

DRAFT SYLLABUS - Political Science 110-M70- American National Government (33941) May 15 - June 2

Professor Contact Information:

Dr. Kiasatpour

Office Location- Grise Hall-316

Phone: (270) 745-6359 E-mail: soleiman.kiasatpour@wku.edu *Best way to contact me!*

Fax: (270) 745-2945

Class Time and Location: Web Delivery

All Times are Central Standard Time CST or Central Daylight Time depending on the year

**** NOTE:** This syllabus is a work in progress and may be updated and modified up to the start of the course.

CONTACT ME-- If you have any questions or comments, throughout the course and even before we get started, please contact me via email and in your subject heading, type “PS 110” and a topic (non-substantive subject headings will be ignored). See “How to Communicate with your Professor” section below. I generally will respond to your emails and or phone calls within 24-48 hours**

Course Objectives & Description:

This course is a web course provided completely via the Internet through BlackBoard and email. In general, a basic knowledge of word processing and simple computer skills are necessary. Access to a computer that is connected to the Internet is mandatory. I can only open files (your papers and exams) that are supported by University software. **DO NOT SEND ME ANYTHING IN MICROSOFT WORKS or WORD PERFECT!** Be aware that web courses are best suited for methodical students who do work regularly and over time and not last minute. This web course is **HARD WORK!**

The course introduces you to the foundations, institutions and processes of American government and politics. It not only provides the necessary background for more advanced courses in political science (in case you are a major), but also seeks to help you to become better and more aware participants in politics and society. After successful completion of this class, you should be able to better comprehend local, national, and even, global political events and news, distinguish between fact and opinion and identify more clearly with a political worldview. Since “politics” is “who gets what, when and how,” this can be one of the most significant courses you will ever take. We will survey the structure and working of the American polity. The topics include: the political theory and philosophical foundations of U.S. politics, analysis of the Constitution, the division of power among the national, state and local governments (federalism) and an overview of the major formal-legal institutions of the national government—Congress, the presidency and the judiciary.

In addition, the processes that result in specific policy decisions and laws will also be addressed. Here we will focus on major issues confronting our government and society. As a result, you are required to follow the national news on a regular basis. The regular reading and analysis of political events and news are crucial.

COLONNADE REQUIREMENT—

PS 110 – American National Government fulfills **Colonnade Requirement:** Explorations (Social and Behavioral Sciences) This course fulfills the three hour requirement for the Colonnade Explorations section. As a Social and Behavioral Sciences course, PS 110 explores the human experience using theories and tools of political science. Students will analyze problems and conceptualize the ways in which theories and tools inform our understanding of the individual and society.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students successfully completing PS 110: American National Government will be able to:

- Students will be able to describe the historical context and development of the American political system and Constitution.
- Students will be able to identify the key institutions of the American political system.
- Students will be able to explain the processes and functions of the American political system.
- Students will be able to describe American political behavior by using knowledge of how people organize and use political information.
- Students will be able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the American political system.
- Students will be able to critically evaluate the ability of the American political system to serve its citizens.

How to Communicate with your Professor:

Communication in this course is primarily done through e-mail, Blackboard Communication interface and or by phone or in class.

In any email correspondence include:

1. your subject heading, type "PS 110" AND a "topic" (non-substantive subject headings will be ignored) Example of a substantive heading, "PS110 – paper guideline". Subjectless emails go to my junk folder and are deleted without being read.
2. a salutation, such as, "Dr. Kiasatpour,"
3. an email message which uses ALL the same conventions as any other piece of academic writing. i.e., Capitalization and punctuation, a meaningful message, and a formal closing and "signature." I will ignore emails which do not follow these guidelines.
4. For my part, when I receive your emails and or phone calls, I will try to respond within 48 hours or sooner.

How to SUCCEED in this course:

Do ALL the readings on time. Take good notes. Submit regularly on Blackboard. Be an active learner. Ask questions if you are confused. Follow ALL DIRECTIONS. When I provide feedback to you, implement my suggestions in the next assignment!

Following all directions is crucial in an online course. Unlike a traditional classroom, I assume that whatever I send to you and or type as text for your consumption is READ and UNDERSTOOD. So there is not the same type of repetition involved in a typical classroom setting. I send important information regularly to your assigned Western Kentucky University E-mail address. MAKE SURE YOUR EMAIL WORKS!!! Become familiar with how Blackboard works BEFORE class begins.

YOU as the student MUST BE PROACTIVE. Also you must be able to MANAGE YOUR TIME WELL.

Required Textbooks and Sources:

- PowerPoints – Instructor presentations of the material. These are mainly an outline of the material I believe is important for you to know. [meaning they will be tested] All are on Blackboard.

- Government In America Revel Access, by George Edwards and Lineberry

ISBN: 9780133951301

Status: Required

Edition: 16

Copyright: 2016

You may purchase older editions of Edwards up to one year old. However, pagination and chapters may be different.

NOTE: not having the book in time for the start of the course is NOT AN OPTION.

- Parenti, Michael. Democracy for the Few. 9th Ed. Wadsworth. 2011. ISBN 0-495-91126-7 Hereafter referred to as "Parenti." This book will be used throughout the course to contrast with Edwards and reflect on alternative positions on some of the events and issues you follow on the Blackboard discussions.

* Supplemental sources will be required and are on BlackBoard or will be sent to you via email. Some are listed below and marked, (S).

* Online coverage of the national news RELEVANT to our course at either:

1) The New York Times (Hereafter NYT)

<http://www.nytimes.com/> MAINLY READ THE "U.S./national" and "Washington" news sections.

OR

2) Another source is <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/> which is a clearinghouse for many sources.

Teaching Philosophy:

I would like to instill a sense of urgency in you regarding the political processes that affect your lives. For my part, I will try to facilitate your exploration of an interesting, challenging and critical subject. I try to promote a critical and analytical approach to understanding national politics and encourage students to become more and more politically active whatever their ideological tendencies.

Statement on Academic Honesty and Integrity:

You are expected to maintain a high standard of academic integrity. I will ask you to sign an academic honesty policy statement for each assigned work you turn in and will hold you accountable. As such, plagiarism and academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Violation of these standards will result in an “F” in the course and no possibility of withdrawal. NO EXCEPTIONS. That means if you cheat, plagiarize, engage in any sort of academic dishonesty including failure to cite sources appropriately on ANY portion of the course and are caught—you will automatically receive an “F” in the course and no further assignments will be honored. In addition, at the discretion of the instructor, cases may be pursued even further according to departmental and university guidelines. Here are excerpts from p. 27 of the Western Kentucky University Undergraduate Catalog (2001-2003) concerning academic honesty:

Academic Offenses – The maintenance of academic integrity is of fundamental importance to the University. Thus it should be clearly understood that acts of plagiarism or any other form of cheating will not be tolerated and that anyone committing such acts risks punishment of a serious nature.

Plagiarism – To represent written work taken from another source as one’s own is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense. The academic work of a student must be his/her own. One must give any author credit for source material borrowed from him/her. To lift content directly from a source without giving credit is a flagrant act. To present a borrowed passage without reference to the source after having changed a few words is also plagiarism.

* So when do you cite a source? If you have ANY doubts click on the links below

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/print/research/r_plagiar.html

for Purdue University’s Online Writing Lab page on plagiarism. Or go to “Turn-it-in.com” for their tips-- http://www.turnitin.com/research_site/e_home.html

Or if you are in doubt, email me or call me and or go to the Writing Center for guidance.

**** I maintain a zero-tolerance position on academic dishonesty. DO NOT COLLABORATE WITH EACH OTHER OR USE SOURCES WITHOUT APPROPRIATE ATTRIBUTION. **** On quizzes, do not use your books or notes if the instructions state “CLOSED NOTES/BOOKS.” I reserve the right to use “Turn-it-in” a powerful program the University and department have rights to and other software to identify collusion and plagiarism. Violators will be disciplined to the full extent of University guidelines, which includes an “F” for the course and expulsion from the University.

I DO NOT ACCEPT ANY MATERIAL FROM ONLINE DICTIONARIES AND OR ENCYCLOPEDIAS such as WIKIPEDIA; Only use our sources and or SPECIALIZED SOCIAL SCIENCE DICTIONARIES AND OR ENCYCLOPEDIA (with appropriate citations) available in most university libraries and some public libraries.

****** NOTE: All of your Assignments/Exams that are turned in via email or Ass’t Link need to include the following statement at the bottom:**

*This assignment (exam) represents my own work. I have not incorporated into this assignment (exam) any ****unacknowledged**** material from the work of another person, including papers, words, ideas, information, computer code, data, evidence-organizing principles, or style of presentation taken from the Internet, books, periodicals, or other sources.*

Word Count _____ words

Signature (type your name) Date

YOUR FINAL COURSE GRADE will be based on your performance in the following areas:

A. READING and CHAPTER QUIZZES (20% of final grade)

The quizzes cover chapter/lecture/readings and are similar to some of the forum questions. The quizzes are timed and closed books and notes. You will have two attempts and the grade of your second attempt is recorded. If you go over the time limit, Blackboard notifies me with an “!” mark. I will ignore ONE over the time limit quiz. After the first, I will only give you half credit for an over-the-time-limit quiz. If I sense ANYONE is engaged in ANY impropriety, I reserve the right to change the quiz policy (i.e., make quizzes one attempt only or shorten the duration of the quizzes).

B. REFLECTION JOURNAL ENTRIES (30% of final grade) See Sample Below

Much of the work you will do in this course will be online and mainly via the Journal function on BlackBoard. You will be responsible for responding to and commenting on various questions and topics throughout the course. I will monitor this regularly and let you know if you are or are not on track at the beginning. Sometimes the feedback is general and you may receive an email that may not apply to you. I apologize in advance but there is not enough time to personalize every email message. As for the reflection journals-- **YOU MUST DO THIS MULTIPLE TIMES DURING THE WEEK! QUANTITY AND QUALITY ARE BOTH CONSIDERED.**

- In intensive summer or winter sessions, the student will complete one set of reflection journal entries per day or two or three days (depending on length of course). For each forum you will be asked to answer 1-3 mandatory “EVERYONE DO” questions and 2-3 other questions that will be randomly generated. Thus, you will provide about 3-6 responses for each reflection journal, which covers the materials for that lecture, chapter and section of the course. Make sure that there is some thoughtful deliberation and thinking on those questions that ask for your opinion and views. **FOLLOW THE SCHEDULE.**
- **NOTE:** Always respond to question with evidence from OUR sources and ALL of our sources ONLY [unless you are prompted to use an outside source]. You must cite Edwards et al., Parenti and lecture in your responses to substantive questions. In other words, demonstrate **FIRST** that you have done the readings and understand the material, **THEN** and **ONLY** if asked provide your opinion or data from other sources if required.

C. TWO EXAMS (worth 50% of final grade, 25% each).

The purpose of exams is not only evaluation but also synthesis of knowledge. You will be asked to **APPLY** concepts to real-life situations and events. **STUDENTS WHO SHOW AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE MATERIAL THAT GOES BEYOND MERE REPETITION OF INFORMATION RECEIVE THE MOST CREDIT.** Exam questions may be from *Edwards, Parenti*, or supplemental sources or related to major pertinent news events. The questions may be a combination of **MULTIPLE CHOICE** and **ESSAY** and **SHORT ANSWER**. The Multiple Choice section is **TIMED** and offered **ONLINE** via Blackboard. You will receive a study guide. Questions are often similar to quiz questions and or the reflection journal entry questions. The essay exams are open book and notes and you must follow all directions for successful completion of this requirement of the course. Typically there are a choice of 2-3 Essay Questions and 5-10 Short Answer/Definitions. In your responses you must show that you have read **ALL** of our sources. **** You must attach the Honesty Statement to all Exams ****

YOU WILL RECEIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR EACH EXAM. Following the directions closely will help you earn the most possible points. **WORK ALONE AND INDEPENDENT OF OTHERS.**

- **Criteria for Grading --** You are rewarded for **ORIGINALITY** of ideas and the ability to synthesize the materials and have a clear and logical thesis in all of your answers. Sharing that knowledge with others means it is no longer special and becomes ordinary. **PLUS IT IS CHEATING!**
- For the essay questions, each and every response needs to have an introduction, body and conclusion(s). **DO NOT REPEAT** concepts and theories for each response. **EXPECTATIONS ARE MUCH HIGHER FOR TAKE-HOME EXAMS THAN IN-CLASS CLOSED-BOOK TESTS.** Please keep this in mind. You will have a set time frame to complete the essay portion of the exams.

IMPORTANT: Most questions come from the reflection journals and quizzes and under the weekly headings below. You will do well, if you study the **glossary** and understand the concepts for each week’s readings. To do well on the Multiple Choice section you must be taking notes on an ongoing basis.

GENERAL RULES AND GUIDELINES FOR REFLECTION JOURNAL ENTRIES AND A SAMPLE MAKE SURE

- 1) you have read and understand all the questions and the answers to all the questions posted on the reflection journal study guides YOU WILL GET THEM on the exam
- 2) make sure to read all the questions and have an answer for them, even if you do not “formally” respond to them
- 3) Make sure you are using all of the relevant sources in your answer.
- 4) In your reflections, REFERENCE THE TEXT page numbers of our class sources (Lec Notes, Edwards, Parenti, NY Times, or other approved source). DO NOT GIVE YOUR OPINION; UNLESS REQUESTED ; show you have read the powerpoints of all the class notes and texts and CITE THEM; **Always cite your sources; for example, (Parenti 26) or (Lecture Congress Slide 3)**
- 5) always seek to use **definitions, concepts and theories** from OUR COURSE Material;
- 6) If you are using information from the text or powerpoints, put these in YOUR OWN WORDS (but still cite your source); Do not merely copy and paste; you should PARAPHRASE the texts
- ** Both QUANTITY and QUALITY are taken into consideration when evaluating your reflection journals
- 7) I expect students to be on task throughout the week that means logging on and submitting your entries on multiple days (if applicable and a module/chapter is spread across more than one day; this may not apply if it is a super intensive class)
- 8) Each Topic/Chapter/Lecture [these may differ] typically requires 4-6 questions and or exercises. Many of these exercises REQUIRE you to visit a website or read a paragraph or two to respond. Answers to these questions are weighted more heavily, so make sure that you answer in full and relate the “evidence” you are often asked to provide to the substantive conclusions and data provided by our course materials.

WHAT NOT TO DO--

DO NOT

- use Wikipedia, Merriam Webster's, or other online dictionaries or encyclopedia; CUT AND PASTE SUBMISSIONS are considered PLAGIARISM without a cite [that constitutes a ZERO and possible disciplinary action]; with a cite they still receive no credit since information has been merely moved from one location to another
- be polemical, argumentative for the sake of argumentation
- submit "fact" or "opinion" without evidence from our sources or sources you cite; in fact, merely rejecting any of our authors or others' opinions without demonstrating you understand their position and providing evidence is unacceptable
- use these reflection journal entries as your "soap box"; your opinion is important; however, express them AFTER you have demonstrated you have read and understand our course material

SAMPLE REFLECTIVE JOURNAL ENTRY

Author:

What are public goods? Define and give an example. Go on the Internet and find an economists' definition of public goods. Compare that with Edwards' or Parenti's definition of this concept.

Entry

According to our text glossary, public goods are defined as “goods such as clean air and clean water that everyone must share” (Edwards, 621). Public goods are provided by the government with the intent that all people have equal access to them (Edwards, 8). A couple examples of public goods include national defense and access to highways (Edwards, 8). People have the ability to gain access to these goods without approval or permission. If one person has access to a public good, then everyone else does as well. Public goods are just one of the many tasks that are universal to the roles of government (Edwards, 8). According to Investopedia.com, an economists' definition of a public good is defined as “A product that one individual can consume without reducing its availability to another individual and from which no one is excluded. Economists refer to public goods as ‘non-rivalrous’ and ‘non-excludable’. National defense, sewer systems, public parks and basic television and radio broadcasts could all be considered public goods.” The economists' definition of public goods is very similar to that of Edwards' definition. Both definitions mention the inability to deny access to any person and the ability provide equal availability to all. Although both definitions are similar, the economists' definition is more specific, listing goods such as public parks, sewer systems, and television/radio broadcasts as examples as well. According to our lecture notes (see slide 2, intro Lecture), one of the key issues involving public goods is the “free-rider” problem.

How does government ensure the provision of public goods (that are paid for by the public through taxes) to everyone when many who do not pay their fair share of taxes “free-ride” and take advantage of the public good? This is a question that haunts governments around the world not just in the U.S.

Link to Investopedia.com public good definition:

<http://www.investopedia.com/terms/p/public-good.asp>

****** Important Grading and Testing Policies:**

LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR GRADED. Online courses cannot be functional if they are not structured systematically. Please help us maintain a well-functioning course by turning assignments in on time. That will be the key to success in this course.

**** IF YOU FAIL TO COMPLETE THE PAPER/ASSIGNMENTS OR MISS AN EXAM OR ANY COMPONENT OF THE COURSE, you will receive a ZERO for that portion of the course.**
No Incomplete grades will be given. No Change of Grades or Late Withdrawals will be honored.

Final letter grades are awarded based on the following percentage point totals:

A = 90- 100% B = 80-89% C = 70-79% straight D = 60-69% F = 0-59%

******* NOTE -- You must use, when applicable, ALL THE SOURCES: Lecture Notes, Edwards and Parenti in your work in the discussions, and on exams; OTHERWISE YOU WILL ONLY RECEIVE PARTIAL CREDIT. DEMONSTRATE YOU HAVE READ ALL THE MATERIAL *******

**** For students who qualify under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA),** Students with disabilities who require academic and/or auxiliary accommodations for this course must contact Student Disability Services in Downing University Center, A-200. The phone number is 270-745-5004. Please DO NOT request accommodations directly from the professor or instructor without a letter of accommodation from Student Disability Services.

****** Important Grading and Testing Policies:**

LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED OR GRADED.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ASSIGNMENTS (see below)

Political Science 110-D70-- American National Government (33941)– May 15 – June 2, 2017
SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

Instructor and Contact Information:

Soleiman Kiasatpour, Ph.D.

pronounced <Key-Ā-sat-poor>

Office Location- Grise Hall-316

Phone: (270) 745-6359 E-mail: soleiman.kiasatpour@wku.edu *Best way to contact me is by email!*

All Times are Central Standard Time CST or Central Daylight Time depending on the year

**** NOTE:** This syllabus is a work in progress and may be updated. **CONTACT ME**—If you have any questions

TECHNICAL ISSUES ARE NOT A VALID EXCUSE FOR FALLING BEHIND AND FAILURE TO COMPLETE ASSIGNED WORK ON TIME, INCLUDING QUIZZES AND EXAMS. Make a back up of all your work as you work. Email a copy of your assignments to your self. Back-up to your device, Use University labs if you have a slow connection at home.

	Readings	Assignments
May 15	Introduction to the study of politics & democracy and American government Edwards, <i>Preface and Introducing Government In America</i> ; Parenti, <i>Partisan Politics</i> ; Skim Parenti, <i>Wealth and Want in the United States</i>	Reflection Journal and quiz by 9:00 PM
May 16	The Constitution and especially Articles I, II, and III Edwards, <i>The Constitution</i> ; Parenti, <i>A Constitution for the Few</i> ; Marbury v. Madison (1803) (S) Also read the Federalist Essays in the Appendix of Edwards. What are the key arguments of <i>Federalist 10</i> and <i>51</i> ?	Reflection Journal Start
May 17	Continue with The Constitution	Reflection Journal End Take Quiz by 9:00 PM
May 18	Federalism Edwards, <i>Federalism</i> ; no Parenti McCulloch v. Maryland (1819) (S) Contrast federal, confederal & unitary governments. What powers do each level of government have in each system?	Reflection Journal and quiz by 9:00 PM
May 19	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Combined lecture, discussion and quiz) Edwards, <i>Civil Liberties and Public Policy</i> ; Parenti, <i>Unequal Before the Law</i> Know key cases relating to Civil Liberties and Civil Rights. E.g., <i>Gideon v. Wainwright</i> (right to counsel)	Reflection Journal Start
May 20	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Combined lecture, discussion and quiz), Cont. Edwards, <i>Civil Rights and Public Policy</i> ; Parenti, <i>Unequal Before the Law</i>	Reflection Journal End Take Quiz by 9:00 PM
May 21	NO CLASS WORK	
May 22	Public Opinion and Political Socialization Edwards, <i>Public Opinion and Political Action</i> ; Parenti, <i>The Plutocratic Culture: Ideologies and Institutions</i> . What/who are the agents of political socialization? Liberal v. Conservative	Reflection Journal and quiz by 9:00 PM

May 23	The Mass Media Edwards, <i>The Mass Media and Political Agenda</i> ; Parenti, <i>Mass Media: For the Many by the Few</i> . Ownership and the News; Theories of the Media and politics. How do the media affect politics? Three models of media influence on politics in class notes are important. Watch and critically evaluate the “ <i>Myth of the Liberal Media</i> ” film clip on BB	Reflection Journal and quiz by 9:00 PM
May 24	EXAM ONE (directions and due dates/times TBA)	
May 25	Political Parties Edwards, <i>Political Parties</i> ; Skim Edwards, <i>Campaigns and Voting Behavior</i> (there will be questions on this) Parenti, <i>Voters, Parties, and Stolen Elections</i> Why two parties? What is Duverger’s “Law”? SMDP v. PR systems. Read supplemental material on the two systems as outlined on discussion board. What are the functions of parties?	Reflection Journal Start
May 26	Political Parties, Cont.	Reflection Journal End Take Quiz by 9:00 PM
May 27	Interest Groups Edwards, <i>Interest Groups</i> ; Parenti, <i>Who Governs? Elites, Labor, and Globalization</i> ; and Skim Parenti, <i>Politics: Who Gets What?</i> Theories of IG politics; Who benefits? Who has the most influence and why? Which organizations are most likely to influence politics?	Reflection Journal and quiz by 9:00 PM
May 28	NO CLASS WORK	
May 29	Congress Edwards, <i>Congress</i> ; Parenti, <i>Congress: The Pocketing of Power</i> . The office, the process; representational style; Party loyalty, Committees, study a particular rep/senator and evaluate style and monetary support and position taking; the advantages of incumbency	Reflection Journal Start
May 30	Congress cont.	Reflection Journal End Take Quiz by 9:00 PM
May 31	The Presidency Edwards, <i>The Presidency</i> ; Parenti, <i>The President: The Guardian of the System</i> . Essay by Richard Neustadt (S)	Reflection Journal and quiz by 9:00 PM
June 1	The Federal Courts Edwards, <i>The Federal Courts</i> ; Parenti, <i>The Supremely Political Court</i> Past and present decisions of the Court; is the Court political?	Reflection Journal and quiz by 9:00 PM
June 2	Final Exam	EXAM TWO (directions and due dates/times TBA)