American and Wyoming Government

Discussion Section Syllabus

Spring 2017: POLS 1000

Sections 22, 25

10:00 am – 10:50 am & 11:00 am – 11:50 am, Fridays

Teaching Assistant: Jerry Stott
Office: Room 136 A&S
Email: jstott3@uwyo.edu
Office Hours: Monday: 9:00 am – 10:00 am
              Tuesday: 9:30 am – 10:30 am
              Wednesday: 9:00 am – 10:00 am
              or by appointment

The purpose of the discussion section of American and Wyoming Government is to enhance your knowledge on the lecture subjects and explore questions and topics that might not be addressed in the lecture. By the end of this class, you will better understand the structure and function of the local, state, and federal government. You will also learn more about the impact and role of government in your life. The discussions provide you and your classmates the opportunity to explore political ideas and concepts, so please do not be afraid to participate.

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 and impact you. Students are expected to follow current events in American politics through reading newspapers, watching news online or on television, or keeping up with news through other media sources. Discussion about current events or historical accounts is encouraged, however, I reserve the right to restrict in-class discussion if necessary.

Any 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, allow you to participate and answer questions, but they will also enable you to write response papers. Also, this class will feature a 3-page double-spaced opinion paper that should be backed up by multiple academic sources.

The two Response Papers and Argument Paper are to be handed in during the class date the assignment is due. This must be a hard copy, I will not take an emailed version of the paper. You must deliver this paper to me in person, not via a classmate. These writing assignments should be well thought out and have few spelling or grammar issues. Write in 12pt font and double space your work. Please cite all sources, this can be in any citation method you choose.
Grading

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

Classroom Etiquette

Students must abide by the Student Code of Conduct. Because of the expansive nature of American Politics, many topics will be covered and many opinions will be shared that you may or may not agree with. All opinions will be equally considered; however, any discriminatory remarks or behavior will not be tolerated. It is my goal to provide an environment where each student feels comfortable enough to share their thought and opinions. Because of this, be respectful to your classmates. If a situation arises where you do not feel safe or comfortable, please contact me, Dr. King, or the University to report the situation. As part of creating a comfortable environment, electronics other than laptops should be turned off or silenced. If you have a specific reason why you need to have your cell phone available, speak to me before class.

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory in order to be successful in this class. Regularly attending discussions not only provides you with necessary course information but allows me a chance to know who you are and help you succeed. The purpose of discussion sections is to provide a platform for you to explore your own thoughts and consider the views of the authors we read and your classmates. This isn’t possible if you are not regularly attending discussions.

Frequent participation is essential for every student in this class. Your grade will be based not only on how active you are but 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 within 48 hours before the start of class, explaining why you will not be able to attend. I understand that situations arise that are more important than this class. Please keep in contact with me. There is no guarantee you will be excused, but the more contact I have with you the better. Again, send me an email or come to office hours if something arises.

Late Work

If you know in advance that you are going to have difficulty meeting an assignment deadline, you must contact me by email within 24 hours before the assignment is due, explaining what your conflict is and suggesting an alternative deadline that you can meet. There is no guarantee that your request will be accepted, it depends on your situation and the lab 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 penalty for committing academic dishonesty are as follows:

- First offense: a score of zero (0) on the assignment in question
- Second offense: a grade of “F” for the course.

Additional penalties, including suspension from the University and loss of scholarships, may also be imposed by other University officials (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 to contact me via email or through office hours to discuss class materials or other related topics. My goal is to help students understand the material and succeed. If you are struggling with a topic, please contact me. 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. If this happens you will receive prior notification.

January 27, Week 1
Class Introduction

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

February 10, Week 3
Federalism
Response Paper #1 Assigned

February 17, Week 4
Rights of Individuals Accused of Crimes
**Reading Response #1 Due**
**Review for the first exam (which is given Wednesday, February 22)**

February 24, Week 5
Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

March 3, Week 6
Political Attitudes and Participation
**Return the first exam**

March 10, Week 7
Political Parties and Elections
Response Paper #2 Assigned

March 17, Week 8
**Spring Break**

March 24, Week 9
Political Parties and Elections
**Response Paper #2 Due**

March 31, Week 10
Interest Groups and Lobbying
Discussion on Argument Paper
Review for the second exam (which is given Monday, April 3)

April 7, Week 11
Congress and State Legislature
**Return the second exam**

April 14, Week 12
Congress and State Legislature
**Argument Paper Due**

April 21, Week 13
Executive Branch and Bureaucracy

April 28, Week 14
The Courts

May 5, Week 15
**Review for final exam**