

WESTERN KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY
Department of Political Science
PS 110 - American National Government
Fall 2019 – World Wide Web

Class Location: World Wide Web

Instructor: Dr. Amber Scott Belt
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Course Description:

PS 110, fulfills the three hour requirement for the Colonnade Explorations section. This course is an introduction to the political structure and processes of government at the national level within the United States. 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.

Course Objectives:

Regardless of the individual's course of study or level of expertise, this course shall prepare each student to:

- Exercise responsible citizenship by exploring the U.S. Political System and participating in various writing assignments known as *Citizen Engagement Exercises* and on-line debates.
- Demonstrate effective critical thinking skills through the exercise of identifying, investigating, evaluating and analyzing the relevance of attainable data, as it pertains to the U.S. Political system, and providing students with the opportunity to deliberate his or her personal inference and conclusion as it relates to such data. This course objective will be met through Discussion Board participation, quizzes and exams.
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the U.S. Political System through the exercise of reading the text and successfully completing of various assessments. This course objective will be met through Discussion Board participation, quizzes and exams.

Required Text: (NOTE – The electronic version of this text will automatically be made available to you on Blackboard. Purchasing the hard copy is optional).

American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials, Enhanced, 19th Edition

- Author(s): Barbara A. Bardes; Mack C. Shelley II; Steffen W. Schmidt
- Textbook ISBN-10: 1-337-79978-5
- Textbook ISBN-13: 978-1-337-79978-2

Course Requirements

Participation – Successful completion of any course largely depends upon the level of student effort

and participation. Students are expected to participate in weekly Discussion Threads. **Participation means that you are not only required to post a thread, but you are to read and thoughtfully respond to a minimum of two your fellow students' posts.** Please review the *WKU Student Code of Conduct* at www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo.

Preparation – Students shall demonstrate preparation for this course by reading the text and completing the quizzes assigned on Blackboard.

Demonstration – Students shall demonstrate their comprehension of the text by participating in Discussion Board forums and completing Citizen Engagement Exercises and exams as assigned on Blackboard.

Learning Outcomes:

- 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.

Method of Evaluation:

The course grade will have three components – Participation (Discussion Boards), Preparation (chapter quizzes) & Demonstration (Discussion Board participation, Citizen Engagement Exercises and exams). The final exam will be comprehensive and optional. If a student is satisfied with his/her grade after completing Exam 4, S/he may elect not to take the final exam.

The final grade will be determined as follows:

100 – 90 % = A
89 – 80% = B
79 – 70% = C
69 – 60% = D
59 – 00% = F

Assignments

ALL Assignments are posted on Blackboard. **It is the student's responsibility** to check Blackboard daily for announcements, assignments and upcoming class activities. For this course, the week begins on Monday at 12:00a.m. and ends the following Sunday at 11:59p.m. Central Time. All assignments and assessments must be submitted by 11:59p.m. Central Time each respective Sunday.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE POSTED DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION. This course is designed so that there are plenty of opportunities to earn points. Students who find themselves unable to meet course requirements should contact the instructor IMMEDIATELY. This course is specifically designed so that students may work as far ahead as they choose with the exception of weekly Discussion Board participation which may be accomplished via most electronic devices. Therefore, missed assignments cannot be made up unless the student suffers a

catastrophic illness or injury. Otherwise, **the final exam will be the ONLY opportunity to earn additional points.** The final exam will be comprehensive and optional. If a student is satisfied with his/her grade after completing Exam 4, S/he may elect, without penalty, not to take the final exam and keep their current overall grade.

INSTRUCTIONAL AVAILABILITY AND ASSISTANCE

Scheduled office hours to assist students are by appointment. I am available by email or telephone and you are always welcome to contact me. However, **while the course is available 24/7, the instructor is not.**

Other information concerning student accessibility assistance, Title IX, academic integrity, and other student resources may be found at: www.wku.edu/syllabusinfo.

Course Schedule – Instructor reserves the right to modify the Course Schedule based on time constraints and other unforeseen events and will notify students via Blackboard Announcement and e-mail of pending changes as soon as is reasonably possible.

COURSE OUTLINE/DAILY SCHEDULE:

*****All assignments are posted in Blackboard under 'Weekly Assignments' and may be accessed via a link contained on the left navigation bar.**

Week 1: Aug 26 – Sep 1

Chapter 1 “The Democratic Republic”

HOMEWORK (DUE SEP 1): Complete both of the Week 1 Discussion Boards. Watch video. Read Chapter 1 as assigned in the text. Complete quiz for Chapter 1.

Week 2: Sep 2 – Sep 8

Chapter 2 “The Constitution”

Chapter 3 “Federalism”

HOMEWORK (DUE SEP 8): Complete Week 2 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapters 2 & 3 in the text. Complete quizzes for Chapters 2 & 3.

Week 3: Sep 9 – Sep 15

Chapter 4 “Civil Liberties”

Chapter 5 “Civil Rights”

HOMEWORK (DUE SEP 15): Complete Week 3 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapters 4 & 5 in the text. Complete Chapter 4 & Chapter 5 Quizzes and Prepare for Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5).

Week 4: Sep 16 – Sep 22

Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5)

HOMEWORK (DUE SEP 22): Complete Exam 1 (Chapters 1-5). Complete Week 4 Discussion Board. Citizen Engagement Exercise 1 Part 2.

Week 5: Sep 23 – Sep 29

Chapter 6 “Public Opinion and Political Socialization”

HOMEWORK (DUE SEP 29): Complete Week 5 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapter 6 in the text. Complete quiz for Chapter 6.

Week 6: Sep 30 – Oct 6

Chapter 7 “Interest Groups”

Chapter 8 “Political Parties”

HOMEWORK (DUE OCT 6): Complete Week 6 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapters 7 & 8 in the text. Complete quizzes for Chapter 7 and Chapter 8.

Week 7: Oct 7 – Oct 13

Chapter 9 “Campaigns and Elections”

Chapter 10 “The Media”

HOMEWORK (DUE OCT 13): Complete Week 8 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapters 9 & 10 in the text. Complete quizzes for Chapters 9 & 10 and Prepare for Exam 2 (Chapters 6-10).

Week 8: Oct 14 – Oct 20

Exam 2 (Chapters 6-10)

HOMEWORK (DUE OCT 20): Complete Exam 2 (Chapters 6-10). Complete Week 8 Discussion Board. Complete Citizen Engagement Exercise 2.

Week 9: Oct 21 – Oct 27

Chapter 11 “The Congress”

HOMEWORK (DUE OCT 27): Complete Week 9 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapter 11 in the text. Complete quiz for Chapters 11.

Week 10: Oct 28 – Nov 3

Chapter 12 “The President”

HOMEWORK (DUE NOV 3): Complete Week 10 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapter 12 in the text. Complete quiz for Chapter 12.

Week 11: Nov 4 – Nov 10

Chapter 13 “The Bureaucracy”

HOMEWORK (NOV 10): Complete Week 11 Discussion Board. Watch video. Read Chapter 13 in the text. Complete Chapter 13 quiz.

Week 12: Nov 11 – Nov 17

Chapter 14 “The Courts”

HOMEWORK (DUE NOV 17): Complete Week 12 Discussion Board. Read Chapter 14 in the text. Complete quiz for Chapter 14 and prepare for Exam 3 (Chapters 11-14).

Week 13: Nov 18 – Nov 24

Exam 3 (Chapters 11-14)

HOMEWORK (DUE NOV 24): Complete Exam 3 (Chapters 11-14). Complete Week 13 Discussion Board. Complete Citizen Engagement Exercise 3.

Week 14: Nov 25 – Dec 1

Chapter 15 “Domestic and Economic Policy”

HOMEWORK (DUE DEC 1): Complete Week 14 Discussion Board. Read Chapters 15 and 16 in the text. Complete the quizzes for Chapters 15 & 16. Prepare for Exam 4 (Chapters 15-16).

Week 15: Dec 2 – Dec 8

Chapter 16 “Foreign Policy”

HOMEWORK (DUE DEC 8): Complete Exam 4 (Chapters 15-16). Complete Discussion

Board 15.

Week 16: Dec 9 – Dec 13

Final Exam (Chapters 1-16)

HOMEWORK (DUE DEC 13): ***This is the final exam for this course. The final exam is comprehensive and optional. If a student is satisfied with his/her grade after completing Exam 4, S/he may elect, without penalty, not to take the final exam and keep their current overall grade.

THIS COURSE SCHEDULE IS TENTATIVE AND IS SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITH OR WITHOUT NOTICE.