

American National Government & Politics
PS 1100-113 – Fall 2017
MWF 10:00a.m. – 10:50a.m., Room: BLIC 114

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Office: Anne Belk Hall 351E
Office Hours: Mondays, 12-3pm; Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9-10:30am

Course Description: This course introduces students to the major institutions and political processes, as well as the underlying political culture, of the American federal government. It also introduces students to the field of political science. In doing so, we will focus on some of the theoretical tools and empirical evidence from which our understanding of American politics, and politics more generally, is derived.

We will focus on several core questions throughout the semester. What are the major political institutions underlying the American 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.

Textbook:

- Geer, John G., Richard Herrera, Wendy J. Schiller, and Jeffrey A. Segal. 2018. *Gateways to Democracy: An Introduction to American Government. Fourth Edition.* Boston: Cengage Learning.

Course Grades

<i>Grading Scale</i>		<i>Grade Requirements</i>			
A	94-100	C	74-76	Exam 1	23%
A-	90-93	C-	70-73	Exam 2	23%
B+	87-89	D+	67-69	Exam 3	23%
B	84-86	D	64-66	Activities	31%
B-	80-83	D-	60-63		
C+	77-79	F	0-59		

Exams: Nearly 70% 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.

Activities: Roughly 30% of each student's grade is based on his or her performance on out-of-class activities, administered nearly each week through MindTap (**access it via AsULearn**). During a typical week (i.e., a week without a test and/or a holiday), students can access these activities

as early as 8:00am, Monday morning. They automatically close at 11:00pm on Friday. Because students get 5 days to access these activities, *I do not allow for any make-ups.*

General Course Outline:*

- I Introduction
- II The Constitution
- III Federalism & Separation of Powers
- IV Civil Liberties
- V Civil Rights

Exam I, 10/04

- X Congress
- XI The Presidency
- XII The Supreme Court

Exam II, 11/01

- VI Participation & Voting
- VII Political Parties
- X Interest Groups
- VIII Public Opinion

Exam III, 12/13 (8:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.)

Specific Course Outline: Part I

August 23	Course Introduction
August 25	Introduction: Geer et al., Ch. 1
August 28	Constitution: Geer et al., Ch. 2
August 30	APSA
September 1	APSA
September 4	Labor Day
September 6	Constitution: Geer et al., Ch. 2
September 8	Constitution: Geer et al., Ch. 2
September 11	Federalism: Geer et al., Ch. 3
September 13	Federalism: Geer et al., Ch. 3
September 15	Federalism: Geer et al., Ch. 3
September 18	Liberties: Geer et al., Ch. 4
September 20	Liberties: Geer et al., Ch. 4
September 22	Liberties: Geer et al., Ch. 4
September 25	Rights: Ginsberg et al., Ch. 5
September 27	Rights: Ginsberg et al., Ch. 5
September 29	Rights: Ginsberg et al., Ch. 5
October 2	Catch-up, Review
October 4	Test 1

Specific Course Outline: Part II

*Dates and topics are subject to change at instructor's discretion.

October 6	Congress: Geer et al., Ch. 12
October 9	Congress: Geer et al., Ch. 12
October 11	Congress: Geer et al., Ch. 12
October 13	Fall Break
October 16	The Presidency: Geer et al., Ch. 13
October 18	The Presidency: Geer et al., Ch. 13
October 20	The Presidency: Geer et al., Ch. 13
October 23	The Court: Geer et al., Ch. 15
October 25	The Court: Geer et al., Ch. 15
October 27	The Court: Geer et al., Ch. 15
October 30	Catch-up, Review
November 1	Test 2

Specific Course Outline: Part III

November 3	Voting: Geer et al., Ch. 11
November 6	Voting: Geer et al., Ch. 11
November 8	Voting: Geer et al., Ch. 11
November 10	Parties: Geer et al., Ch. 9
November 13	Parties: Geer et al., Ch. 9
November 15	Parties: Geer et al., Ch. 9
November 17	Groups: Geer et al., Ch. 8
November 20	Groups: Geer et al., Ch. 8
November 22	Thanksgiving Break
November 24	Thanksgiving Break
November 27	Groups: Geer et al., Ch. 8
November 29	Public Opinion: Geer et al., Ch. 6
December 1	Public Opinion: Geer et al., Ch. 6
December 4	Public Opinion: Geer et al., Ch. 6
December 6	Catch-up, Review
December XX	Test 3

General Education Program 1.0: This course is a member of the “This American Life” theme within the Historical & Social Perspective of the General Education Program.

General Education Program 2.0: This course is a member of the Liberal Studies Experience Program.

For further information on general education requirements, and the goals and objectives of the various perspectives available to students, please see:

<http://generaleducation.appstate.edu/welcome-new>

Academic Integrity: 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 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.