

American National Government and Politics
PS 1100–110 Spring 2015
Monday, Wednesday, & Friday 11:00–11:50 a.m.
Location: Anne Belk Hall 223

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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m.,
Tuesdays 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. (virtual),
Thursdays 9:00 a.m.–11:00 a.m. (virtual), and by appointment

1 Introduction

“We hold these Truths to be self-evident,
that all Men are created equal,
that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights,
that among these are Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness -
that to secure these Rights, Governments are instituted among Men,
deriving their just Powers from the Consent of the Governed,
that whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these Ends,
it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it,
and to institute new Government, laying its Foundations on such Principles,
and organizing its Powers in such Forms,
as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness.”
The Declaration of Independence, 1776

This course will provide students with an introduction to American politics and government. The course will focus on three areas: foundations of American government, institutions, and American political behavior. By the end of the course, students will have a more complete understanding of the way government operates as well as the effect rules and institutions have on behavior. Time will also be spent exploring ways for individuals to actively engage the political process.

2 Required Text

There is one required text for this course:

- Geer, Schiller, and Segal. 2014. *Gateways to Democracy*. 2nd ed. Cengage Learning.

Students are expected to keep up with current events by reading a national newspaper (*Washington Post*, *LA Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *Wall Street Journal*, or *New York Times*) daily. Articles may be assigned as additional reading throughout the semester.

Supplementary material will be distributed in class, posted on AsULearn or distributed via e-mail if necessary. All class communication will be sent to the e-mail address on file with the university. **Students are expected to check this account daily.**

3 Course Requirements

- *Participation:* (10%)
- *General Education Exercises:* (10%)
- *Exam I:* (20%)
- *Exam II:* (20%)
- *Final Exam:* (25%)
- *Online Problem Sets:* (15%)

Examinations: All exams will be graded on an 0-100 scale. Grades will consist of 3 exams, general education exercises, and quizzes. Exams will be cumulative. Make-up exams will only be offered under extraordinary circumstances, i.e. a death in the family or medical emergency. Proper documentation is required. Note that simply visiting a doctor is not sufficient. There must be written documentation stating that the student was physically incapable of taking the exam. All make-up exams must be completed within one week (7 calendar days) of the original exam date. This window will only be increased for the most extreme cases. Failure to complete a make-up exam within the allotted 7-day window will result in a grade of zero for the exam. The format of the make-up exam is left to the discretion of the instructor.

Students who improperly fill in their names on the Scantron sheet will lose five points off their exam grade.

I will impose a 24-hour moratorium on the discussion of grades beginning when a graded assignment or exam is returned. In addition to this waiting period, all concerns regarding graded work must be presented in writing.

Attendance and Participation: Although formal attendance will not be taken, students are expected to attend every class. Students who miss class are responsible for all material missed. Beyond attendance, students are expected to have completed all of the assigned reading before class. Due to the large amount of material covered each meeting, it is imperative that everyone be familiar with the material before each class begins. Completing the reading before class also allows students to engage in thoughtful discussion and makes class more interesting. The quality (not just quantity) of class participation and completion of in-class exercises will be considered when computing the student's final grade. Remember: simply showing up is not enough to get credit for participation.

Problem Sets: Students are responsible for completing several problem sets on the Aplia website (linked via AsULearn). Problem set dates are noted on the Aplia website. Students are responsible for knowing when a problem set is available and completing it before the problem set closes. Once a problem set is closed, it can not be taken. In other words, there are no make-up problem sets. It is advisable to not wait until the last minute to start a problem set as technology problems are not an excuse for missed quizzes.

Note: There may be unannounced in-class quizzes if it appears students are not keeping up with the reading. Any material covered up to and including that day's material (textbook readings and lecture) is fair game for a quiz. Note that quizzes may be given at any time during the class period—including multiple quizzes per day—and *there are no make-up quizzes*.

How to register for Aplia: Students should not attempt to register with Aplia until given the go-ahead by the instructor. Detailed registration instructions will be posted on AsULearn. When registering, you will need the following course key: 5LX4-LSXJ-DP64

General Education Assessment Exercises: All PS 1100 students (regardless of section) are required to complete two general education assessment exercises. **Both exercises must be submitted via AsULearn as hard copy submissions will not be accepted.** Students who submit the exercise on time and address each requirement will receive full credit for that assignment. Students will be penalized 15 points for every *calendar day* the assignment is late. Improper citations or other forms of plagiarism will result in a grade of zero (0). Please see the academic integrity section below.

Grading Scale: Letter grades will be assigned according to the scale below:

- 100-94 = “A”
- 93-90 = “A–”
- 89-87 = “B+”
- 86-84 = “B”
- 83-80 = “B–”
- 79-77 = “C+”
- 76-74 = “C”
- 73-70 = “C–”
- 69-67 = “D+”
- 66-64 = “D”
- 63-60 = “D–”
- Below 60 = “F”

A final word on grading: Final grades will only be rounded up in the case of decimals, e.g. an 85.4 will round to an 86. An 89.0 *will not* be rounded to a 90. This policy is non-negotiable. Please plan accordingly.

“Lack of preparation on your part does not constitute an emergency on my end.”
- Unknown Origin

“Do or do not, there is no try.”
-Yoda

4 Classroom Policies

For additional and more detailed policies, please visit <http://academicaffairs.appstate.edu/syllabi>

Electronic Devices: **Laptop and tablet computers may not be used during class time.** Students are also expected to silence their cell phones and refrain from talking, texting, or otherwise using their phones for the duration of the class period. Any internet activity (including checking email), gaming, or other use that does not directly pertain to this class is unacceptable. Students who violate the electronics policy will

receive a grade of zero (0) for their final participation grade. If you feel you will not be able to abide by this policy, please leave your electronic devices at home so you won't be tempted.

No audio or image recording is allowed in the classroom without the express written consent of the instructor.

Email: Writing a professional email is an important skill one should master before graduation. All emails to the instructor should include the following: a subject line briefly explaining the topic of the email and that it pertains to PS 1100; a greeting more professional than "Yo" or "Hey;" a clear question or request; and should identify the sender by name. **Emails lacking any of these criteria will no be returned.** Most emails will be returned within 24 hours on weekdays and 48 hours on weekends, although circumstances may arise which delay response time.

Office Hours: Office hours are as listed on the top of the syllabus. Students who are having difficulty with the course materials and/or assignments are encouraged to see me during office hours or schedule an appointment to meet with me outside of office hours. Please note that office hours are for clarification of material, not for recreating a lecture. In other words, if you miss a class please make sure your first course of action is to read the required readings and obtain the lecture notes from a classmate rather than coming to office hours and asking me to "re-do" the lecture. I am always happy to spend time with students clarifying materials, provided they have made an independent effort to comprehend the material.

A List of Do's and Don'ts (Mostly Don'ts)

Do's:

- Attend all classes.
- Read all of the assigned material before class.
- Participate in class discussion.
- Ask for help as soon as you feel yourself falling behind—not the evening before an exam or paper.

Don'ts:

- Don't ask me if you have to do something. I will always tell you no—but keep in mind there are always consequences for failing to do it.
- Don't ask me how to get an A in this course. The syllabus clearly states how to achieve this desired outcome—accumulate 94% (or more) of the total available points.
- Don't ask me if something we are discussing in class is important. Assume if we are talking about it that it is important.
- Don't complain if you are tardy and miss a quiz or other in-class assignment. Chronic lateness is your problem, not mine.
- Don't ask me to email you anything. Most things will be placed on ASULearn. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get it and this does not mean asking me for it.
- If you miss class for any reason, don't ask me if you missed something important. Assume you missed something important and figure out how you are going to obtain that information.
- Don't text or talk on your cell phone, sleep, talk to your fellow classmates, read the newspaper, check your email, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, GChat/IM, Yik Yak, shop online, or do work or reading for another class during class time. If you feel compelled to engage in any of these activities, STAY HOME (seriously).

5 Americans with Disabilities Act

Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. If you have a disability and may need reasonable accommodations in order to have equal access to the University's courses, programs and activities, please contact the Office of Disability Services (828.262.3056 or www.ods.appstate.edu). Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations. Please notify me as soon as possible if you require any accommodations related to a disability.

6 Academic Integrity

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty are required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Office of Student Conduct. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty, please refer to the academic integrity code website at <http://studentconduct.appstate.edu/pagesmith/2>

7 This American Life Theme

American National Government and Politics is part of the This American Life theme within the Historical and Social Perspective. With a focus on the foundations of civic education, this theme leads to an understanding of how the American people created and developed their democratic institutions and social processes; how marginalized groups within the American framework have sought and won access to civic life; and how Americans have expressed their social and individual conscience to shape their identity and their place within the world.

8 Course Schedule

** This syllabus serves a general plan for the course; deviations announced by the instructor may be necessary.*

12-Jan : Introduction

14-Jan : Founding

Required Reading: Chapter 2; Federalist #10; Federalist #51

16-Jan : No Class—SPSA Conference

19-Jan : No Class—State Holiday

21-Jan : Founding and Constitution

Required Reading: Chapter 2

23-Jan : Constitution

Required Reading: Chapter 2

26-Jan : Constitution

Required Reading: Chapter 2

28-Jan : Constitution
Required Reading: Chapter 2

30-Jan : Federalism
Required Reading: Chapter 3

2-Feb : Federalism
Required Reading: Chapter 3

4-Feb : Federalism — **FIRST GEN ED EXERCISE DUE**
Required Reading: Chapter 3

6-Feb : Civil Liberties
Required Reading: Chapter 4

9-Feb : Civil Liberties
Required Reading: Chapter 4

11-Feb : Civil Liberties
Required Reading: Chapter 4

13-Feb : Civil Liberties
Required Reading: Chapter 4

16-Feb : Civil Rights
Required Reading: Chapter 5

18-Feb : Civil Rights
Required Reading: Chapter 5

20-Feb : Civil Rights
Required Reading: Chapter 5

23-Feb : Catch-up/Review Day

25-Feb : **EXAM I**

27-Feb : Congress
Required Reading: Chapter 12

2-Mar : Congress
Required Reading: Chapter 12

4-Mar : Congress
Required Reading: Chapter 12

6-Mar : No Class

9-Mar : No Class—Spring Break

11-Mar : No Class—Spring Break

13-Mar : No Class—Spring Break

16-Mar : Executive and Bureaucracy
Required Reading: Chapters 13 & 14

18-Mar : Executive and Bureaucracy
Required Reading: Chapters 13 & 14

20-Mar : Executive and Bureaucracy
Required Reading: Chapters 13 & 14

23-Mar : Judiciary
Required Reading: Chapter 15

25-Mar : Judiciary
Required Reading: Chapter 15

27-Mar : Judiciary
Required Reading: Chapter 15

30-Mar : Catch-up/Review Day

1-Apr : **EXAM II**

3-Apr : Public Opinion
Required Reading: Chapter 6

6-Apr : No Class—State Holiday
8-Apr : Public Opinion/Voting
Required Reading: Chapters 6 & 11

10-Apr : Voting
Required Reading: Chapter 11

13-Apr : Voting — **SECOND GEN ED EXERCISE DUE**
Required Reading: Chapter 11

15-Apr : Campaigns and Elections
Required Reading: Chapter 15

17-Apr : Campaigns and Elections
Required Reading: Chapter 10

20-Apr : Campaigns and Elections
Required Reading: Chapter 10

22-Apr : Campaigns and Elections
Required Reading: Chapter 10

24-Apr : No Class

27-Apr : Parties and Interest Groups
Required Reading: Chapters 8 & 9

29-Apr : Parties and Interest Groups
Required Reading: Chapters 8 & 9

1-May : Catch-up/Review Day

8-May : **Final Exam– 3:00-5:30pm**