

**Introduction to Politics
Fordham University**

Spring 2025

Prof. Mark Schneider

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Class Location: Faber Hall 668

Section 1 (POSC-1100-R02): Tuesdays and Fridays, 10AM -11-15 AM

Section 2 (POSC-1100-R03): Tuesdays and Fridays, 10AM 11:30AM -12:45PM

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1:30 – 230 PM and by appointment

Course Description

Aim of the Course

This course will introduce you to the different approaches political scientists bring to studying politics with a focus on democracy. We will be dealing with questions such as: what does it mean to say a country is democratic? Why are some countries democratic while others are authoritarian? Why do some countries maintain liberal democracies while others see backsliding? How do elections incentivize ethnic and other divisions? How does democracy work differently in different contexts around the world? We will learn about the different ways political scientists have responded to these questions (using qualitative research, surveys, experiments, and other methods) and how and why they disagree about what the correct answers are. We will also learn to read carefully (see the guide at the end of this syllabus), engage political science questions carefully with attention to logic and evidence (more than based on our personal opinions or what's in the news although we will discuss this in class).

Basic Rules

In-Class: You are expected to be present every session and to participate in class discussions and partner/group activities. You should make sure that you come to class having read all the readings for each day, and you should participate actively in our conversation about those readings. To help you digest the readings, I provide a reading worksheet at the end of this syllabus. I encourage you to copy and fill in this worksheet for each of the 1-2 main readings assigned each class. While taking notes on laptops is fine, I will ask you to refrain from using your phones or using your computers for anything other unrelated to note taking or class activities (e.g., social media, messaging, etc.).

To create an atmosphere in which all students feel comfortable participating and have the ability to achieve their full potential, civility during the discussions is vital. During our conversations we will inevitably come to talk about day-to-day politics as it related to course themes, and it is very much possible that you will find yourself disagreeing with points put forward by your fellow students (and, they with you!). While you should absolutely feel free to challenge other students, it is crucial that you do so in a respectful way (and, of course, you can expect the same of your fellow students towards you). We also are a course on political science, which means that our discussions should focus on concepts, methods, and theory rather than

current events for their own sake. Disciplining ourselves in this way can elevate discussions in a rigorous and insightful way.

Absences: If for some reason you cannot be present for understandable reasons (illness, personal circumstances clearly beyond your control, etc.) you should contact me as soon as you can (if at all possible, before the start of class). In line with Fordham's attendance policy you should report any excused absences with documentation by filling out the Excused Absence Form. I keep attendance and unexcused absences result in a lowering of your participation grade.

Note that Fordham's official attendance policy is that for courses that meet twice a week it is not allowed to have more than four absences in total across the course – while having more than four unexcused absences does not automatically result in failing this course, excessive absences make it very difficult to receive a passing grade.

Covid Policies: As of right now there are no specific Covid policies in place in this course. However, if conditions were to change we may have to adjust. That being said, if you are sick – Covid or otherwise – stay home, let me know, fill out the excused absence form, and get medical care if necessary. If you have any concerns or questions about any of this, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Office Hours

If you have any questions or want to chat about the course, you can come to my office hours on Tuesdays between 1:30 and 2:30 PM (unless otherwise noted). My office is in 667 Faber Hall. You do not need to make an appointment for this time slot - so if you want to chat feel free to drop by! Also, it's fine to stop by if you want to talk about the course more broadly and you don't really have specific questions. Office hours are also a really helpful way to get feedback and questions answered about upcoming exams or assignments, so make sure you use them! If you want to meet but cannot make it during my office hours, send me an e-mail and we will schedule a meeting.

AI and Academic Ethics

AI Use, Plagiarism and Other Violations of Code of Conduct: All assignments in this course fall under Fordham University's code of conduct. Generative AI tools are not permitted in this course for any written assignments. Students must rely on their own originality, creativity and critical thinking skills to complete assignments, complete take-home exams, write papers, and engage with course material. Any violation (including, but not limited to, cheating on exams, relying on AI, and plagiarism) will result in the student being held accountable to the full extent of university guidelines. This includes self-plagiarism – meaning, cases where students re-use material they wrote themselves for other courses.

The research proposal will exist of a 10-to-12-page double-spaced paper engaging a specific puzzle regarding political science in relation to the readings you will read in this course. The goal of this paper is for you to come up with an original research question, a set

of hypotheses derived from this question, and a research design that – if executed – would allow us to test these hypotheses and answer your question. You will not actually execute the proposal, but the goal is to think critically about what methodological approach would allow you to do so if you would – that is, what data you’d have to collect, how you would do so, etc. I will provide more details on this assignment in class in week 3.

On March 4 we will use our class time to begin workshopping your paper ideas. On November 1 you will submit a one-page description of your research proposal on Blackboard: this assignment is not graded but you will receive feedback from me on it. On March 28 you will share a three-page double spaced outline of your planned research proposal with other students – you will read the papers shared with you and will discuss them with the other students in class on April 1. On December April 21 you will share a full draft of your final paper with your group members and you will read and discuss each other’s papers in class on December 23. You will submit your final paper on Blackboard on May 1.

Grading Scale and Calculation of Final Course Grade

For the exams you can earn up to 100 points. Those points subsequently are converted to a letter grade which builds towards your final course grade in line with the scale below. For the paper and your participation, you will receive a single letter grade which follows the point value outlined below.

Exam Points	Letter Grade	Points toward Final Grade
100-93	A	4.0
92-90	A-	3.7
89-87	B+	3.3
86-83	B	3.0
82-80	B-	2.7
79-77	C+	2.3
76-73	C	2.0
72-70	C-	1.7
69-60	D	1.0
59 and below	F	0.0

Grade Complaints: I will grade your performance in comparison both to my general expectations of all participants as well as your fellow classmates' work in this course. It is possible that you may be unhappy with a grade, and I am always willing to discuss your progress during the course to help you improve. If you believe the grade you received is an incorrect assessment of the quality of the work you produced, you can challenge your grade. If you want to do so, please email me to set up an appointment and send me a copy of your work and a written description explaining in detail why you believe your grade does not accurately represent the quality of the work you submitted. We will subsequently discuss your work and I will assess whether I believe your grade should be changed. Before you contact me about your grade(s), consider the following things.

First, the goal of a grade reassessment is to produce a grade that is a fair representation of your performance: this means that any errors that lowered your grade will be corrected, but any potential errors that increased it will also be adjusted. The re-grading process can thus result in a higher grade, the exact same grade, but also of a lower grade than what you received through the original grading process.

Second, a grade challenge means you must make a specific argument about why you think the grading does not reflect the quality of your work. This is a non-negotiable part of a grade challenge: it is not enough to state that you are confused by your grade, or that you feel that it does not reflect the amount of time and effort you put into the course. Both of those feelings can be very frustrating! But they are not arguments for why a grade is not correct, and I will not entertain grading challenges based on these arguments.

Third, as you are assessing your work in comparison to the answer keys or my comments, make sure you do not just look at the things you did right: you also have to incorporate those things you missed or got wrong. For example, if you received an A- for a midterm, it is easy to list a variety of things you got right. But those things are what likely earned you the A-. The point of a grade challenge is to show that I incorrectly withheld points for things you got wrong or failed to discuss (in enough detail).

Fourth, students sometimes try to ‘challenge’ their grade through a roundabout way – effectively having the instructor defend why they graded the work the way they did. Often, those students do not provide arguments for why they disagree with the grade. If you are unsure what you did wrong and you would like me to clarify, I am of course always happy to do so. But I will not engage the ‘roundabout grade challenge’: if you think the grade is incorrect, then you think I made one or more mistakes and you have to identify what I did wrong. If you cannot articulate why you think the grade is wrong, then that might just mean it is in fact a correct assessment of your performance.

Finally, grades are not a negotiation. The correct use of this process is not to look at your different grades at the end of the semester and to try to up one, or multiple, grade(s) with the sole goal of collecting enough points to increase your final letter grade. If you want to ensure you get the highest grade possible I would advise you to spend your time reaching out to me with questions before the exams and paper deadline, and not on trying to haggle about a grade afterwards.

Notes

Fordham generally provides me with a class list that includes your legal name. If you prefer to be addressed by an alternate name and/or gender pronoun, please do not hesitate to let me know. You can do so in class, by email, or during an office hour appointment – whichever you prefer. Also, please correct me if I ever mispronounce your name or use an incorrect gender pronoun!

Fordham’s Writing Center (in Walsh Library at Rose Hill and in Quinn Library at Lincoln Center) provides individualized assistance to students for writing assignments. You can

make an appointment – free of charge! – to meet with someone who will read your paper and discuss it in detail with you. I strongly recommend using this system for your paper in this class and in other classes. You can sign up for an appointment at https://www.fordham.edu/info/20126/writing_center.

As a faculty member, I am – by law – a mandatory reporter and I am required to contact and provide information to Public Safety, the Dean of Students, or Fordham’s Title IX Coordinator if I am provided with any information indicating that a Fordham student has been sexually harassed (verbally or physically), sexually assaulted, stalked, had domestic violence or dating violence occur in a relationship, or been a victim / survivor of any behavior that is prohibited by Fordham’s Sexual Misconduct Policy and Procedures. Once reported, Fordham will seek to support any student and make efforts to stop the negative behavior, prevent it from recurring, and remedy its effects. It is important for you to be aware that there are three confidential places on campus where you can seek support or guidance from Fordham staff members who are not mandatory reporters: clinical counselors in Counseling & Psychological Services, pastoral counselors in Campus Ministry, and medical service providers in University Health Services. You can read more about this in the Student CARE brochure or visit www.fordham.edu/care or www.fordham.edu/sexualmisconduct for more information.

If you or someone you know is struggling with emotional or mental health concerns, and/or gender, sexual, or domestic violence, Fordham’s Counseling and Psychological Services (CPS) can provide free assistance. The Rose Hill office of CPS is open Monday through Friday and can be reached by phone at 718-817-3725. If you, or a student you know, is experiencing a mental health crisis or emergency that requires immediate attention contact Fordham’s office of Public Safety at Rose Hill at 718-817-2222 (available 24/7). If you prefer to access mental health services outside of Fordham, New York City provides free mental health support through NYC Well (<https://nycwell.cityofnewyork.us/en/>).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your final grade will be based on the following components:

20% - Class Participation. Since this is a seminar course, attendance is obligatory. An active role in discussions and class activities by everyone enrolled in the course is expected, as is the completion of required readings before the class session for which they are assigned. Each student is permitted one unexcused absence (i.e. without a written note from a doctor or a dean). Additional unexcused absences will affect the participation grade.

5% - Progress in the News. You will be asked to search for news that documents efforts to improve governance/democracy/ethnic reconciliation, etc. in a particular country. You will present your news (related to a particular class theme) at the beginning of class. In your short (2-3 minutes) presentation, be sure to explain not only what progress you have found but why it represents progress and how you define progress on that issue. Class sessions for this assignment will be assigned in Week 2.

25% - Take-Home Midterm. Students will be required to write a midterm consisting of a short answer section and longer essay (7-8 pages) section. I midterm will be posted to blackboard on

20% - Research Paper Proposal. The research proposal will exist of a 10-to-12-page double-spaced paper engaging a specific puzzle regarding political science in relation to the readings you will read in this course. The goal of this paper is for you to come up with an original research question, a set of hypotheses derived from this question, and a research design that – if executed – would allow us to test these hypotheses and answer your question. You will not actually execute the proposal, but the goal is to think critically about what methodological approach would allow you to do so if you would – that is, what data you’d have to collect, how you would do so, etc.

30% - Take-Home Final. Students will be required to write a take-home final consisting of a short answer section and longer essay (8 pages) section. Students interested completing a research paper as an alternative to the final may do so pending approval of a 1-2 page paper proposal and timeline by the instructor.

1/14: Introduction (No Assigned Reading)

1/17: Session 2: What is Political Science?

Amelia Hoover Green, “[How to Read Political Science: A Guide in Four Steps.](#)”

*Also review the critical reading guide at the end of this syllabus.

1/21: What is a State and Where Does it Come From?

Assignment: Complete the reading worksheet for Tilly and bring it to class. Prepare to discuss your responses.

Tilly, Charles. 1985. War Making as Organized Crime. In P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer and T. Skocpol (Eds). *Bringing the State Back In*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Herbst, Jeffrey. 1990. “War and the State in Africa.” *International Security*, 14(4) 117-139.

Recommended: Brookings, “[Musk and Ramaswamy, meet the real deep state.](#)”

1/24: What Happens When State Capacity is Weak?

Bagley, Bruce. 1988. “Colombia and the War on Drugs.” *Foreign Affairs*, 67(1) 70-92.

Recommended: Berenschot, Ward. 2011. "On the Usefulness of Goondas in Indian Politics: ‘Money power’ and ‘Muscle power’ in a Gujarati Locality." *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, 34 (2) 255-275.s

1/28: What is Democracy

Przeworski, Adam. 1999. Minimalist conception of democracy: a defense. *Democracy's values*.

Zakaria, Fareed. 1997. "The Rise of Illiberal Democracy." *Foreign Affairs*. November/December: 22-43. [Skim for the main idea on illiberal democracy].

Recommended: Lankov, Andrei. 2017. "Kim Jong-Un is a Survivor, Not a Mad Man." *Foreign Affairs*. Available: <http://foreignpolicy.com/2017/04/26/kim-jong-un-is-a-survivor-not-a-madman/>

1/31: What Makes an Election Free and Fair?

Lehoucq, Fabrice. 2003. "Electoral Fraud: Causes, Types, and Consequences." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 6: 233-56.

Nicholas Kerr, Bridgett A King, Michael Wahman. 2024. The Global Crisis of Trust in Elections, *Public Opinion Quarterly*, Volume 88, 451–471.

Listen: [This American Life](#) on the Venezuelan Election.

Recommended: [Pew: How to Restore Trust in Elections](#).

2/4: How Do We Know Democracy When We See It? Measurement

Read the "Freedom in the World 2024: Methodology Questions," and read the 2023 Freedom House country report for the US and a country of your choice.

Lindberg, Staffan I. 2014. Michael Coppedge, John Gerring, and Jan Teorell. "V-Dem: A new way to measure democracy." *Journal of Democracy* 25 (3) 159-169.

2/7: Does Wealth Make Countries Become (and stay) Democratic?

Skim: Seymour M. Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," *American Political Science Review* 53 (March 1959) pp. 69-85. [Note that the article is longer – you only need to read through page 85.]

De Mesquita, Bueno, Bruce Downs and George Downs. 2005. "Development and Democracy." *Foreign Affairs* 84(5): 77-86.

Levitsky, Stephen. and Way, Lucian. 2023. "Democracy's Surprising Resilience." *Journal of democracy*, 34(4) 5-20.

2/11: Democratic Backsliding

Bermeo, Nancy. "On Democratic Backsliding." 2016. *Journal of democracy* 27 (1) 5-19.

Mickey, Robert, Steven Levitsky, and Lucian Ahmad Way. 2017. "Is America Still Safe for Democracy: Why the United States is in danger of backsliding." *Foreign Affairs*.

Pepinsky, Thomas. 2017. "[Life in Authoritarian States is Mostly Boring and Tolerable.](#)" Vox.

2/14: Democratic Backsliding and Resilience: Cases

Read 1 case of backsliding closely:

Turkey: Esen, Berk, and Sebnem Gumuscu. 2016. "Rising Competitive Authoritarianism in Turkey." *Third World Quarterly*, 37(9)1581-1606.

Post-Civil War U.S.: Mickey, Rob. Paths Out of Dixie: The Democratization of Authoritarian Enclaves in America's Deep South, 1944-1972. Chapter 2.

India: Varshney, A., 2022. How India's Ruling Party Erodes Democracy. *Journal of Democracy*, 33(4), pp.104-118.

Hungary: Bogaards, Matthijs. 2018. "De-Democratization in Hungary: Diffusely defective democracy." *Democratization* 25 (8) 1481-1499.

AND

Center for American Progress. "[Poland's Democratic Resurgence: From Backsliding to Beacon.](#)"

2/18: No Class.

2/21: Who Governs I: Elites, the Public, and Unequal Democracy

Robert Dahl, Who Governs? Chapters I.

Page, Benjamin I., and Martin Gilens. 2020. *Democracy in America?: What has gone wrong and what we can do about it.* University of Chicago Press. Chapter 2.

Brenan Center. "[We Don't Have to Let Big Tech Money Dominate Elections.](#)"

2/25: Who Governs II: Consequences for Public Policy

Gilens, M. and Page, B.I., 2014. Testing theories of American Politics: Elites, interest groups, and average citizens. *Perspectives on politics*, 12(3), pp.564-581.

Robert Dahl, Who Governs? Chapters 13, 14.

2/28: Who Votes (and Why)?

Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, and Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. "Beyond SES: A resource model of political participation." *American Political Science Review*, 89(2) 271-294.

Ahuja, Amit and Pradeep Chhibber. 2012. "Why the Poor Vote in India: 'If I Don't Vote, I Am Dead to the State.'" *Studies in comparative international development*, 47(4) 389-410.

3/4: Constitutional Design: Representation and Presidential Systems

Take-Home Midterm Will be Handed Out at the end of Class. Due 12pm Monday, 3/10.

In-Class Activity: Design the Ideal Political System for the United States.

Moe, Terry and Michael Caldwell. 1994. "The Institutional Foundations of Democratic Government: A Comparison of Presidential and Parliamentary Systems," *Journal of Institutional and Theoretical Economics* vol. 150, no. 1.

Levitsy, Steven and; Daniel Ziblatt. *Tyranny of the Minority : Why American Democracy Reached the Breaking Point*. New York: Crown, 2023. Chapter 6 ("Minority Rule")

3/7: Getting Out the Vote in the U.S. (Midterm Q&A in the last 20 minutes of class)

In-Class Activity: Design a Get Out the Vote Campaign Targeting Young People.

Gerber, Alan, Donald P. Green, and Christopher W. Larimer. 2008. Social Pressure and Voter Turnout: Evidence from a Large-Scale Field Experiment. *American Political Science Review* 102 (1) 33-48.

Grumbach, J.M., Han, H. and Warren, D.T., 2024. Getting out the vote in the projects: lessons from a community organizing experiment. *Politics, Groups, and Identities*, 12(1), pp.245-256.

3/11: What Do Political Parties Do?

Aldrich, John. 1995. *Why Parties: The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in America*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press: Chapter 3.

Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1957. Chapters 2 and 7.

Ellison, Catherine. BBC. "[Can we have democracy without political parties?](#)"

3/14: How are Populist Parties Different?

Vachudova, Milada Anna. 2021. "Populism, Democracy, and Party System Change in Europe." *Annual Review of Political Science* 24 (1) 471-498.

3/18 to 3/21: No Class. Spring Break.

3/25: Does Democratic Competition Encourage Ethnic Divisions?

Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98 (4): 529-545.

Chandra, Kanchan. 2005. "Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability." *Perspectives on Politics*, 3(2) 235-252.

3/28: When Do Elections Incentivize Ethnic and Political Violence?

Guest Lecture: Drew Stommes, NYU.

Wilkinson, Steven I. 2005. "Putting Gujarat in Perspective." *Economic and Political Weekly*: 1579-1583.

Assignment: Submit a one-page description of your current research proposal idea on Blackboard.

4/1: Paper Workshop II

Read your group mates' paper proposals.

4/4: How Does Gender Impact Representation and Governance in the U.S.?

Richard L. Fox and Jennifer L. Lawless, "Uncovering the Origins of the Gender Gap in Political Ambition," *American Political Science Review* vol. 108, no. 3 (2014) 499-519.

Holman, Mirya R. 2017. "Women in Local Government: What we know and where we go from here." *State and Local Government Review* 49 (4) 285-296.

4/8: Do Voters Hold Politicians Accountable?

Achen, Christopher H., and Larry M. Bartels. 2016. *Democracy for Realists: Why elections do not produce responsive government*. Princeton University Press, Chapter 4.

Ahlquist, J.S., Ichino, N., Wittenberg, J. and Ziblatt, D., 2018. How do voters perceive changes to the rules of the game? Evidence from the 2014 Hungarian elections. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 46(4), pp.906-919.

Listen: Ezra Klein and Malcolm Gladwell: [Why We're Polarized](#).

4/11: Does Social Media Undermine Electoral Accountability?

Guess, Andrew M., and Benjamin A. Lyons. 2020. "Misinformation, disinformation, and online propaganda." *Social media and democracy: The state of the field, prospects for reform*, Chapter 10.

Berinsky, Adam J. 2023. *Political rumors: Why we accept misinformation and how to fight it*. Chapter 5.

4/14: Do Democracies Fight Each Other? Democratic Peace

Guest Lecture: Brooke Greene, PhD.

John M. Owen, "How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace." *International Security* vol. 19 no. 2 (1994) 87-125.

Sebastisan Rosato, "The Flawed Logic of Democratic Peace Theory," *American Political Science Review* vol. 97 no. 4 (2003) 585-602.

4/18: No Class. Easter.

4/22: Does democracy work? Are there reasonable alternatives?

Assignment: Upload your draft papers to blackboard.

Mittiga, Ross. 2022. "Political Legitimacy, Authoritarianism, and Climate Change," *American Political Science Review* vol. 116 (3) 998-1011.

Brennan, Jason. 2011. "The Right to a Competent Electorate," *Philosophical Quarterly* vol. 61.

Alexander A. Guerrero, "Against Elections: The Lottocratic Alternative," *Philosophy & Public Affairs* vol. 42, no. 2 (2014).

4/25: Paper Workshop III

4/29: Q&A or Make-Up Session TBD by class vote.

Reading Skills

As you manage the reading for this and other courses, you are likely to find, if you have not already, that there is no correlation between effort and outcome. It is entirely possible to spend several hours reading something without “getting it.” And it is equally possible to spend less than a half-hour reading something else and getting to the heart of the argument. You will have to devise for yourselves ways to read efficiently. These are some devices that may help:

1. Figure out what the heart of an argument is before you read deeply: skim, read the abstracts, the jacket blurbs, often short reviews published elsewhere. When you know where the center of gravity is, you read more efficiently.
2. Read actively: do not simply soak up the reading for what the author wants to tell you, but approach it with questions, and try to answer them for yourself as you make your way through.
3. Use other peoples’ skills: you do not have to do all the work yourself. It is not “cheating” if you talk through the argument with someone else before or after you delve in, or look at reviews for explication, or form reading groups where you can discuss the argument with each other.
4. Write in order to read. The response papers for this class and the (non-graded) worksheet attached should help.
5. Use diagrams if necessary: often, the structure of an argument can be most clearly expressed if you “draw” it, using arrows and lines, than by trying to understand it in words.
6. Organize your notes in a way that makes retention and information retrieval possible: you could use index cards, annotated bibliographies, database programs like Filemaker Pro etc. These rules may be obvious to some and not to others. Basically, do whatever works for you. But be self-conscious about the reading process as a skill that has to be learned and not necessarily as an ability that either comes naturally or does not.

Reading Worksheet

For each book, chapter, or article assigned in this course, you should fill out the following (non-graded) worksheet. Many of these points can be addressed in a sentence or two (e.g. Questions 1 and 2; in some cases, answers will not need even to be full sentences (e.g., Question); and in some cases, the answers may overlap. These worksheets should be retained: they will be useful for future reference.

1. State the central question that the reading addresses.
2. State the central argument(s) defended in the paper in response to this question.
3. What type of reasoning or evidence is used to support these arguments? If it is an analytical paper, what is the logic that undergirds the argument? If an empirical paper, what type of data is employed? Are there other data sources that you think might be more appropriate?
4. Do you find the claims of the reading convincing? What do you see as the main gaps that need to be filled?
5. Why (if at all) is the reading interesting?
6. Do you agree with the main claims? What are your hesitations? (This may simply involve restatement of previous points.)
7. Identify one or two implicit premises or background assumptions in the paper that you think are especially controversial or objectionable.
8. Considering your answers to the previous questions, write an abstract for the article of no more than 100 words. (Feel free to repeat formulations given in response to earlier questions.)
9. When you have done this for individual readings, take some time to think about the various readings you have been assigned in relation to each other. See if you can write or imagine a summary table for all the readings taken together which compares and contrasts them.