

American National Government & Politics – Fall 2019
PS 1100, Section 111
MWF 11:00a.m. – 11:50a.m.
Room: BH 223

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. William D. Hicks
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Office Hours: 12:00p.m.-1:00p.m., MTW

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes

This course introduces students to the politics, institutions, and policy processes of the US federal government. We will focus on several core questions throughout the semester. What are the major political institutions underlying the policymaking process, and how have they evolved historically? How, and with what consequences, do these institutions affect policymaking and policy choices made by the federal government? In addition, we will discuss how we, as citizens, relate to the federal government. How do citizens' political preferences, opinions, and attitudes shape American politics, and how are they shaped by it? Ultimately these questions will lead us to evaluate critically the conditions under which policy choices made by the federal government reflect the wishes of the citizens it represents.

This course also teaches students how political scientists uncover and explain general principles and patterns of politics and government. In our focus on these core questions, we will explore the logic and methods that underlie political science research. Doing so will help students become better consumers and producers of ideas about government and politics.

Required Texts and Materials

Kernell, Samuel, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, and Lynn Vavreck. 2020. The Logic of American Politics. 9th edition. Sage/CQ Press. ISBN: 978154432295

Exams & Graded Activities

Exams: 75% of each student's grade is based on his or her performance on three non-cumulative exams. These exams are comprised of multiple choice and true/false questions.

Participation: 25% of each student's grade is based on his or her participation. I derive each student's participation grade from three separate activities: (1) attendance, (2) in-class discussion, and (3) quizzes/activities. I expect students to attend every class, and participate meaningfully in classroom discussions. Students will complete a quiz roughly each week on AsULearn.

Course Grades

<i>Grading Scale</i>			<i>Grade Requirements</i>		
A	94-100	C	74-76	Exam 1	25%
A-	90-93	C-	70-73	Exam 2	25%
B+	87-89	D+	67-69	Exam 3	25%
B	84-86	D	64-66	Participation	25%
B-	80-83	D-	60-63		
C+	77-79	F	0-59		

Absence Policies

I will not take attendance everyday. That said, I will have pop-quizzes, which I usually administer at the end of class. Students who are not present will earn a zero on these quizzes. As such, attendance will strongly shape students' grades directly via their participation grade.

Additionally, attendance in my classes always positively shapes students' scores on the exams. **If a student misses an exam, they have no more than 24 hours after the time of the exam to notify me of this absence in order to qualify for a makeup.**

Student Conduct

As a community of learners at Appalachian State University, we must create an atmosphere of honesty, fairness, and responsibility, without which we cannot earn the trust and respect of each other. Furthermore, we recognize that academic dishonesty detracts from the value of an Appalachian degree. Therefore, we shall not tolerate lying, cheating, or stealing in any form and will oppose any instance of academic dishonesty. This course will follow the provisions of the Academic Integrity Code, which can be found on the Office of Student Conduct Web Site:

www.studentconduct.appstate.edu

Statement on Student Engagement with Courses

In its mission statement, Appalachian State University aims at “providing undergraduate students a rigorous liberal education that emphasizes transferable skills and preparation for professional careers” as well as “maintaining a faculty whose members serve as excellent teachers and scholarly mentors for their students.” Such rigor means that the foremost activity of Appalachian students is an intense engagement with their courses. In practical terms, students should expect to spend two to three hours of studying for every hour of class time. Hence, a fifteen-hour academic load might reasonably require between 30 and 45 hours per week of out-of-class work.

Disability Support Services

Appalachian State University is committed to making reasonable accommodations for individuals with documented qualifying disabilities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. Those seeking accommodations based on a substantially limiting disability must contact and register with The Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <http://www.ods.appstate.edu/> or 828-262-3056. Once registration is complete, individuals will meet with ODS staff to discuss eligibility and appropriate accommodations.

Religious Observances Policy

Faculty members are required to make reasonable accommodations for students requesting to miss class due to the observance of religious holidays. All ASU students are allowed a minimum of two absences per year for religious observances. Up to two absences for such observances will be excused, without penalty to the student, provided that the student has informed the instructor in the manner specified in the syllabus. Notice must be given by the student to the instructor before the absence occurs and no later than three weeks after the start of the semester in which the absence(s) will occur. Arrangements will be made to make up work missed by these religious observances, without penalty to the student. For the purposes of this policy, ASU defines the term “religious observance” to include religious holidays, holy days, or similar observances associated with a student’s faith that require absence from class. Faculty, at their discretion, may include class attendance as a criterion in determining a student’s final grade in the course. On the first day of class, faculty must inform students of their class attendance policy and the effect of that policy on their final grade; both policies must be clearly stated in the class syllabus.

Syllabus Change Policy

This syllabus is only a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice.

Course Schedule

Monday, August 19

Introduction

Wednesday, August 21

What's Government? Kernell et al., Chapter 1

Friday, August 23

The Constitution: Kernell et al., Chapter 2

Monday, August 26

The Constitution: Kernell et al., Chapter 2

Wednesday, August 28

The Constitution: Kernell et al., Chapter 2

Friday, August 30 - NO CLASS

Monday, September 2 - NO CLASS

Wednesday, September 4

Federalism: Kernell et al., Chapter 3

Friday, September 6

Federalism: Kernell et al., Chapter 3

Monday, September 9

Civil Liberties: Kernell et al., Chapter 5

Wednesday, September 11

Civil Liberties: Kernell et al., Chapter 5

Friday, September 13

Civil Liberties: Kernell et al., Chapter 5

Monday, September 16

Civil Rights: Kernell et al., Chapter 4

Wednesday, September 18

Civil Rights: Kernell et al., Chapter 4

Friday, September 20

Civil Rights: Kernell et al., Chapter 4

Monday, September 23

Catch-up, Review

Wednesday, September 25

Exam 1

Friday, September 27

SPECIAL TOPIC

Monday, September 30

Congress: Kernell et al., Chapter 6

Wednesday, October 2

Congress: Kernell et al., Chapter 6

Friday, October 4

Congress: Kernell et al., Chapter 6

Monday, October 7

President: Kernell et al., Chapter 7

Wednesday, October 9

President: Kernell et al., Chapter 7

Friday, October 11

President: Kernell et al., Chapter 7

Monday, October 14 - NO CLASS

Wednesday, October 16

Supreme Court: Kernell et al., Chapter 9

Friday, October 18

Supreme Court: Kernell et al., Chapter 9

Monday, October 21

Supreme Court: Kernell et al., Chapter 9

Wednesday, October 23

Catch-up, Review

Friday, October 25

Exam 2

Monday, October 28

Public Opinion, Kernell et al., Chapter 10

Wednesday, October 30

Public Opinion, Kernell et al., Chapter 10

Friday, November 1

Public Opinion, Kernell et al., Chapter 10

Monday, November 4

Voting, Campaigns, & Elections: Kernell et al., Chapter 11

Wednesday, November 6

Voting, Campaigns, & Elections: Kernell et al., Chapter 11

Friday, November 8

Voting, Campaigns, & Elections: Kernell et al., Chapter 11

Monday, November 11

Parties: Kernell et al., Chapter 12

Wednesday, November 13

Parties: Kernell et al., Chapter 12

Friday, November 15

Parties: Kernell et al., Kernell et al., Chapter 12

Monday, November 18

Interest Groups: Kernell et al., Chapter 13

Wednesday, November 20

Interest Groups: Kernell et al., Chapter 13

Friday, November 22

Interest Groups: Kernell et al., Chapter 13

Monday, November 25

SPECIAL TOPIC

Wednesday, November 27 - NO CLASS

Friday, November 29 - NO CLASS

Monday, December 2

Catch-up, Review

Friday, December 6, 11:00am

Exam 3