American & Wyoming Government
Political Science 1000-44; Spring 2017

Instructor: Jeffery Williams
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A note on availability to students: Since this is an online class, there are not set “office hours” per se. However, students will still very likely find the need to contact the instructor over the duration of the course. If the need arises, please feel free to contact me at the email address above. I will do my best to respond within twenty-four (24) hours from the time I receive your email.

Course Description

This is an introductory college-level course in the organization and structure of American national government and of the government of the state of Wyoming. Undoubtedly, each of you has experienced classes in American government before. Thus I find it necessary to differentiate the goals of this course from those you might have experienced before. The goals of this class are two-fold.

First, to fulfill the mandate presented to the University of Wyoming by the state, we will discuss in relative depth both the Wyoming and U.S. constitutions and the governmental systems established by each.

Second, we will critically discuss the impact which government, both state and national, has upon our lives. Participation in this discussion is mandatory and will take the form of questions and answers constituting a threaded discussion, accessed through each week's discussion link.

POL$\ 1000$ fulfills the United States and Wyoming Constitutions (V) requirement of the University Studies Program. U.S. and Wyoming Constitution (V) courses provide students with an understanding of the historical development, cultural context and major principles of the constitutional documents and the political systems established by those documents. V courses also provide students with understandings of the relationships between the political institutions through which they are governed and their roles as responsible participating citizens.

Our governmental system is based upon the notion of an enlightened electorate. This course is a small step toward that end.
Texts

The required texts for this course are:


Students are expected to purchase these texts and to remain current with the assigned readings. Current events will be used as examples in course discussions. Students should keep abreast of what is happening in American politics through reading a daily newspaper, watching television news, etc. Class discussion is strongly encouraged. Please feel free to raise questions concerning the readings or current events. If you have specific questions please address them to me via email rather than posting them in the area reserved for discussion posts.

Video Lecture

Please note beginning with one (1) most of the assigned readings are accompanied by a video lecture which will be available on the course website. When you are required to view a video lecture this requirement is noted in your syllabus. These lectures are part of the assigned work for this course. Quizzes will take questions from the video lectures and these lectures should also be used to guide your discussion posts.

Grading

Grades for this course will be based on three criteria:

1. **Quizzes** (based on readings from the Lowi and King books as well as the video lectures)
   a. Dates
      i. Quizzes will be available for 72 hours at the end of each week beginning at 12am Thursday and ending at 11:59 pm Saturday meaning you will have all day Thursday, Friday or Saturday to take your quiz.
   b. Value
      i. Fourteen (14) quizzes, each covering one week’s material, are worth 25 points each. Each quiz will consist of five (5) to ten (10) questions.
      ii. The best ten (10) quiz scores will count toward your grade.
   c. Format
      i. The quizzes are not comprehensive, each quiz covers only the material for that week.
      ii. Each quiz is made up of multiple-choice and true/false questions.
      iii. Each quiz will have a time limit of 15 minutes.
   d. Procedure
i. Quizzes will be given on the dates specified on the course schedule. Each quiz must be taken at the scheduled time unless other arrangements are approved by the instructor in advance. Remember only your best ten (10) of fourteen (14) quizzes will count toward your grade therefore, **arrangements must be made before the quiz is due if you want to take a quiz at a separate time** and a University approved excuse and/or Doctor’s note may be required.

ii. Requests for make-up quizzes must be made in writing (via email) within seven calendar days of the scheduled quiz date. The written request must include the reason for missing the quiz and your student identification number. Requests for make-up quizzes will be denied unless a valid reason is presented. Examples of valid excuses for taking a quiz at an alternative time include illness, death in the family, and participation in a university-sponsored activity. Other excuses will be considered as well. Documentation for the excuse may be required.

2. **Discussion**

   a. Each Sunday, I will post to the course website a series of challenge questions regarding the week’s readings.
   b. By Saturday of the same week, students will post responses to my challenge questions.
   c. By Saturday of the same week, students will post a response to at least one other student’s response post.
   d. **TO RECEIVE FULL CREDIT FOR DISCUSSION YOU MUST:**
      i. Post an Answer to the question posed (5 points)
      ii. Post a Response to one of your classmates posts (5 points)
   e. The highest ten weekly discussion grades make up the students discussion grade. Because discussion is a group activity and only the best ten (10) of fourteen (14) discussion posts count toward your grade, discussion cannot be made up.

   **RESPECTFUL DISCUSSION:** I understand political questions can bring about emotional reactions. This is positive because it demonstrates an individual cares deeply about an issue. However, this course is an academic environment and abusive, offensive or threatening conduct will not be tolerated.

3. **Issue Paper** (based on a topic of your choice)

   a. This assignment will be submitted to me in two parts: First a one (1) to two page proposal explaining the topic you have chosen to cover, second the final paper which will be five (5) to eight (8) pages and must include a works cited page containing at minimum four (4) credible sources.
      i. **Paper Proposal (1-2 pages) due Friday, March 3rd (3/3/17) by 11:59 pm. 20 points possible.**
ii. **Final Paper (5-8 pages) due Friday May 5th (5/5/17) by 11:59 pm. (the final day of classes). 80 points possible** Choose any current issue in American politics which is of interest to you.

iii. By “current” I mean an issue that has gained national attention in the last 10 years. Issues such as the Cuban Missile Crisis, slavery, and independence from Britain are neither current nor sufficient for this paper.

iv. By American politics I mean those issues which are largely of importance to America itself. Issues such as genocide in Darfur, piracy in the South Pacific, or the amendment of the Japanese constitution are not sufficient for this paper.

v. Hint: When looking for a topic, try looking to a major newspaper, such as the Washington Post or the New York Times, or to a news service, such as [www.RealClearPolitics.com](http://www.RealClearPolitics.com). These media will give you overviews of current issues and will thus help you in finding a topic of interest to you.

b. Write a one (1) to two (2) page research proposal briefly outlining the topic you have chosen.

c. On the topic you have chosen, write five (5) to eight (8) pages articulating at least **two opposing points** of view and choosing the single point of view that is most appealing to you. (Formatting instructions will be posted on the course website).

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Grading at a Glance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gradable Items</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Quizzes*</td>
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<tr>
<td>10 Weeks of Discussion**</td>
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<tr>
<td>Issue Paper (2 components)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1) Issue Proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>2) Final Paper</td>
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<td>Total Points Possible</td>
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* The best ten (10) quiz scores will count toward each student’s grade.

** The best ten (10) discussion scores will count toward each student’s grade.

Final grades for the course will be based on the total number of points earned on the quizzes, discussion, and the issue paper relative to the following scale:

405 to 450 points = A
360 to 404 points = B
315 to 359 points = C
270 to 314 points = D
0 to 269 points = F

**Academic Dishonesty**
1. University regulations concerning academic dishonesty (UW Regulation 6-802) will be strictly enforced.
2. Any and all suspicions of academic dishonesty shall be investigated in accordance with UW Regulation 6-802.
3. Evidence of academic dishonesty will result in the recommended sanction of a failing grade for the course, in accordance with UW Regulation 6-802 6.A.vi

Words of Advice

If you find yourself having difficulty identifying the important points from the readings or following lectures, please make an appointment to meet with me outside of class. Do not wait until the day of a quiz or the end of the semester to tell me that you are having trouble. By then it is too late. The time to adjust your study habits is in mid-semester, not the last week of classes.

There is a strong correlation between participating in class discussion regularly and receiving a high grade in any course. Students are therefore urged to actively participate in the online forum as much as possible. Quizzes are designed to draw from the readings and discussions, and students are expected to be familiar with all class material.

Quiz Procedures

1. Quizzes will be given on the dates specified on the course schedule (below). Each quiz must be taken at the scheduled time unless other arrangements are approved by the instructor.

2. Requests for make-up quizzes must be made in writing (via email) within seven calendar days of the scheduled quiz date. The written request must include the reason for missing the quiz and your student identification number. Requests for make-up quizzes will be denied unless a valid reason is presented. Examples of valid excuses for taking an quiz at an alternative time include illness, death in the family, and participation in a university-sponsored activity. Other excuses will be considered as well. Documentation for the excuse may be required.

3. University regulations concerning academic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.
Course Schedule POLS 100-43 (SPRING 2017)

Week One (1/23-1/28):
Reading:

Week Two (1/29-2/4):
Reading:
Viewing:
* U.S. Constitution lecture
* Wyoming Constitution lecture

Week Three (2/5-2/11):
Reading:
Viewing:
Federalism lecture

Week Four (2/12-2/18):
Reading:
Viewing:
* Congress and the Wyoming Legislature

Week Five (2/19-2/25):
Reading:
Week Six (2/26-3/4):
Reading:
* King et al. Chapter Five: “The Executive Branch: Who's in Charge?”
Viewing:
*Chief Executives

Paper Proposal (1-2 pages) due Friday, March 3rd (3/3/17) by 11:59 pm. 20 points possible.

Week Seven (3/5-3/11):
Reading:
Viewing:
*Federal and State Courts

Week Eight (3/12-3/18):
SPRING BREAK!!!!
No Assignments this week but I will tell you the same thing my father tells me every Spring Break even though I am now forty years old, “try not to do anything stupid.”

Week Nine (3/19-3/25):
Reading:
* Lowi et al. Chapter Four: “Civil Liberties and Civil Rights” pp. 84-129.
Viewing:
*Civil Liberties
*Civil Rights

Week Ten (3/26-4/1):
Reading:
Viewing:
*Public Opinion
Week Eleven (4/2-4/8):
Reading:
*Lowi et al. Chapter Ten: “Elections”
Viewing:
*Parties and Elections

Week Twelve: (4/9-4/15):
Reading:
*Lowi et al. Chapter Eleven: “Political Parties”
*King et al. Chapter Three: “Political Participation: Individuals, Parties and Groups”
Viewing:
*Voter Turnout

Week Thirteen: (4/16-4/22)
Reading:
*Lowi et al. Chapter Twelve: “Groups and Interests”
Viewing:
*Interest Groups

Week Fourteen: (4/23-4/29)
Reading:
Lowi et al. Chapter Thirteen: “Introduction to Public Policy”
Viewing:
TBA

Week Fifteen: 4/30-5/6)
Reading:
Lowi et al. Chapter Fourteen: “Foreign Policy”
Viewing:
TBA
Final Paper (5-8 pages) due Friday May 5th (5/5/17) by 11:59 pm. (the final day of classes). 80 points possible