

PS 101-007 Spring 2014
American Government
Mr. Ryan Voris
MWF 1PM-1:50PM
Erickson Hall Room #308

Contact Information:

Instructor: Ryan Voris
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Contacting the Instructor: Email is the preferred method of contact for personal and course related business. Feel free to contact me anytime via email. I am generally close to my email and try to respond as soon as I can, usually within 24 hours of receiving the email. The exception to this is over the weekends when it may take me longer to get back to you, please allow 48 hours for response to emails sent after 5pm Friday through Sunday night. Also, feel free to speak with me either before or after class.

Office Hours: My office hours are listed above, please feel free to drop by my office during this time to discuss any matters related to the course or grades. If you are unable to come during these times I am also available by appointment. Please email me with times that you are free to meet and I will get back to you with a time that hopefully works out for both of us.

Introduction:

This is an introductory course in American government and is designed to present students with a broad overview of the American political system. However, this course is not simply a college-level civics course. Rather, the primary purpose of PS 101 is to introduce you to the science of American politics. Our goal will be to assess the health of the American political system as it faces the challenges of the 21st century. Along the way, we will question why government works as it does and trace the effects of the government's operation through American history.

PS101 also is part of the U.K. Core Program and can be taken to fulfill the "Community, Culture, and Citizenship in the USA" requirement. The goal of this requirement is to familiarize students with the diversity of cultures and communities within the United States, now and overtime, to make them better citizens in the operation of American democracy. To help fulfill this requirement we will be paying special attention to how the institutions, processes, and policies of American government represent both the conflict and compromise that grows out of American diversity.

Learning Outcomes:

Students who attend lectures regularly and who do the assigned readings and MyPoliSciLab activities should be able to:

- (1) Identify the key political, theoretical, and cultural bases of the American Republic and apply these to a basic analysis of how the Constitution was created and has been changed to better reflect the political needs and realities of 21st Century America.
- (2) Identify and describe the constitutional powers and responsibilities of all three branches of the federal government and explain how they relate to each other in the constitutional system of checks and balances and shared powers.

- (3) Describe the importance of citizenship to democracy, including the importance of well-protected and maintained civil liberties and civil rights.
- (4) Identify and describe the ways in which the public communicates values, opinions, and attitudes to public officials
- (5) Describe how political institutions and the media shape the connections between policies and public demands.

As this course satisfies UK Core's "Community, Culture, and Citizenship in the USA" requirement, students who attend lectures regularly and who do the assigned readings and MyPoliSciLab activities should also be able to:

- (1) Demonstrate an understanding of historical, societal, and cultural differences, such as those arising from race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, language, nationality, religion, political and ethical perspectives, and socioeconomic class.
- (2) Demonstrate a basic understanding of how these differences influence issues of social justice and/or civic responsibility.
- (3) Demonstrate an understanding of historical, societal, and cultural contexts relevant to the subject matter of the course.
- (4) Demonstrate an understanding of at least two of the following, as they pertain to the subject matter of the course: Societal, cultural, and institutional change over time, Civic engagement, Regional, national, or cross-national comparisons, Power and resistance

Course Requirements:

Grade Determination: Your final course grade will be based on six components:

- (1) Exam 1 (15%)
- (2) Exam 2 (20%)
- (3) Final Exam (25%)
- (4) Attendance (10%)
- (5) MyPoliSciLab Activities (10%)
- (6) UK Core Citizenship Essay (20%)

Required Texts:

- (1) Daniel M. Shea, Joanne Connor Green, and Christopher E. Smith. *Living Democracy*, 2012 Election Edition. (New York: Pearson).
- (2) MyPoliSciLab (www.mypoliscilab.com), which includes practice tests, multimedia activities, and more to reinforce your understanding of the textbook.

The new 4th edition of Shea is required, and will come bundled with your access code for MyPoliSciLab. If you acquire a used version of the 4th edition you will need to purchase access to MyPoliSciLab, which can be done online through their website. You can access MyPoliSciLab through Blackboard using the navigation bar on the left of the course shell. Follow the signup instructions, including how to enter your code, from there.

All of the readings and assigned videos, simulations, and data explorations for this course are required. You should read all of the assignment material by the date we will cover that material in class in order to be prepared to discuss it or be quizzed over it in class.

Due dates for the MyPoliSciLab activities are available on the 'Assignment Calendar' on the MyPoliSciLab website. You should also be prepared to be examined over the assigned materials even if it is not discussed in class. Our class time will not be spent simply going over the assigned materials; rather, the readings will serve as our point of departure for the lectures. Most lectures will cover materials not contained in the readings and MyPoliSciLab assignments.

Exams (60%): There will be three (3) exams given during the course of the semester weighted as follows; Exam I 15%, Exam II 20%, and the Final Exam 25%. The final exam will be cumulative. Exams will consist of multiple-choice questions. All exams will be conducted in class and I will provide the exam and answers sheet, you are required to bring a pencil to all exams. Exams will cover material covered in the lectures, readings, and assigned MyPoliSciLab activities.

Make-up exams will be given only for university-excused absences (for more information see the 'Excused Absences' section below) or with instructor approval prior to the absence. If you miss an exam with an unexcused absence you will receive a zero for that exam. Permission to miss an exam must be secured from the instructor before the exam in the case of foreseeable reasons (university approved travel, surgery, etc.), for unforeseen reasons it is your responsibility to contact me ASAP following the exam. Written verification of the absence is required to make-up any exam. Make-up exams will be scheduled for the final class period prior to finals week. No other make-up days will be available except under extraordinary circumstances.

Attendance (10%): Attendance is essential to success in most college courses. Lectures provide material that will not be covered in the readings. Additionally, lectures will provide indications about what materials will be covered on the exams. Attendance will be monitored via a daily sign-in sheet that will be passed around. All students will be required to fill out an index card with basic information, including a signature that will be used to verify attendance. If the signature on the sign-in sheet does not match the signature on the index card the student may not receive credit for attendance. Students will not be penalized for excused absences, additionally; all students will receive two 'cuts' that they will not be penalized for. The attendance grade will be taken as the percent of lecture sessions attended over the course of the semester. According to University Rule 5.2.4.2 any student who misses more than one-fifth (1/5) of the total scheduled meetings for the course will be required to petition for a "W" in the course.

MyPoliSciLab Activities (10%): Throughout the semester we will be using MyPoliSciLab from Pearson to access multimedia supplements to the textbook as well as quizzes to access your comprehension of course materials. You will be required to complete a selection of the MyPoliSciLab materials for a grade. In addition, MyPoliSciLab contains many materials that can help you prepare for exams; including pre- and post-tests for each chapter and flashcards. The code needed to access MyPoliSciLab is bundled with your textbook.

You are required to complete all MyPoliSciLab assignments/quizzes by the due date indicated on the 'Assignment Calendar' in MyPoliSciLab. The assignments will be due by midnight on the first day that material will be covered in lecture. For example, we will be covering the Constitution in class on January 24th, 27th, and 29th; so the MyPoliSciLab assignments listed will be due by midnight January 24th. Only the assigned activities will count towards your final grade. It is your responsibility to contact the instructor if you experience technical issues that prevent you from completing the assignments. Late credit will not be given for missing MyPoliSciLab assignments, unless there are technical difficulties that prevent you from completing the assignment. In the case of technical difficulties, please get a screen capture of the nature of the issue (if possible), and email me as soon as you can describing the nature of the problem. Please let me know as soon as possible of any issues related to MyPoliSciLab.

UK Core Citizenship Essay (20%): This short essay (4-5 pages) is designed to help you dig deeper into the course learning outcomes, especially those targeted under the UK Core requirement. Your comments are expected to be serious, well-thought out, and critical. You will not be graded on your point of view or political beliefs but on how thoughtful and well-informed your comments are. This assignment will be due at the end of the semester and further instructions will be provided later in the semester.

Course Policies:

Email Policy: There are a few general guidelines to follow when emailing me. First, begin the subject line with "PS 101:" followed by a brief statement about the nature of your email. This will help to ensure

that I see your email and am able to respond to it in a timely fashion. Second, emails are not text messages and should not be written as such. Open the email by addressing me as Mr. Voris, concisely indicating the nature of your problem and/or request, and signing off with your name. Emails that do not follow this procedure risk not being replied to as I may not see it or know who is sending the email. Finally, I will not discuss grades or give personally identifying information over email. To discuss grades come see me during office hours or by appointment.

Classroom Standards: I expect all students to behave in a professional manner during class time. This includes coming to class on time and prepared to start at 1pm. It is disrespectful to me and to your fellow students to come late and disrupt class, so please be on time. I will not tolerate chronic tardiness, and if you arrive to class more than 5 minutes late, you may be asked to leave. Also, unless you have obtained prior approval from me, you may not leave class early. Furthermore, I do not tolerate rude and disruptive classroom behavior. During class, refrain from talking during the lecture, reading a newspaper, doing crosswords, sudoku or other puzzles/games, sleeping, or listening to your iPod or other .mp3 players. When in class, turn off your cell phones, silencing will not suffice when many of your phones have a “vibrate” function that is just as loud and disruptive. Finally, due to the potential for distracting you and your fellow classmates, please avoid using laptop computers or other devices that may be used to access the Internet for purposes other than class activities (e.g., Facebooking, shopping eBay, emailing, etc.). I reserve the right to dismiss from class any student in violation of any classroom standards policies.

Grading: The grading scale for the final course grade for this course is as follows: A = 90-100%, B = 80-89%, C = 70-79%, D = 60-69%, and E = 0-59%.

All grades will be posted to Blackboard after the instructor has completed grading them. For the exams this will typically be within one week of the date the exam is taken. Attendance and MyPoliSciLab grades will be updated monthly throughout the course of the semester.

Excused Absences: The University defines the following as acceptable reasons for excused absences: illness of the student or serious illness of a member of the student’s immediate family; death of a member of the student’s immediate family; trips for members of student organizations sponsored by an academic unit, trips for university classes and trips for participation in intercollegiate athletic events; major religious holidays; any other circumstances which the instructor finds reasonable cause for nonattendance. I reserve the right to require documentation for any excused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to notify me before any absence if possible, but no later than one week following the absence in any case. It is the student’s responsibility to provide proper documentation and notification in all cases. Students with excused absences that result in missing more than one-fifth (1/5) of scheduled course meetings will be required to petition for a “W” in the course.

Late Assignments: University policy will be followed regarding all make-up exams and writing assignments. Make-up exams and writing will only be allowed for excused absences. For definitions of these terms, please consult the Student Rights and Responsibilities handbook.

A Note on Cheating & Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: All work submitting for this course is expected to be the result of each student’s own thought, research, or self-expression. Cheating and Plagiarism will not be tolerated. The University of Kentucky defines plagiarism as submitting “work purport[ed] to be their own, but which in any way borrows ideas, organization, wording, or anything else from another source without appropriate acknowledgement of the fact” (Student Rights and Responsibilities, Section 6.3.1). Cheating “includes, but is not limited to, the wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material by a student with the intent of aiding himself/herself or another on any academic work” which determines the final grade for the course, whether or not any benefit actually occurs (Student Rights and Responsibilities, Section 6.3.2). Any student(s) caught in violation of any form of academic dishonesty will automatically receive a zero (0) on that portion of the final grade. This includes all exams, the UK Core Essay, MyPoliSciLab assignments, and attendance.

Classroom and Learning Accommodations: If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible during scheduled office hours. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, email address jkarnes@email.uky.edu) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities.

Course Schedule:

Note: All items in the “Course Schedule” are subject to change at the discretion of the instructor. These changes will be announced in class and/or on Blackboard or MyPoliSciLab (where applicable). You are responsible for all announced changes, so come to class and check Blackboard regularly.

Introduction (January 15)

American Political Culture (January 17, 22)

January 20 Martin Luther King Jr. Day – No Class

- Read Shea Chapter 1
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz

The Constitution (January 24, 27, 29)

- Read Shea Chapter 2
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Explore – “How Long Did it Take to Ratify the Constitution” and post data quiz

Federalism (January 31, February 3)

- Read Shea Chapter 3
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Explore – “Which States Win and Lose the Federal Aid Game?” and post data quiz

Civil Liberties (February 5, 7)

February 5- Last day to drop course without it appearing on transcript

- Read Shea Chapter 4
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Video – “Thinking Like a Political Scientist” and post video quiz

Civil Rights (February 10, 12)

- Read Shea Chapter 5
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz

Exam 1 February 14

Congress (February 17, 19, 21)

- Read Shea Chapter 6
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Video – “Thinking Like a Political Scientist” and post video quiz
- Explore – “Can Congress Get Anything Done?” and post data quiz

The Presidency (February 24, 26, 28)

- Read Shea Chapter 7
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In the Real World” and post video quiz
- Video – “Thinking Like a Political Scientist” and post video quiz
- Explore – “What Influences a President’s Public Approval?” and post data quiz

The Judiciary (March 3, 5, 7)

- Read Shea Chapter 9
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Video – “In the Real World” and post video quiz
- Video – “Thinking Like a Political Scientist” and post video quiz
- Explore – “Who Are the Activist Judges?” and post data quiz

The Bureaucracy (March 10, 12)

- Read Shea Chapter 8
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Video – “In the Real World” and post video quiz

Exam 2 March 14

March 17– 21 Spring Break - No Class

Public Opinion and Political Socialization (March 24, 26, 28)

- Read Shea Chapter 10
- Video – “The Big Picture” and post video quiz
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In the Real World” and post video quiz
- Simulation – “You Are a Polling Consultant” and post simulation quiz

The Media (March 31, April 2, 7)

April 4- Midwest Political Science Association Conference (MPSA) and the National Conference on Undergraduate Research (NCUR) – No Class

- Read Shea Chapter 11
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In the Real World” and post video quiz
- Video – “Thinking Like a Political Scientist” and post video quiz
- Simulation – “You Are a Newspaper Editor” and post simulation quiz

Political Parties and Elections (April 9, 11, 14, 16)

April 11- Last day to withdrawal from course for academic reasons. After this date students can withdrawal only for urgent non-academic reasons.

- Read Shea Chapter 13
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Video – “Thinking Like a Political Scientist” and post video quiz

Interest Groups (April 18, 21, 23)

- Read Shea Chapter 12
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz
- Video – “In the Real World” and post video quiz
- Explore – “Can Interest Groups Buy Public Policy?” and post data quiz

Domestic Policy (April 25, 28)

- Read Shea Chapter 14.1, 14.2, and 14.6 (pages 507-519, 529-534)
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In the Real World” and post video quiz

Foreign Policy (April 30)

- Read Shea Chapter 15.3 and 15.5 (Pages 559-562, 574-584)
- Video – “The Basics” and post video quiz
- Video – “In Context” and post video quiz

Exam Make-Up Day - May 2

Final Exam: Wednesday May 7, 2004 @ 1:00PM – 3:00PM