

POL 101(13814):

Introduction to American Government



Eastern Kentucky University

Department of Government

Fall 2011

MWF 10:10-11:00am (3 Credit Hours)

Instructor: Dr. Paul D. Foote

Office: McCreary Bldg #224

Office Hours: MWF 2:30pm-4:30pm

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Course Description:

Political Science 1101 is an introductory examination of the principles, functions, and basic political institutions of the American system of government at the national level.

Learning Objectives:

POL 101 is a general education course that is designed to help students:

1. Use appropriate methods of critical thinking and quantitative analysis (Gen Ed Goal 2).
2. Use political events, institutions and issues to analyze the social and behavioral influences that explain how people relate to each other, to institutions, and to communities (Gen Ed Goal 4).
3. Integrate political knowledge that will deepen their understanding of, and will inform their own choices about, issues of personal and public importance (Gen Ed Goal 8).

Students will learn how political scientists use qualitative and quantitative methods to study political institutions, processes and behavior. Throughout the course students are required to use critical thinking to understand and evaluate democratic traditions and to better understand the importance of engaged citizenship. Finally, the study of political science requires that students integrate knowledge of political institutions, processes and behavior throughout the course.

Political Science Learning Objectives

POL 101 is a political science course that forwards the following objectives for the undergraduate major:

1. Civic engagement: Students will gain political literacy, including enhanced appreciation of the importance of political participation and public service and through increased opportunities for civic engagement (Objective A).
2. Critical Thinking, Methodology, and Communications: Students will become more discerning consumers of political events, messages and processes by applying theories and methodologies of political science and through effective oral and written communication (Objective B).
3. Substantive Knowledge of Political Science: Students will understand the institutions, processes and values that underpin political behavior and events (Objective C).

Specific Course Objectives:

- 1) Identify and explain the prominent political ideologies in United States politics and describe their respective beliefs, values, and attitudes. 2) Compare and contrast the powers of the US Congress, the Presidency and the Judiciary. 3) Describe and interrelate some of the basic ideas in American politics which appeared in the Federalist Papers and the US Constitution.

Required Text:

Bardes, Barbara, Shelley, Mack and Steffen Schmidt. *American Government & Politics Today the Essentials* 2011-2012. Wadsworth, Cengage Learning. ISBN: 978-0-538-49719-0

In addition, students are expected to stay informed of the prevailing topics and issues of the day. I recommend staying up-to-date with the following sources:

1. All Politics (<http://cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/>)
2. FOXNEWS (<http://www.foxnews.com/politics/index.html>)
3. Politics 1 (<http://www.politics1.com>)

Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend all class meetings, and to have read the assigned portions of the text **before** the class meets. Students whose number of unexcused absences is more than **six** will receive a grade of “F” for the course. Final determination of what constitutes an excused absence rests with the classroom instructor. An excused absence is one that is due to personal illness, family emergency, or college sponsored events. Excused absences are usually accompanied with written documentation. An unexcused absence is one that is due to oversleeping or laziness, etc. Students are responsible for getting with other students for notes covering classroom lecture and/or discussion material they might have missed.

General Policies:

POLICY ON CELLULAR TELEPHONES, LAPTOPS and Other Annoyances: All students MUST turn off their cell phones prior to the beginning of class. If your phone should ring during class, you will have two points automatically deducted from the next exam. If your phone should ring during an exam, you will have four points deducted from that exam. The same occurs if I catch you text messaging in class. It is extremely rude for both the instructor and the class. **YOU MAY NOT TEXT MESSAGE or WEAR EARPEICES.** In addition, if you need to use the bathroom facilities, please do so before not during class. Also, sleeping or resting one's head on the desk is not permitted in the classroom.

University Disability Statement: If you are registered with the Office of Services for Individuals with Disabilities, please obtain your accommodation letters from the OSID and present them to the course instructor to discuss any academic accommodations you need. If you believe you need accommodation and are not registered with the OSID, please contact the Office in the Student Services Building Room 361 by email at disserv@eku.edu or by telephone at (859) 622-2933 V/TDD. Upon individual request, this syllabus can be made available in an alternative format.

Department Disability Statement: The Department of Government is located in McCreary Hall, a historic building on campus that is not handicapped accessible. Alternative meeting locations are available for those students who are unable to access the building. Please notify me of your need and I will arrange an alternative meeting location.

Academic Integrity Statement: Students are advised that EKU's Academic Integrity policy will be strictly enforced in this course. The Academic Integrity policy is available at www.academicintegrity.eku.edu. Questions regarding the policy may be directed to the Office of Academic Integrity.

Grading Policy:

1. **Exams (55%)** There will be a total of **three exams** given throughout the semester. The first exam will be worth 15% of the total score. The second and third exams will each be worth **20%** of your total evaluation grade. Students are expected to come to class prepared to discuss the readings and current events of the day. To inspire students to follow current events, each test will include “extra credit” questions relating to contemporary political issues. The exams will cover the textbook and lecture materials. They are not comprehensive. Exams consist of multiple choice, matching, true and false questions, and possibly short answer essays.
2. **Assignments (20%)** The number of assignments will depend on the level of *classroom participation*. If it becomes apparent that the class is not doing the assigned reading, the instructor will provide *additional homework*.
3. **Quizzes (10%)** There will be at least **two quizzes** given throughout the semester. They may be unannounced pop quizzes based on material covered in the class notes and textbook.

4. **Participation (15%)** Classroom participation is **vital**. The participation portion of the grade is comprised of two components. **First**, if you participate in every classroom discussion with relevant comments, you will receive full credit. Excellent classroom discussion is defined by the following elements: your comments are related to the day’s topic, you demonstrate insight and accuracy in the content of your remarks, and your discussion contributes to a more complete understanding of the concept or term being analyzed in the textbook or lecture. **Second**, your participation will be measured through postings to the Critical Thinking blog in Blackboard. I’ll place a rubric on the Blackboard course site to assist you in writing your answers to the questions.

Summary of Grade Values:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Exam I	15
Exam II	20
Exam III	20
Participation	15
Quizzes	10
Assignments	20

Grading System:

90-100 A, 89-80 B, 79-70 C, 69-60 D, 59-0 F

Official E-mail: An official ECU e-mail is established for each registered student, each faculty member, and each staff member. All university communications sent via e-mail will be sent to this ECU e-mail address.

Make-up exams: Exam dates are specified well in advance to assist you in planning your time. Make-up exams are given only in the most **EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES**. Such an extenuating circumstance often requires a formal written excuse. Make-up exams must be taken no later than the **next three class sessions** following the scheduled test date.

Blackboard: While students can generally figure out how to use Blackboard, you can receive help at the website <http://learn.eku.edu> (click Bp Help tab) by selecting the link, “**Student Guide for ECU Blackboard**” for some instructions. Once on your Blackboard homepage click on the link for POL 101. This takes you to the Blackboard homepage for this course. You will be required to provide a username and password to login. Your username and password for Blackboard match the same information for your student email. Students who do not know their username and password should visit the ECU Web site at <http://www.eku.edu/students/> and select the link to “EKU Email: Activate Student Email,” or if you have problems you may call (859)622-8400 for assistance.

Extra Credit:

Attendance will be taken throughout the spring semester. If you demonstrate *perfect attendance* and *regularly participate* in classroom discussion, you will receive 1 additional point toward your final grade point average.

Student Progress:

Midterm grades will be available for viewing Sunday, October 16th on EKU Direct. Your mid-term grade point average will be based on two quizzes and two exams.

* The syllabus provides a general guide of the course; deviations may be necessary.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS



INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND THE CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

August 22nd -31st Chapter 1, pp.500-503, p. 510

August 28th Last day to register for or add/drop full semester classes

September 2nd - Sept. 9th Chapter 2 and Federalist #51-Appendix A-7-A-9 and the Declaration of Independence-Appendix A-1&A-2

September 5th Labor Day Holiday-University Offices closed

FIRST QUIZ Chapters 1-2

September 12th-19th Chapter 3, Constitution Article IV pp. 70-71

FIRST EXAM Wednesday, September 21st Chapters 1-3

Sept. 23rd -October 3rd Chapter 4

SECOND QUIZ Chapter 4

October 5th Chapter 6

October 7th-14th Chapter 7, Federalist #10 Appendix C pp.A-4-A-6

October

10th-11th Fall Break. University is closed and classes are not in session.

SECOND EXAM **Friday, October 14th** **Chapters 4, 6, & 7**



INSTITUTIONS OF GOVERNMENT

October 17th-24th Chapter 10, pp. 494-497, pp. 527-531, Constitution Article I pp. 63-68

October 26th-November 2nd Chapter 11, pp. 527-531, Constitution Article II pp. 68-70

October 28th **Last day to withdraw from full-semester classes**

November 4th-9th Chapter 12

November 11th-21st Chapter 13, Constitution Article III p. 70



POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

November

22nd Thanksgiving Holiday begins for students at 9 p.m. **Night classes will meet.**

November 28th-Dec. 2nd Chapter 8

Congressional Homework is due on Friday, December 2nd

December 5th-9th Chapter 9

December 9th Classes end.

THIRD EXAM **Wednesday, December 14th**

8:00-10:00am **Chapters 10-13 & 8-9**