

Political Science 101: Introduction to American Politics Fall 2008

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Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursday 9:45am to 11:15am

This course, which satisfies the UNLV United States and Nevada Constitution requirements, provides an overview of the political institutions, processes, and cultures in the United States and in Nevada. It also includes an examination of current political, economic, and social issues and policies.

Course Objectives

1. Understand the fundamental principles upon which the U. S. government is based.
2. Know the structure, responsibilities, and contemporary issues of the Executive, Legislative, and Judiciary branches at both the federal and Nevada state level.
3. Be familiar with the civil liberties and civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States.
4. Examine the impact on the political system of American political culture and ideology, the political parties, interest groups, public opinion, and the media.

Textbooks and Lecture Graphics

- Magleby, O'Brien, Light, Burns, Peltason, and Cronin *Government by the People Basic 22nd edition*
- Bowers, *The Sagebrush State: Nevada's History, Government, and Politics (3rd edition)*
- Academic Course Pack (graphics)

Requirements

1. Readings: Assigned readings should be completed before the lecture on that topic.
2. Homework Assignments: There will be five homework assignments. Specific information on the assignments is given in a separate handout.
3. Examinations: There will be four exams, one at the conclusion of each major portion of the course. The examinations are not cumulative. Make-up for missed exams for the first, second, and third exams will be given on Thursday, December 4th. There will be no make-up exam for the fourth exam and students may not take the fourth exam early. You may not use a dictionary (hardcopy or electronic) during an examination. You must bring a photo ID and a SCANTRON sheet to each examination.
4. Communications: Official university communications, including those from the instructor, will be sent to students' RebelMail account. Students are responsible for all information provided in this manner. The instructor will post grades on the class WebCampus site.

Grading

Exams (4 @ 20% each) 80%

Homework Assignments (5 @ 4% each) 20%

90% - 100% = A 60% - 69% = D below 60% = F

80% - 89% = B 70% - 79% = C

Academic Integrity

For this course, any attempt to cheat on an examination or to present someone else's work (including material copied from the Internet) as your own for a written assignment will be subject to the most severe penalty the University allows.

Classroom Etiquette

- Students must arrive on time and be prepared to begin class on time. If late arrivals become a problem, the doors will be locked once class has started.
- Cell phones, lap top computers, and other electronic devices must be turned off and stored out of sight.
- No recording devices will be permitted.
- No food or beverage (except water) is allowed in the classroom.
- Classroom behavior should always be courteous, respectful of others, and consistent with the expectations set forth by the university.

Religious Holidays and Official Extracurricular Activities

If the date of any of the examinations conflicts with a religious holiday that you observe or an official extracurricular activity, the instructor must be notified no less than 1 week prior to the examination so that alternative arrangements can be made. For extracurricular activities, official documentation will be required. If you are going to miss a class when homework is due, you are expected to turn your homework in at a previous class so that no late penalty is applied.

Writing Center and Other Student Assistance

One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-301. Although some drop-in times are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling (702) 895-3908. When you go to your appointment, please bring a copy of your assignment and two copies of any writing that you may have completed on it. Another source of information on UNLV organizations whose purpose is to support students' academic activities, a short description of their function, and contact information can be found at http://tlc.unlv.edu/student_success.htm

Disabilities

UNLV complies with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, and offers reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Complex (SSC), Room 137, and the contact numbers are: VOICE (702) 895-0866, TTY (702) 895-0652, FAX (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit: <http://studentlife.unlv.edu/disability/>.

Schedule

The dates of the examinations and the homework due dates on the following schedule are firm. The topics to be covered may change.

Date	Topic	Readings			Assignments
		Magleby	Bowers	Other	
26-Aug	Course Introduction				
28-Aug	Constitutional Democracy	1			
2-Sep	The Living Constitution	2		U. S. Constitution	
4-Sep	Nevada History		1,2		
9-Sep	American Federalism	3			#1 USA.GOV
11-Sep	Political Culture and Ideology	4			
16-Sep	Exam #1				
18-Sep	The American Political Landscape, Interest Groups	5, 6	4		
23-Sep	Political Parties; Public Opinion, Participation, and Voting	7,8	5		
25-Sep	Campaigns and Elections, Nevada Politics, The media and American Politics	9,10			#2 Political Party
30-Sep	(cont.)				
2-Oct	Exam #2				
7-Oct	Congress, Nevada Legislature	11	6		
9-Oct	(cont)				
14-Oct	The Presidency, Nevada Executive	12	7		
16-Oct	(cont.)				
21-Oct	Federal Administrative systems, Nevada State Government	13	9		#3 Presidential Candidates
23-Oct	The Judiciary	14	8		
28-Oct	(cont)				#4 "State of Nevada"
30-Oct	(cont)				
4-Nov	Exam #3				
6-Nov	First Amendment Freedoms	15			
11-Nov	HOLIDAY				
13-Nov	(cont)				
18-Nov	Rights to Life, Liberty, and Property	16			
20-Nov	(cont.)				
25-Nov	Equal Rights Under the Law	17	3		
27-Nov	HOLIDAY				
2-Dec	(cont.)				#5 Racial, Ethnic Diversity at UNLV
4-Dec	Make-up Exams				
9-Dec	Exam #4				