Western Illinois University

Political Science 122 Section 3 Fall Semester
Tuesday and Thursday 11:00 A.M. 12:15 P.M.
Morgan Hall 314

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Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday 10:00—11:00 A.M. and
Wednesday 11:00 A.M.—12:00 Noon and 1:00—2:00 P.M. and
by appointment

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

This course examines the development, organization, powers, limitation, and practical problems of the governmental and political system of the United States. The course will focus on the major institutions that compromise the structure of American government and on the processes that occur within and between these institutions.

This course satisfies WIU General Education requirements in the social studies category, in which students will be able to explore aspects of their own cultures and beliefs and the cultures and beliefs of others within a context of empirical research findings and theoretical speculation. Through this course you will be able to:

1. Gain insight in the institutional forces that influence politics;
2. Recognize multiple methods and modes of inquiry used in political science and their appropriate applications;
3. Critically communicate ideas and explain concepts and analysis using the language of the social sciences, i.e. politics.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Student effort: A university course is collaboration between student and professor. You are expected to do all the readings for the course and to read them on time. Lecture material supplements, it does not repeat text material, the reading assignments are yours, not mine to do for you. As a rule, you should be prepared to spend at least 2 hours of your time working on this course outside of class for every hour you spend in class. It is your responsibility to do the reading, studying and outside assignments for the course. If you are having difficulties understanding the material and/or the assignments, I will be glad to work with you outside class; however you have the primary responsibility to give the course the attention it demands.

You are expected to do the following:

- Read all the assigned course readings, prepare thoroughly;
- Participate in class discussions;
- Display appropriate courtesy, leave personal conversations in the hall;
- Adhere to course deadlines and timetables;
Provide constructive feedback; challenge each other intellectually, be respectful of others and different opinions. We all have different views, let's agree to disagree accordingly.

**Attendance:** Class attendance is strongly encouraged. Regular attendance is expected and it is extremely difficult to do well in this course without attending on a regular basis. Participation is a factor in determining your final grade—it is impossible to participate if you do not attend. I may feel it necessary to take attendance in order to provide extra points on exams for those who are putting forth the effort to come to class.

**Information Technology:** There is a Western Online site for this course. This is a closed web site available to students enrolled in POL 122. In order to gain access to the site you will need an ECOM id and password. If you do not have an ECOM account, go to the University Computer Support Services (UCSS) at Stipes Hall room 126. I do use this website frequently. I post outlines, written assignments and discussion questions as well as updates of this course on this site. ALL ASSIGNMENTS CAN BE SUBMITTED ELECTRONICALLY AT THE DESIGNATED DROP BOX (OR SUBMITTED IN CLASS BY HAND)
Please do not submit assignments to my email address.

The 21st Century has allowed us access to a host of information through smartphones, tablets, and computers. We are attached to these devices constantly! In class I expect you to reduce constant texting, twittering, or other communication software and focus on the lectures and discussions.

**Smokeless Tobacco Use:** If you are one who indulges in the use of smokeless tobacco, leave this outside the class. The discharge of unwanted tobacco juice in class is a distraction to others and has public health issues. So before coming to class, UNPACK THE LIP!

**Participation:** Ask questions concerning the readings, instructor discussion, and comments of your classmates. Participation challenges intellect! Don’t be afraid to ask questions or pose interesting comments. Provide constructive feedback and respect the exchange of information from your classmates.

**Required Examinations:** There will be four required examinations. Three regular exams and a final. These exams are student generated, which means YOU will create it! Check "GRADE DETERMINATION" down below for how this works!

**Please note that for whatever reason you arrive late for an exam, you will not be able to take the exam once one student has "legitimately" taken the exam and left the room. I reserve the right to change the date of the exam as necessary. I will post the changes in class and on Western Online.

**Make-up Examinations:** If a student has a University-approved excuse (via Student Development and Orientation) AND if the instructor is notified PRIOR to the examination, arrangements for a make-up will be made. If a student fails to notify the instructor, the student will receive a zero for the exam. Please note: I reserve the right to develop and administer a different exam if a make-up is given. Exams missed due to court appearances in which you are a defendant; do not count as a legitimate excuse. For
any other questions regarding approved excuses consult:
http://www.sdo.wiu.edu/handbook/handbook.pdf

Basic Policies

Accommodations: In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies faculty of a specific need for accommodation. It is imperative that students bring such needs to the faculty member’s attention, as faculty are not legally permitted to inquire about such particular student needs. Students who require special assistance in emergency evacuations should contact their faculty to discuss emergency procedures. Contact Disability Support Services (298-2512) for additional services.

Academic Misconduct: Academic misconduct will not be tolerated. Academic misconduct is a serious offense and constitutes grounds for failing the course regardless of your grade on other assignments. Academic misconduct includes:

1. Cheating on exams either through crib sheets or copying another student’s answers.
2. Plagiarism including:
   a. Turning in a paper someone else has written.
   b. Copying directly from the book you read
   c. Using material obtained via electronic sources without proper documentation.
   d. Failure to properly document quotations used in your paper.

Any and all of these activities will result in an F for the course. The penalties for plagiarism apply whether you plagiarize inadvertently or deliberately. If you have any questions about how to cite sources, ask before you turn in your assignment.

Incomplete Policy: In accordance with University policy, incompletes will only be given in rare instances where a student cannot complete the course requirements during the semester due to circumstances beyond their control. You must keep me informed regarding such circumstances in a timely manner. However, the decision to allow an incomplete is at the discretion of the instructor.

For more information regarding academic misconduct and incomplete refer to your student handbook at http://www.sdo.wiu.edu/handbook/handbook.pdf.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS AND READINGS


There is a textbook on reserve in the library for a two (2) hour checkout.

In addition to the required text, you must be aware that the material covered in this course is tied to current events. It is advisable for you to read newspapers, newsmagazines, watch TV news program, or
Western Illinois University

listen to the news on public radio with enough regularity to remain up-to-date on contemporary political events. Lectures and discussions will build upon the readings, so it is important to keep up with the reading assignments. Be sure to read the materials by the class session for which they are assigned.

GRADE DETERMINATION

Your course grade will be determined as follows:

1. **Four Exams.** There are two regular exams at 50 points each. One non-comprehensive final exam at 100 points. Exam questions are developed by YOU! How does the work? Before the designated exam date, you will review materials from course readings, lectures, discussions, videos, and class exercises. You will create five (5) questions in the form of multiple choice and true false, and matching with the answers. The questions you create are then submitted to the online drop box and also posted on an assigned discussion board to share with your classmates. I take those questions, and create the exam. Believe me...this works! Exams will be given as listed on class schedule.

2. **American Government Exercises.** There three (3) American Government exercises to help you gain an understanding of government and politics. Each exercise is worth 25 points totaling 75 points. The exercises include: Know Your Representative, Understanding the U.S. Constitution, and Finding a Supreme Court Justice Case.

The Road to the White Starts at Western Illinois University

This semester Western Illinois University will conduct a Mock Presidential Election to determine who will be the next president of the United States. Participation in the Mock Presidential Election is voluntary and provides for extra credit. There will be five (5) sessions and participation in each session is equal to 5 points. Therefore, you can accumulate up to 25 extra credit points, which can go to your overall points in the class. Check the course schedule for the upcoming dates.

3. **Written Assignment Modules.** There are two written assignments:

   * **“What Political Party do I favor and why?”**
     This assignment will require you to determine which political party you identify and offer an explanation for why you favor that party. Research the Democratic, Republican, Tea Party, Green Party, Libertarian parties. If you know your party identity explore why you favor that party. Review the parties’ platforms, their stances on issues that are important to your, which groups tend to favor the parties.

     If you don’t identify with one party, address what issues or factors you find appealing for each party and what factors or issues you find unappealing for each. Basically, explain why you do not identify with either party.

   * **“What presidential candidate do I support for the 2016 election and why?”**
     It’s here again the impending 2016 Presidential election! This assignment you will address which presidential candidate you support, and why. While the presidential elections are in its infancy, address the candidate that you hope will garner a presidential nomination. Address which candidate you favor and what issues he/she supports that is important to you.
Examine the candidates' websites and other more neutral sites to research their views. Who provided money to the candidates and what their positions are.

The two written assignments are worth 50 points each for a total of 100 points.

4. **One In-Class Assignments.** There is one (1) in-class assignment worth 20 points. This assignment will focus on Federalism.

*Written Assignments can be submitted in-class or by assigned drop box at Western Online

*Late assignments will have points deducted for each day late.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Total Possible Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams I, II, III</td>
<td>3@50 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam Non-Comprehensive</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Written Assignment Module</td>
<td>2@50 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>American Government Exercises</td>
<td>3@25 points each</td>
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<tr>
<td>In-Class Assignments</td>
<td>20</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>WIU Presidential Mock Simulation—Extra Points—up to 25 points</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>To be discussed in further detail</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points</strong></td>
<td><strong>445</strong></td>
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Please check Western Online for additional updates and information regarding this class. I post in the “News” section of the website.

**Presidential Mock Election Simulation Participation Dates:**

Refer to: [http://wiumockelection.com/](http://wiumockelection.com/) for more information

- **Oct. 20** Session #1
- **Oct. 22** Session #2
- **Oct. 27** Session #3
- **Oct. 29** Session #4
- **Nov. 2** Session #5
### CLASS SCHEDULE

Changes to the schedule will be announced in class and posted at Western Online.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings/Assignments</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug. 25-Sept. 1</td>
<td>Introductions Syllabus Overview Politics, American Citizens and Political Culture</td>
<td>Chapters 1 and 2 Barbour and Wright</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sept. 6-10</td>
<td>Founding of America</td>
<td>Chapter 3 Barbour and Wright</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 13-20</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>Chapter 4 Barbour and Wright Know Your Representative 9/15 In-Class Assignment 9/17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 24</td>
<td>Exam 1</td>
<td>Covering Chapters 1-4 (Student Generated) Bring a No. 2 Pencil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 29- Oct. 6</td>
<td>Public Opinion and The Media</td>
<td>Chapters 11 and 15 Barbour and Wright 1st Written Assignment—Which Political Party do you favor? 10/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 13-20</td>
<td>Political Parties and Interest Groups</td>
<td>Chapters 12 and 13 Barbour and Wright Read the Constitution 10/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 22</td>
<td>Exam 2</td>
<td>Covering Chapters 11, 12, 13, 15 (Student Generated) Bring a No. 2 Pencil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct. 27- Nov. 5</td>
<td>Civil Liberties and Rights</td>
<td>Chapters 5 and 6 Barbour and Wright Finding a Supreme Court Case</td>
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<td>Nov. 10-17</td>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>Chapters 7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 19</td>
<td>Exam 3</td>
<td>Covering Chapters 5, 6, 7 (Student Generated) Bring a No. 2 Pencil</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 23-27</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
<td>No Classes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 1-10</td>
<td>Presidency and The Courts</td>
<td>Chapter 9 and 10 Barbour and Wright 2nd Written Assignment: “What Presidential Candidate do I support and why?” Due: 12/3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec. 17 @ 10:00 A.M.</td>
<td>Final Exam Non-Comprehensive</td>
<td>Covering Chapters 9 and 10 Barbour and Wright Bring No. 2 Pencil MG 314</td>
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\(^1\) From the WIU Undergraduate Catalog under University General Education Curriculum pp. 56-57.