

POLITICAL SCIENCE 101: AMERICAN POLITICS

FALL 2018

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Tues./Thurs. 9:30am-10:30am

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Consider the decisions that impact your life as a citizen of the United States – war, education, roads, food safety, healthcare, taxes. How are these decisions made and whose views do they reflect? *Politics are all around you but what you see isn't always what matters and what matters isn't always what you see.* By teaching you to see politics through the lens of political science this course aims to illuminate those aspects that are often most hidden and how they connect to form our political system:

Pluralism: People have different and conflicting views about what goals to pursue and how to accomplish them. This fact is what makes politics both necessary and difficult.

Representation: Representatives take many different views and turn them into a single, collective power. Incorporating competing views is a central feature of democracy but if compromise is achieved then no one gets exactly what they want and no one is fully satisfied.

Constitution: A constitution is powerful since it is the highest level of rules that establish how collective power may be used by political institutions and what decisions are permissible. It is also fragile since its authority comes from whether a population believes in the legitimacy of the institutions and decisions it produces.

Learning how these pieces work and fit together will give a more complete picture of why our political system functions the way it does.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Students will identify important examples and explain how ...

- a plurality of ideas and interests leads to competing goals.
 - political preferences are expressed in many forms.
 - laws and rights guide and restrict government.
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GRADES

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points</u>
Attendance	25
Participation	75
Quizzes	150
Unit Examinations	150 + 150
Policy Memo	150
Total	700

A	700 - 651	C+	560 - 541
A-	650 - 631	C	540 - 511
B+	630 - 611	C-	510 - 491
B	610 - 581	D+	490 - 456
B-	580 - 561	D	455 - 421
		F	420 - 0

TEXT RENTAL. Ginsberg, Lowi, et al. *We the People, 10th Essentials Edition.* W.W. Norton, 2014.

****Materials not in the textbook will be distributed electronically.**

WEEK	TOPICS	ASSIGNMENTS
UNIT 1: PLURALISM AND REPRESENTATION		
09.04-09.07	Introduction	Syllabus Text: pp. 10-18
09.10-09.14	Public Opinion	Text: Ch. 5 <i>Quiz</i>
09.17-09.21	Media	Text: Ch. 6 <i>Quiz</i>
09.24-09.28	Parties and Elections	Text: Ch. 7 <i>Quiz</i>
10.01-10.05	Interest Groups	Text: Ch. 8 <i>Quiz</i>
10.08-10.12	Legislature	Text: Ch. 9 <i>Quiz</i>
10.15-10.19	Review	October 19: Unit 1 Exam
UNIT 2: CONSTITUTION		
10.22-10.26	Founding Debate I	Text: <i>Federalist</i> , No. 10 and No. 51 (pp. A33-A41)
10.29-11.02	Founding Debate II	Text: <i>Federalist</i> , No. 39; <i>Centinel</i> , No. 1 (Canvas)
11.05-11.09	Civil Rights and Liberties	Text: pp. 53-56 and 95-134 <i>Quiz</i>
11.12-11.16	Federalism	Text: Ch. 3 <i>Quiz</i>
11.19-11.21	Essay Help (<i>optional</i>)	November 21: Essay Due (Canvas)
11.26-11.30	Executive - Presidency	Text: Ch. 10 and pp. 446-457 <i>Quiz</i>
12.03-12.07	Executive - Bureaucracy	Text: Ch. 11 <i>Quiz</i>
12.10-12.14	Judiciary	Text: Ch. 12 <i>Quiz</i>
12.17-12.21		December 20, 10:15am-12:15pm: Unit 2 Exam

UWSP POLICIES

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: All UWSP policies regarding academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism) are defined in Chapter 14 of *UWSP Community Bill of Rights and Responsibilities*. Violations may result in a failing grade for the course or disciplinary sanctions by the University.

EQUAL ACCESS: If you have a challenge requiring classroom accommodation, please contact UWSP [Disability Services Office](#) with your documentation as early as possible in the semester. They will notify me confidentially of the accommodations.