PLSC 471: American Constitutional Law

Christopher Zorn

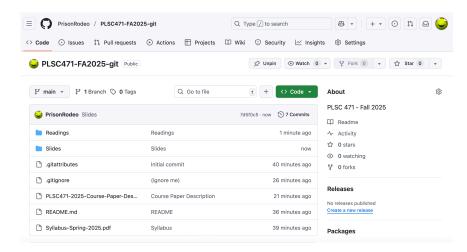
August 26, 2025

Course Goals

- 1. Understand the institutional, historical, and legal bases for the exercise of sovereign power in the U.S.
- 2. Understand the importance of <u>political</u> factors on the evolution and application of constitutional law.

Logistics

- Course meetings: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:35-11:50
 a.m. ET.
- Location is Carpenter 107
- No class on October 30 (wellness day) or November 25 & 27 (Thanksgiving break)
- Course materials are at: https://github.com/PrisonRodeo/PLSC471-FA2025-git/



Course Readings

- No textbook / casebook
- Primary sources (statutes, cases, etc.) + news and commentary
- Syllabus may be updated periodically, as events dictate...
- All readings will be available on the course Github repository

Grading

Two options:

- 1. Option A:
 - · Midterm (350 points)
 - · Final (650 points)
- 2. Option B
 - · Midterm (200 points)
 - · Final (400 points)
 - · Course paper (400 points)

Choose by September 23

Exams:

- · Midterm: October 9
- · Final: December ??

Communication, etc.

 (Non-virtual) Office: 545 Susan Welch Liberal Arts Building

• Zoom: https://psu.zoom.us/my/prisonrodeo

• Office Hours: By appointment

• E-mail: zorn@psu.edu

• Mobile Phone / Text: 803-553-4077

• Bluesky: @prisonrodeo

Things To Do Before Thursday

1. Bookmark:

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https://github.com/PrisonRodeo/PLSC471-FA2025-git
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2 Read:

Epstein, Lee, Kevin McGuire, and Thomas G. Walker. 2024. "Understanding the U.S. Supreme Court." In *Constitutional Law for a Changing America: Institutional Powers and Constraints*. Sage Publications.