

POLS 1010
Introduction to American National Government

Spring 2020

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A-103 Brewster
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Office Hours

Tuesday 11:00-12:00
Wednesday 1:00-3:00
Thursday 2:00-4:00
and by appointment

Class Time and Location

Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30 - 10:45
Bate 1032
CRN 33147

[email](#)

[web page](#)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will present you with an understanding of American Government, a field of the Social Science discipline Political Science. You will learn about the institutions and processes of American government, how political scientists study American Politics, and the relevance of our research in American politics to general knowledge.

REQUIRED READINGS

Kernell, Samuel, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, and Lynn Vavreck. 2018. *The Logic of American Politics*. Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press.
Wall Street Journal <http://r.wsj.net/jbnz3>

GRADING

The course grade will be based on four **cumulative** examinations and several unannounced quizzes. All exams will be in-class, closed book. Each test will consist of multiple choice questions. Students are to provide their own blue bubble sheets. You are responsible for the material covered in the readings and the lectures. Exams are each worth 20% of your final grade. The grade earned on the final exam, in addition to being worth 20% of your final grade, will also substitute for the lowest grade on exams 1-3, assuming the final is higher than one of these. There will be unannounced quizzes over the material throughout the term. These quizzes may cover material from the reading before we go over it in class. That is, the quiz may come *before* any classroom discussion of the topic. Students who have read the material should do well on the quizzes. The highest 75% of the quizzes (however many there will be is to be determined) will count. So, if there are four quizzes, the highest three will count. If there are eight, the highest 6 will count. These quizzes will constitute 20% of

your final grade. There is the opportunity for extra credit in the class. As you are assigned the *Wall Street Journal*, you will have the opportunity to write brief summaries of articles that concern matters of American politics. Each one will be worth up to 2 points on the next exam, with a maximum of 5 summaries per exam. These must be typed (word processed), double-spaced, and no more than one page.

In addition, I will be calling upon you a number of times throughout the semester. Being in class that day will add one point to your final examination score. Answering my question correctly will add another point to your final exam score.

Academic Integrity: The standard plagiarism and academic integrity rules apply, i.e. all the materials you submit must be the result of your own individual work. Any signs of plagiarism will be taken very seriously. The university code of academic integrity will be strictly enforced in this course. According to the East Carolina University Honor Code, violations of academic integrity include the following:

- *Cheating.* Unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work.
- *Plagiarism.* Copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting same as one's own original work. DO NOT submit someone else's homework.
- *Falsification.* Statement of any untruth, either spoken or written, regarding any circumstances relative to academic work.
- *Attempts.* Attempting any act that if completed would constitute an academic integrity violation as defined herein.

For more information about university policies concerning academic integrity, please visit the web at <http://www.ecu.edu/cs-acad/fsonline/customcf/currentfacultymanual/part6section2.pdf>. If you violate the Honor Code you will be reported to the Academic Integrity Board for disciplinary action. The penalties for violating the university code of academic integrity *range* from having assigned an F for that assignment to more stringent measures such as failure, assigned grade of XF on the transcript, in the course and/or expulsion from the university.

GRADING SYSTEM

93 – 100	A	73-77	C
90 – 92	A-	70-72	C-
88 – 89	B+	68-69	D+
83 – 87	B	63-67	D
80 – 82	B-	60-62	D-
78 – 79	C+	0-59	F

CLASS DECORUM

I expect all students to exhibit a high level of courtesy toward each other. Please arrive on time and stay for the entire class. While I endorse the reading of newspapers and the listening to music, please refrain from doing either in class. Newspaper reading and listening to music outside of class is optional. Also, there is **NO** excuse for texting, Facebooking, and the like during class time. Last, please be respectful while someone is asking or answering questions. Treat those individuals as you would wish to be treated. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 (252) 737-1016 (Voice/TTY).

Learning Objectives

This course will prepare students to:

- Relate American political thought, the Constitution, and political institutions and processes to political actions.
- Identify and explain the structures, functions, interactions, and development of the three branches government established by the Constitution.
- Explain how the rules of the game are integral to explaining political decisions.
- Understand and explain the process by which the Constitution is amended.
- Understand and explain the process by which a bill becomes a law.
- Explain the differences between the House and Senate and how that influences public policy.
- Explain the principles of federalism and how they apply to the relationship between national and state government in the United States.
- Compare and contrast national and state governments.
- Examine the relationship between individuals and the government.
- Analyze participation in the American electoral process including public opinion, voting, and interest groups.
- Evaluate the relationship between public policy, public opinion, and political institutions.
- Engage knowledgeably and confidently in the American political process.

Reading Schedule		Exam Schedule	
January 14	Syllabus, Foundations, Constitution	February 11	Exam I
January 28	Federalism	March 5	Exam II
February 6	Civil Rights	April 2	Exam III
February 13	Civil Liberties	May 5 8:00 AM-11:00	Final Exam
February 18	Congress		
February 27	President		
March 17	Federal Judiciary		
March 24	Political Culture		
March 26	Public Opinion		
April 7	Voting, Campaigns, and Elections		
April 16	Political Parties		

April 23	Interest Groups		
April 28	Policy/Review		

In the event of a weather or other emergency, information about the status of classes at ECU is available the ECU emergency information hotline (252-328-0062) and on the ECU emergency alert website (<http://www.ecu.edu/alert>).

If face-to-face classes are suspended, I will send an email to your university account that details how we will communicate during the disruption and how the course will proceed.

Wall Street Journal Article Summary Format

Your Name

Date your turning it in

Date, Section and Page or url of article

Title of article

Actual summary of article