AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Oklahoma State University

POLITICAL SCIENCE

POLS 1113 - 72246

Fall 2022

**PROFESSOR:** Dr. Rebekah Herrick

**DEPARTMENT:** Political Science

**LECTURE TIMES:** Online

**PLACE:** Online

**OFFICE HOURS**: Thursday 10:30 to 11:30 (via zoom: <https://zoom.us/j/93155074088>), and by appointment

**E-MAIL:** Rebekah Herrick@okstate.edu

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**OFFICE:** 218 Social Sciences and Humanities

**TEACHING**

**ASSISTANT:** Meredith McKinnon

**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesday 9:00 to 11:00 (Via Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/99372935658?pwd=ek9uS2ZwRFRrYUZEMzdsalRvL3pXdz09>) or by appointment

**NOTE ON COMMUNICATION: \*\*\*Always include POLS 1113 as the email Subject Line. Excepting weekends, expect a response within 48 hours, but typically within 24.**

Introduction

This course starts with the assumption that students have limited familiarity with the study of American politics. Politics is a struggle over scarce sources of power and how acquired power is exercised. The U.S. Constitution sets the general parameters (or ground rules) for how this power struggle is conducted. A diverse population (in racial/ethnic, economic, regional, religious terms, etc.) as well as the natural tendency to develop competing interests, ensures a perpetual struggle over power and the purposes of its use. Publics rarely agree on the means and/or the ends of political power and beyond the constitutional framework, compromise is reached through the interaction of various political actors who share a stake in the political system.

Course Description

***This is an online course.*** All lectures, resources, assignments, and correspondence are accessed entirely online through Canvas at [canvas.okstate.edu](http://canvas.okstate.edu/). You must use your campus email and password to access the course.

This is an introductory course on the organization, processes, and functions of the national government of the United States.

Goals and Objectives

**Goals:** It is my hope in this course, that by studying the founding and evolution of American government, the behavior of political actors, federal institutions and processes, you will develop a coherent framework for understanding and critically evaluating American politics. In addition, I hope you will develop a working knowledge of the science of politics and the processes of government institutions.

**Objectives:** In taking this course, here are several objectives you should be able to meet:

1. Describe the functions of the three branches of the United States Government.
2. Describe the role of the United States Constitution in our political system.
3. Describe the major factors affecting opinion formation and participation in the United States.
4. Describe the role of the media, political parties, interest groups, and elections in the U.S. political system.
5. Describe the origins and evolution of the U.S. Constitution and political system.
6. Describe the basic civil rights and civil liberties granted American citizens and the major court cases that established these.
7. Describe how the three branches of the federal government check and balance each other.

Course Materials

Course material is accessible through Canvas: this syllabus, your textbook, and graded exams and assignments. Course navigation is made simple by the use of modules, one module for each chapter of the textbook (total of 15 such modules), one for the syllabus and one for “Exams”. A total of 17 modules.

Quizzes and exams are accessed directly in Canvas. Quizzes are in modules for the corresponding chapter and exams are in the “Exam” module. To take a quiz or exam, click on the assignment displayed in the module to complete it.

To get started, you need to register for the course. Do this by clicking on the “McGraw-Hill Connect Stillwater/Tulsa” link on the left side of the Canvas course pane. You will only need to do this once. After that, you will use this same link to access the electronic textbook for the course.

Required Textbook:Harrison, Brigid Callahan, Jean Wahl Harris, and Michelle D. Deardorff. 2022. *American Democracy Now*. 7th Edition. New York: McGraw Hill LLC.

NOTE: textbook is abbreviated **H** on course schedule.

\*Important\* There is no need to purchase a hard copy of the textbook. It is available via the “McGraw-Hill Connect Stillwater/Tulsa” link, where you have automatic access to an electronic copy of the textbook (click on the textbook icon on the left side of your screen to begin reading).

The University Store and I have collaborated with the publisher to deliver your required digital course materials at a significantly reduced price. You will have day-one access to your materials through this course in Canvas. The charge for these materials will be billed by the University Store directly to your Bursar account after the drop/add deadline. For additional information regarding inclusive access, please visit [https://universitystore.okstate.edu/news/direct-bill.html](https://nam04.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Funiversitystore.okstate.edu%2Fnews%2Fdirect-bill.html&data=05%7C01%7Crebekah.herrick%40okstate.edu%7C62efbabe3efc4f5f2ea908da3f44b411%7C2a69c91de8494e34a230cdf8b27e1964%7C0%7C0%7C637891861592768475%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=2f4CNSjAOF1YGAgDHyispNAed37Szw%2BW0XR0CY%2FaxJw%3D&reserved=0) .

If you experience problems with your access please contact [support@willolabs.com](mailto:support@willolabs.com). It is your choice of whether to buy a hard copy version of the textbook.

You may receive a notice on opting-out of access to the electronic textbook. I highly recommend NOT opting-out since 1) part of your grade is based on completion of electronic textbook activities (quizzes and exams), 2) the electronic textbook price is usually lower than what you can purchase elsewhere, 3) the electronic textbook is customized for this OSU course and 4) the electronic textbook is the easiest way to get access to the book immediately. There is a link provided on Canvas for you to opt-out if you wish. Should you ever need to opt back in you can do so by emailing [support@willolabs.com](mailto:support@willolabs.com).

Lectures: I have made 3-5 short recorded lectures for each chapter. These lectures are designed to highlight key material and outline the chapters. They do NOT substitute for reading the book, as the book more fully covers the material. These videos have names such as Chapter 1a that covers the first part of Chapter 1, Chapter1b for the next material and so on. In addition, there are 4 of additional lectures that I created to augment the textbook. Their names identify the chapter the lecture is associated with plus the topic, such as Chapter 3: Tribes.

If you want additional help studying textbook content, you can access to PowerPoint Outlines that came with the book. These can be found in chapter modules and titles are “Harrison7e\_ppt…”. These are optional.

**Tech Support**

For problems related to Canvas, try these contacts: OSU’s help desk [helpdesk@okstate.edu](mailto:helpdesk@okstate.edu), [405-744-HELP(4357)](tel:14057444357) or [1-877-951-4836](tel:18779514836).

Course Organization

The Course is partitioned into four sections. The first section covers Chapters 1-3 and the syllabus; the second section covers Chapters 4-7, the third section covers Chapters 8-11 and the fourth section covers Chapters 12-15. There is an exam corresponding to each section.

Graded Assignments and Grading Rubric

(1). **Syllabus Quiz:** 20 points. This assignment is due by 11:59pm on September 2. You have unlimited time and can take the exam more than once. This quiz is in the “syllabus” module.

(2). **Chapter Quizzes**: There are 15 Chapter Quizzes, one for each covered chapter. Each quiz is worth 20 points. You may take the quiz an unlimited number of times. All quizzes must be taken by 11:59pm on the Friday of the corresponding week. Students are required to take the quizzes by the due date, no exceptions. Note too that the quizzes should help you prepare for the exam so be sure to take the quizzes prior to taking the exam. These quizzes are in each chapter’s module.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *Chapter Quiz Due Dates (Times are for the central time zone USA)* | |
| 1. 11:59pm, September 2 | 9. 11:59pm, October 28 |
| 2. 11:59pm, September 9 | 10. 11:59pm, November 4 |
| 3. 11:59pm, September 16 | 11. 11:59pm, November 11 |
| 4. 11:59pm, September 23 | 12. 11:59pm, November 18 |
| 5. 11:59pm, September 30 | 13. 11:59pm, December 2 |
| 6. 11:59pm, October 7 | 14. 11:59pm, December 9 |
| 7. 11:59pm, October 14 | 15. 11:59pm, December 16 |
| 8. 11:59pm, October 21 |  |

(3). **Exams:** There are 4 exams worth 100 points each. Most exam questions will come from the assigned textbook chapters, but some will also come from the additional lectures I created to augment the book. Proctored exams will be arranged in China. For students at OSU you will need to contact the Teaching Assistant to schedule a time to take the exam. But the first exam must be taken September 16, the second by October 15, the third by November 11 and the fourth by December 16th. Each exam will have between 50 and 70 multiple choice questions. Although each exam is due about the same time as some quizzes, you should take the quizzes first as they should help you prepare for the exam. The exams are in the “Exams” module.

**Engineering and American Government Discussion Board.** This is an assignment where all students must participate in an online discussion (worth 30 points). The discussion prompt is: How is learning about American Government (or government’s generally) helpful for engineers?

Each student is to offer a brief answer to this question (one paragraph) and to respond to at least one other student’s post. Grades will be based on how well students answer the question and whether their response helps others to understand the relevance of American government (or governments generally) to engineering. The discussion end on November 25th. All posts on the discussion board need to follow the ***Internet Netiquette Guidelines*** discussed below.

**Due Dates:** Please do not expect an opportunity to complete any of the assignments after the due date has passed – it most likely will not be granted. If you are having an especially hectic week, then make sure you set aside time to fit in completion of the assignment in advance. Consider these due dates as non-negotiable.

**Grading Rubric:** Based on total points accumulated from the assignments.

Syllabus Quiz 20 pts

Discussion board 30 pts

Chapter Quizzes 300 pts

Exams 400 pts

TOTAL 750 pts

The letter grades will be based on the following point distribution.

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| --- | --- |
| A = | >=675 |
| B = | 674-600 |
| C = | 599-525 |
| D = | 524-450 |
| F = | < 450 |

***Students will be able to check their scores for assignments through our course site in Canvas*.**

***Internet Netiquette Guidelines:*** Students are also required to follow good netiquete. When communicating on-line there are some general standards of behavior that have been referred to as netiquette. Below are some guidelines for on-line communication:

* REFRAIN FROM USING ALL CAPS. It is considered SHOUTING when communicating online.
* Do not post or forward offensive or racially insensitive jokes or comments.
* Be careful with humor and sarcasm.
* Don’t respond to personal attacks: Contact the instructor for action and referral.
* Always add in the subject line a concise statement describing the email or discussion post.
* Respect others' opinions. If you disagree with what another has said, post your thoughts in an objective, respectful manner. Do not make remarks that can be taken personally.
* Reflect upon the text you have entered before posting.
* Keep the discussion within the scope of the course material.
* Communication should be grammatically correct. Adhere to correct sentence structure, grammar, and spelling conventions. Proofread for errors before posting a message.
* Before you respond to a threaded message, read all the messages related to that message that have been previously posted.
* If needed, send out an email to a group using the blind carbon copy field – BCC does not allow your recipients to view who was sent the email.

**Non-Grade Requirements**

Although the following items are not graded as such, students who fail to abide by the following policies run the risk of me lowering their grade.

*Attendance Policy:*Attendance in the class is virtual but required. To attend class, you are to watch the videos, read the assigned materials in the textbook prior to taking the exams and quizzes.

*Academic Integrity:*Academic dishonesty is not acceptable in this or any other academic course. Broadly defined it is submitting work that is not your own without attribution. This includes having someone take your quizzes, or exams or doing your assignments. It also includes having someone help you with your quizzes or exams. Any willful violations of the University’s academic integrity standards will result in serious consequences, such as receiving 0 for the activity, exam, quiz, or course. If a potential violation of the academic integrity policy occurs, I will first discuss the situation with the student before deciding whether the incident requires the filing of an “Academic Integrity Inquiry Form.” If it is determined that a violation of academic integrity has occurred, penalties may include, but are not limited to, a deduction of points from the assignment. In severe cases students can be suspended from the university. Please consult the University’s standards regarding academic integrity.

(http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu).

*Expectations for Student Conduct:* All activities at Oklahoma State University, including this course, are governed by the OSU Student Conduct Code. In addition, students responsible for violating the code may be asked to cancel their registration, or have their registration cancelled. Furthermore, OSU values the diversity of backgrounds, opinions, and values of its students and strives to promote a respectful learning environment. Sexual harassment is strictly prohibited by Oklahoma State University and will not be tolerated. Homophobic, sexist, and racist comments will also not be tolerated, nor will attacks on individual’s ideology or issue stances. OSU policies regarding general student conduct and sexual harassment are available online:

University Academic Regulations

http://registrar.okstate.edu/University-Academic-Regulations

Code of Conduct and Student Rights and Responsibilities, including policies on hazing, discrimination, and sexual harassment

<https://studentconduct.okstate.edu/code>

**Course Announcements and Updates**

I may communicate with students via University email or Canvas regarding assignments, schedule changes, or other course matters. Please ensure that you check your University email account and Canvas regularly or that your email is forwarded to an account that you check regularly.

**Student Disabilities**

Any student with a documented disability condition (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, systemic, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations should contact the professor and Disability Services (405-744-7116) at the beginning of the semester. More information about disabilities services can be found at the following url.

(http://sds.okstate.edu/)

**University Policy**

Drop Policy

Information about university drop policy and dates is at this website:

<http://registrar.okstate.edu/>

To drop this course, contact the Registrar’s office, (405) 744-6876, or drop through Banner Self Service, <http://my.okstate.edu>

**Diversity statement**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that the students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, ideology and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally, or for other students or student groups.

Some of the material in this course may evoke strong emotions, please be respectful of others' emotions and be mindful of your own. Please let me know if something said or done in the classroom, by either myself or other students, is particularly troubling or causes discomfort or offense. While our intention may not be to cause discomfort or offense, the impact of what happens throughout the course is not to be ignored and is something that I consider to be very important and deserving of attention.

I reserve the right to change the syllabus.

Course Schedule

Section 1 August 26 through September 17

Syllabus

(1) Syllabus Quiz due September 2

*Introduction: People, Politics, and Participation*

Read – H: CH 1, People, Politics, and Participation

(2) Quiz Chapter 1 due September 2

*The Constitution*

Read – H: CH 2, The Constitution

(3) Quiz Chapter 2 due September 9

F*ederalism*

Read – H: CH 3, Federalism

(4) Quiz Chapter 3 due September 16

(5) 1st Exam due September 16 (ABOUT)

Section 2 September 19 – October 15

*Civil Liberties*

Read – H: CH 4, Civil Liberties

(1) Quiz Chapter 4 due September 23

*Civil Rights*

Read – H: CH 5, Civil Rights

(2) Quiz Chapter 5 due September 30

*Political Socialization and Public Opinion*

Read – H: CH 6, Political Socialization and Public Opinion

(3) Quiz Chapter 6 due October 7

*Interest Groups*

Read – H: CH 7, Interest Groups

(4) Quiz Chapter 7 due October 14

(5) 2nd Exam due October 15 (ABOUT)

Section 3 October 16 through November 12

*Political Parties*

Read – H: CH 8, Political Parties

(1) Quiz Chapter 8 due October 21

*Campaigns, Elections, and Voting*

Read – H: CH 9, Campaigns, Elections, and Voting

(2) Quiz Chapter 9 due October 28

*The Media*

Read – H: CH 10, The Media

(3) Quiz Chapter 10 due November 4

*Politics and Technology*

Read – H: CH 11, Politics and Technology

(4) Quiz Chapter 11 due November 11

(5) 3rd Exam due November 11 (ABOUT)

Section 4 November 14 through December 16

*Congress*

Read – H: CH 12, Congress

(1) Quiz Chapter 12 due November 18

*The Presidency*

Read -- H: CH 13, The Presidency

(2) Quiz Chapter 13 due December 2

*The Bureaucracy*

Read – H: CH 14, The Bureaucracy

(3) Quiz Chapter 14 due December 9

*The Judiciary*

Read – H: CH 15, The Judiciary

(4) Quiz Chapter 15 due December 16

(5) 4th Exam due December 16