American and Wyoming Government

Discussion Section Syllabus

Spring 2017: POLS 1000-20, 24

9:00 am - 9:50 am & 10:00 am - 10:50 am, Fridays

Teaching Assistant: Adam Croft
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Office Hours: Wednesday: 1 pm – 3:00 pm
Thursday: 1 pm – 3:00 pm
or by appointment

The purpose of the discussion section of American and Wyoming Government is to enhance your knowledge of the subjects covered in lecture. By the end of this class, you will have a better understanding of local, state and national politics, and the issues at the fore of U.S. political debate.

Course Layout & Assignments

There will be 14 discussion class periods during this semester. In addition to discussing topics covered in lecture, we will examine how they relate to current events. Attendance is mandatory in order to succeed in this class, and the discussion section is no different. Required readings will be sent to you via email, and it is expected that you will have read them prior to class. These readings will not only inform discussion, allowing you to participate and answer questions, they will also enable you to complete assignments.

Writing assignments are to be submitted as a physical copy in discussion, not electronically. All writing assignments should be in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font and should be double-spaced. Students should treat these assignments as brief exercises in formal writing. As such, students will be penalized for grammatical or formatting errors. This includes the use of contractions, which will incur a penalty.

Grading

Attendance/Participation: 20 points
Response Papers: 20 points (2 papers, 10 points each)
Argument Paper: 40 points (Due April 14)

Classroom Etiquette

It is essential that students adhere to the Student Code of Conduct. As this is a class about politics, many of the issues that will be discussed are contentious. Students do not have to agree with the opinions and viewpoints expressed by other students or the instructor but
they must remain respectful. Discriminatory remarks of any kind will not be tolerated. It is my goal to create an environment in which students feel comfortable expressing ideas and discussing them with other students. To help maintain a constructive learning environment, please refrain from using cell phones or other devices for purposes that do not pertain to the discussion at hand.

**Attendance Policy**

Frequent participation is essential for every student in this class. Your grade will be based not only on how active you are but also on the insights and perspectives you bring to class. It is essential that you complete the assigned readings prior to class, so as to have an informed opinion during the class.

Attendance will be taken during every class period.

If you know in advance that you are not going to be able to attend a class period, you must contact me by email before the start of class, explaining why you will not be able to attend. There is no guarantee that your request will be accepted, it depends on your situation and the class schedule.

**Late Work**

I will deduct 10% from assignments that are turned in late. If you know in advance that you are going to have difficulty meeting an assignment deadline, you must contact me by email at least one day before the assignment is due, explaining what your conflict is and suggesting an alternative deadline that you can meet. Generally, it will not be an issue to adjust deadlines as needed. However, there is no guarantee that your request will be accepted, it depends on your situation and the course schedule. Your alternative deadline will not be official until I have confirmed it in writing in an email.

In the event of a serious illness or emergency, documentation (e.g., through a doctor’s note) will be accepted and associated penalties removed. It is up to my discretion as to whether or not the documentation itself is acceptable and received in a timely manner (e.g., you cannot turn in a doctor’s note one month after the unexcused absence). Also, I will recognize documented University of Wyoming approved absences.

**Academic Integrity**

University of Wyoming regulations concerning academic dishonesty are strictly enforced. Academic dishonesty can be deliberate or it can be as a result of carelessness; you will be held responsible for academic dishonesty regardless of whether you "meant" to do it. University Regulation 6-802 § 4-A defines academic dishonesty to include:

- Using notes or prepared information in an examination unless authorized by the instructor.
- Taking an examination for someone else or allowing someone to take an examination for oneself.
- Copying from, or assisting, another student during an examination.
• Stealing, or otherwise improperly obtaining, copies of an examination before or after its administration.

The policy on academic dishonesty stated in the course syllabus will be followed. Additional penalties, including suspension from the University and loss of scholarships, may also be imposed (University Regulation 6-802 § 6).

**Accommodations for Disabilities**

Students who have a physical, learning, sensory, or psychological disability and require accommodations must inform me as soon as possible. You will need to register with University Disability Support Services (UDSS) and provide them with documentation of your disability. Their office is in Room 330 of Knight Hall and their email address is udss@uwyo.edu

**Communication**

Students are welcome and encouraged to contact me via email or through office hours to discuss class materials or other related topics. My goal is to help students better understand the topics covered in the class. I will happily respond to emails sent from UW accounts (uwyo.edu) and with the subject line "POLS 1000". My office hours are listed at the top of this document, or you can contact me to set up an appointment.

**Tentative Schedule:**

Topics are subject to change, but in such cases, you will receive prior warning.

- **January 27, Week 1**
  Class Introduction

- **February 3, Week 2**
  U.S. Constitution Quiz
  U.S. Constitution

- **February 10, Week 3**
  Federalism
  **Reading for Response Paper Issued**

- **February 17, Week 4**
  Rights of Individuals Accused of Crimes
  **Reading Response Paper Due**
  **Review for the First Exam**

- **February 24, Week 5**
  Civil Liberties (Freedom vs. Security)

- **March 3, Week 6**
  **Return the first exam**
  Political Attitudes
March 10, Week 7
Reading for Response Paper #2 Issued
Political Parties

March 17, Week 8
Spring Break, NO CLASS

March 24, Week 9
Reading Response #2 Due
Elections

March 31, Week 10
Review for the second exam
Discuss Argument Paper
Interest Groups

April 7, Week 11
Return the second exam
Congress

April 14, Week 12
Argument Paper Due
Congress

April 21, Week 13
Executive Branch and Bureaucracy

April 28, Week 14
Courts

May 5, Week 15
Review for final exam