Academic Article Reading in Political Science
By: Olivia O’Gorman

P: Pull together all knowledge you already know about the subject matter—its okay if you know nothing!

O: Open your mind to ideologies you might not agree with.

L: Listen to what the author is trying to communicate—what is the message they want you to take away?

I: Investigate what you are not familiar with. (e.g. If there are forms of government or ideas you might have heard of, google it! Sometimes, the explanations given by the author will be much more complicated than needed.)

S: Search for answers to the thesis/research questions presented in the article.

C: Compose a structured informed opinion/conclusion based on the articles methods and findings.
   -Remember that an informed opinion considers both sides of the debate/discussion.
   -Critiquing the methods of studies could influence the outcome of the study, but you cannot critique the findings without recommending changes in the methods

I: Incorporate the article’s ideas into class discussion as well as papers. Your professor wants you to be familiar with these ideas!

Remember that articles given to you by your political science professors are meant to enhance the subject and/or ideas that they are trying to teach you. Rather than read an article word for word, follow the POLI SCI acronym above to gather the most essential information from the article. Also, remember to read headings, main ideas, and skim sections for main ideas if you are unsure if the information is necessary to know.