

**POLI101: American Government (3.0 credits), Spring 2019**

CRN # 32049                      CRN # 32050  
MWF 10:00-10:50am              MWF 11:00-11:50am  
Room: HS213                      Room: HT404

**Instructor: Professor Jennifer Haydel**

Office Location: HS 194  
Office Hours: MWF 12-1pm; TR 12:30-1:30pm; or by appointment  
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**Course Description:** Structure, powers, and processes of the American political system: executive, legislative, and judicial branches; civil liberties, federalism, and democratic patterns and backgrounds, public opinion, pressure group politics, political parties, constitutional mechanisms, and administrative establishment; foreign and domestic policy. Emphasis on national level.

**Course Outcomes:** At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- 1) Understand the values and processes that create American political culture.
- 2) Explain the significance of the foundations of American politics, including the Constitution, Bill of Rights, separation of powers, checks and balances, and federalism.
- 3) Describe, analyze and evaluate the fundamental institutions of American democracy.
- 4) Assess the role collective action has played in shaping American democracy.
- 5) Describe changes in the U.S. world position over time and analyze how these positions have informed American foreign policy.
- 6) Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of important sources used in the study of American politics.

**Required Resources: Free Online OpenStax American Government Textbook:**

OpenStax American Government, American Government. OpenStax CNX. Jul 31, 2018  
<http://cnx.org/contents/5bcc0e59-7345-421d-8507-a1e4608685e8@18.1>.

\*\*If you would prefer a print copy of the text, print editions are available from a variety of online retailers for less than \$30. The online version is slightly more up-to-date than the print editions, but this will not impair your ability to succeed in the course.

*Blackboard:* I will use the course support page to post announcements, provide required and supplementary readings, post electronic files of distributed assignments, and post additional resources like PowerPoint presentations. You will also take your reading quizzes online in Blackboard. Accessing Blackboard regularly is a mandatory part of the course. A few readings will be provided on the course Blackboard page and/or distributed in class. Scheduled additional readings are indicated in the course reading and assignment schedule. It is your responsibility to access course readings provided via Blackboard.

**General Education Competencies: POLI101 fulfills a General Education Program Behavioral and Social Sciences requirement.** Montgomery College's General Education Program is designed to ensure that students have the skills, knowledge and attitudes to carry them successfully through their work and personal lives. This course provides multiple opportunities to develop the following competencies: written and oral communication, critical analysis and reasoning, technological competency, and information literacy. For more information, please see [www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened](http://www.montgomerycollege.edu/gened).

## Assignments and Grading:

Letter grades are based on the following scale: A (90-100%); B (80-89%); C (70-79%); D (60-69%); F (0-59%)

**\*\*It is your responsibility to keep track of due dates for assignments.\*\***

**Course Participation Grade (10% of course grade).** I will take attendance in a number of different ways throughout the semester. In addition to keeping track of attendance on a roll check sheet, we will often complete a variety of in-class activities, some of which I will collect in order to gauge your learning and to provide you with feedback. This portion of your grade is based on your attendance in class:

- Days you were present ÷ Total number of class meetings = Course Participation Grade
- Example:  $40 \div 45 = 88.9\%$

I recognize that there are days when you may experience an unavoidable absence due to family emergency, illness, or getting called in unexpectedly for work. Therefore, I provide the entire class with three extra credit opportunities that each count towards one class day. For example, if the student in the example above had completed all three extra credit opportunities, s/he would have a course participation grade of  $43 \div 45 = 95.6\%$ .

Extra Credit Opportunity – May be completed up to 3 times – 3 different events.

Here is the first opportunity:

- 1) Attend an event related to American Politics. It can be at the college, in your community, in DC, etc.
- 2) Provide some proof of attendance.
- 3) Write 2-3 paragraphs connecting what you learned in the event with something we have covered in class or in the assigned readings.

Each time is worth one class day in your participation grade. You have until the final examination period to submit for extra credit, but I encourage you to do these extra credit opportunities early in the semester and turn them in once you have completed them.

**Online Quizzes (10% of course grade).** To help you study from the textbook and additional assigned readings, you will regularly complete reading quizzes through the Blackboard course page. Reading quiz due dates are provided on the course schedule; all reading quizzes will be done online through the course Blackboard page. Before the due date, you may complete the quiz as many times as you would like. The point of these quizzes is to help you work through the assigned course readings; therefore these are open book and open note quizzes. Once the due date has passed, you may not make up the online quiz.

**Analysis Papers (4 @ 10% each = 40% total).** You will write a series of 4 analysis papers, each exploring a specific set of course concepts and their connection to historical and current topics and events. A detailed assignment handout will be provided for each. **Late Paper Policy.** Late paper assignments will be penalized by 10%. **Late papers will not be accepted\* more than FIVE calendar days after the deadline.** \*If you face a documented hardship (such as a death in the family or hospitalization), contact me *before the due date* to discuss options for an extension. Extensions are rare and are at the professor's discretion.

**Examinations (Midterm and Final @ 20% each = 40% total).** The examinations will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The final examination will include some comprehensive material, specified in the study guide. If you miss an examination, you must request a make-up examination *in writing*. We will then arrange a time for you to make up the examination with the Assessment Center. If possible, you should inform me that you will miss the exam *in advance*. Make-up opportunities for final exams are extremely limited because of the grade submission deadline.

### **Academic Honesty.**

Plagiarism and cheating are serious violations of the Student Code of Conduct. You will receive a "0" on any assignment or exam where you have cheated or where you have plagiarized the majority of your work. Any plagiarism serious enough to warrant a "0" will also be reported to the Dean of Student Development. If you

have any questions about what counts as plagiarism or cheating, ask me *before* the assignment is due. I strongly encourage you to take the MC Library's Plagiarism Tutorial.

According to [www.plagiarism.org](http://www.plagiarism.org), a website produced by iParadigms, LLC, “[a]ll of the following are considered plagiarism:

- ✓ turning in someone else's work as your own
- ✓ copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- ✓ failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- ✓ giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- ✓ changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- ✓ copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not...”

Source: iParadigms, LLC. 2014. “What is Plagiarism.” [Plagiarism Learning Center](http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism). Available at: <http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism>.

(Accessed 1 July 2015).

**Attendance.** Scheduled class meetings are an important component of this class. If you do not attend class regularly, you will often struggle on exams and assignments because you have missed important course content. Your grade will also be impacted by absences (see explanation of course participation grade above). It is very important that you arrive to class on time and that you remain focused on course material throughout the class session. If you arrive late for an examination, you will not be allotted extra time.

**Classroom Conduct.** We will discuss politically and socially sensitive issues. As such, it is important that we provide a safe and comfortable learning environment for each other. Keep in mind that it is often my job to play devil's advocate. The views I express in class are not necessarily my personal opinion. Similarly, you will have opportunities to express your own opinions, *and* you will be asked to recognize, consider and evaluate differing perspectives.

**Important Student Information Link:** [www.cms.montgomerycollege.edu/mcsyllabus](http://www.cms.montgomerycollege.edu/mcsyllabus). In addition to course requirements and objectives that are in this syllabus, Montgomery College has information on its web site to assist you in having a successful experience both inside and outside of the classroom. It is important that you read and understand this information. The **link provides** information and other resources to areas that pertain to the following: student behavior (student code of conduct), student e-mail, the tobacco free policy, withdraw and refund dates, disability support services, veteran services, how to access information on delayed openings and closings, how to register for the Montgomery College alert System, and finally, how closings and delays can impact your classes. If you have any questions please bring them to your professor. As rules and regulations change they will be updated and you will be able to access them through the link. If any student would like a written copy of these policies and procedures, the professor would be happy to provide them. By registering for this class and staying in this class, you are indicating that you acknowledge and accept these policies.

### **POLI 101 Reading and Assignment Guide**

\*All entries listed as “OpenStax” refer to the online course textbook: OpenStax American Government.

#### **January 23-25: Democracy and American Political Culture**

- Read OpenStax chapter 1

- Cook, Gareth. “How Science Explains America’s Great Moral Divide.” *Scientific American*. 2 December 2012. <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/how-science-explains-americas-great-moral-divide/>. 7 January 2016. [Blackboard]

### **January 28-February 1: Origins of the US Constitution**

- Read OpenStax chapter 2
- **Online Quiz #1 due by 10pm on Friday, Feb. 1**

### **February 4-8: The Supreme Court and Constitutional Interpretation**

- Read OpenStax chapter 13
- **Analysis Paper #1 Due in class on Friday, Feb. 8**

### **February 11-15: Federalism**

- Read OpenStax chapter 3 and sections 14.1 and 14.5
- **Online Quiz #2 due by 10pm on Friday, Feb. 15**

### **February 18-22: Civil Liberties**

- Read OpenStax chapter 4

### **February 25-March 1: Civil Rights**

- Read OpenStax chapter 5
- **Online Quiz #3 due by 10pm on Friday, Mar. 1**

### **March 4-8: Interest Groups and Collective Action**

- Read OpenStax chapter 10
- **Analysis Paper #2 due in class on Monday, Mar. 4**
- **Midterm Examination in class on Friday, Mar. 8**

### **March 11-15: Spring Break – Classes do not meet**

### **March 18-22: Public Opinion and Media Politics**

Read the following:

- OpenStax chapters 6 and 8

### **March 25-29: Political Ideologies and Party Systems**

- Read for March 25:
  - OpenStax chapter 9, “Political Parties”
  - Mounk, Yascha. “McPolitics.” *The New Yorker*. 2 July 2018, pp. 59-63.
- Read for March 27:
  - Shea, Daniel M. and Alex Sproveri. “The Rise and Fall of Nasty Politics in America.” *PS: Political Science & Politics*. 45.3 (2012): 416-421. Print.
- Read for March 29:
  - Pew Research Center Political Typology Profiles Available at: <http://www.people-press.org/2017/10/24/appendix-1-typology-group-profiles-2/>
- **Online Quiz #4 due by 10 pm on Friday, Mar. 29**

### April 1- 5: Congressional Elections and Congress

- Read OpenStax chapter 11
- Price, David E. “Congressional-Executive Balance in an Era of Congressional Dysfunction.” *PS: Political Science & Politics*. vol. 49, no.3, July 2016, pp. 485-489. *ProQuest Education*. doi:10.1017/S1049096516000755.
- Lee, Mike. “Curing the Cancer of Congressional Dysfunction.” *PS: Political Science & Politics*, vol. 49, no. 3, July 2016., pp. 481-484. *ProQuest Education*. Doi:10.1017/S1049096516000743.
- **Analysis Paper #3 due in class on Friday, Ap. 5**

### April 8-12: Voter Turnout; Presidential Elections

- Read OpenStax chapter 7 and OpenStax section 12.2
- **Online Quiz #5 due by 10pm on Friday, Ap. 12**

### April 15-19: The Presidency and the Executive Branch

- Read OpenStax chapters 12 and 15
- Dickerson, John. “The Hardest Job in the World.” *The Atlantic*. May Issue. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/05/a-broken-office/556883/>. [Blackboard]

### April 22-26: Economic Policy

- Read OpenStax chapter 16
- **Online Quiz #6 due by 10pm on Friday, Ap. 26**

### April 29-May 3: Foreign Policy

- Read OpenStax chapter 17

### May 6: Last class day – Review activities

- **Analysis Paper #4 Due in class on Monday, May 6**

**Final exam for 11 am section: Wednesday, May 8, 10:15am-12:15pm**

**Final exam for 10 am section: Monday, May 13, 10:15am-12:15pm**

### Summary Reading and Assignment Schedule (OS = Open Stax American Government Text)

	Topic	Required Readings	Assignment Deadlines
1/23-1/25	Democracy and American Political Culture	OpenStax ch. 1; Cook article	
1/28-2/1	Historical Origins of the US Constitution	OpenStax ch. 2	Online Quiz #1 – by 10 pm on 2/1

2/4-2/8	Supreme Court and Constitutional Interpretation	OpenStax ch. 13	<b>Analysis Paper #1 – due in class on 2/8</b>
2/11-2/15	Federalism	OpenStax ch. 3 and sections 14.1 and 14.5	Online Quiz #2 – by 10pm on 2/15
2/18-2/22	Civil Liberties	OpenStax ch. 4	
2/25-3/1	Civil Rights	OpenStax ch. 5	Online Quiz #3 – by 10pm on 3/1
3/4-3/8	Interest Groups and Collective Action	OpenStax ch. 10	<b>Analysis Paper #2 – due in class on 3/4</b> <b>Midterm Examination – in class on 3/8</b>
3/11-3/15	No classes –spring break		
3/18-3/22	Public Opinion and Media Politics	OpenStax chs. 6 and 8	
3/25-3/29	Political Ideologies and Party Systems	3/25: OpenStax ch. 9 and Mounk; 3/27: Shea & Sproveri; 3/29: Pew Center Typology	Online Quiz #4 – by 10 pm on 3/29
4/1-4/5	Congress and Congressional Elections	OpenStax ch. 11; Price; Lee	<b>Analysis Paper #3 – due in class on 4/5</b>
4/8-4/12	Voter Turnout; Presidential Elections	OpenStax ch. 7 and 12.2	Online Quiz #5 – by 10 pm on 4/12
4/15-4/19	Presidency and Executive Branch	OpenStax chs. 12 and 15; Dickerson	
4/22-4/26	Economic Policy	OpenStax ch. 16	Online Quiz #6 – by 10pm on 4/26
4/29-5/3	Foreign Policy	OpenStax ch. 17	
5/6-5/10	5/6 – Review Session		<b>Analysis Paper Due in class on May 6</b>  <b>11am section has final examination on Wednesday, May 8, 10:15am-12:15pm</b>
5/13-5/17			<b>10am section has final examination on Monday, May 13, 10:15am-12:15pm</b>