough and draft work *and* final copies of all of your assignments. You should keep all assignments until the marked assignments have been returned to you and the grades have been posted.

#### Assignment return

I will grade and return all assignments submitted on time no later than two weeks after submission.

### **Grade appeals**

If you wish to appeal your grade for any assignment, you should approach me no earlier than 72 hours and no later than two weeks after that assignment was returned to you. To appeal the grade, please submit a 150–200-word written explanation of why you wish to have the grade reviewed to me. I will decide whether or not to review the grade based on the strength of your argument. If I decide to review the grade, I may keep the grade that you originally received, reduce it, or increase it.

### **Grading scale**

A	95-100%
A-	90-94%
B+	85-89%
B	80-84%
B-	75-79%
C+	70-74%
C	65-69%
C-	60-64%
D	55-59%
D-	50-54%
F	0-49 %

## **POLICIES**

### **Academic misconduct**

Academic misconduct is defined broadly, to include a wide variety of behaviors that conflict with the values and mission of NU. Students should become familiar with the NU Student Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (Student Code), which is the official document outlining policies and procedures around academic misconduct at NU. Students are responsible for complying with NU policies, as well as those described in the syllabus for an individual class, whether the student has read them or not.

### **Copyright and data protections**

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