

PSC 101: Introduction to American Politics

Fall 2024

MWF 10:00 – 10:50 am

ten Hoor Rm. 115

Instructor: Corinne Lyons

Email: cnlyons@crimson.ua.edu

Office Hours: MWF 11:00-12:00 or by appointment in ten Hoor 351 or via Zoom

Course Description

This is an introductory course that focuses on the national government. Emphasis is placed on learning how institutions, people, and politics shape public policy.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify the roles and responsibilities of the different institutions of US government, particularly as they relate to policymaking.
- Critique the evolving nature of democracy.
- Compare how the electoral system operates in the United States in contrast with other industrialized democracies and how our system affects politics and policymaking.
- Identify factual information about the US political system and societal factors that affect politics.

Required Text

PSC 101 Access Granted Program (Bianco, William T. and David T. Canon. 2021. American Politics Today. 8th Edition.)

Commonly Asked Questions about the Access Granted Program:

- Do I have to get my book this way?
 - No, there is a way to “opt out” of the Access Granted Program. Please reach out to me if you would like to choose to do so.
- What are the repercussions of opting out?
 - You will still need to purchase the book as an e-text in order to complete the online quizzes that are at the end of each chapter. You can do so on the Norton website, but the cost is lower if you use the Access Granted Program for access to the e-text.
- Can I buy a hard copy of the book too?

- Yes, you can purchase an “add-on” hard copy of the book. Contact the Supe Store to have them order it for you or you can find an option to purchase a hard copy in the settings of your online Norton account.
- Bianco, William T. and David T. Canon. 2021. American Politics Today. 8th Edition.

Course Requirements

Blackboard

Announcements regarding the course will be posted in Blackboard and sent to your Crimson email address. It is your responsibility to either regularly check your Crimson email for communication from me about the course, or regularly check Bb Announcements.

Attendance

Attending class is expected. If you will miss class for an extended period of time, please notify me so that we can consider appropriate solutions. You do not need to notify me of every absence and doing so will not result in points for missed classes.

Readings

You should plan to devote a significant amount of time to carefully reading the chapters. You are encouraged to take notes on the reading in whatever format you think will be most helpful to you (chapter outlines, notes on important terms or concepts, etc.). I do **not** cover everything from the reading material in the lecture.

Graded Assignments

- There will be **three exams** worth **60% of your final grade**. The format will be multiple choice. Exams will be administered on Blackboard during class time, and there will be no class on exam days.
- There will be **17 quizzes on Norton** worth **10% of your final grade**. Your two lowest quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the semester, for a total of 15 quiz grades.
- There will be **three writing assignments** worth **30% of your final grade**, administered throughout the semester. Guidelines and further instructions will be discussed later in the semester and posted to Blackboard. Students are expected to submit original work for these assignments which will be ran through Turnitin. Submitted responses with traces of plagiarism will result in a referral to the Dean’s office.

Policy Regarding Make-Ups and Late Work

- Exams – If you have to miss any exam due to university-sponsored events, illness, or a traumatic event, you should contact me within 48 hours of the event and provide documentation for a make-up exam to be scheduled.
- Chapter Quizzes – All Inquizitive quizzes are due by 11:59pm on December 13.
- Writing Assignments – Writing Assignments are due by 11:59pm on Sundays. If you are unable to make a deadline, writing assignments will be accepted for partial credit, with a reduction of 40% of the original grade.

Extra Credit

I reserve the right to assign extra credit assignments and opportunities.

Grading Summary

Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Final Exam	20%
Chapter Quizzes	10%
Writing Assignment 1	10%
Writing Assignment 2	10%
Writing Assignment 3	10%

Total	100%
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Final Grade Calculation

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F <60
A 92-96	B 82-86	C 72-76	D 62-66	
A- 90-91	B- 80-81	C- 70-71	D- 60-61	

Course Schedule

The course schedule and syllabus may be modified during the course of the semester. In the event of such modifications, an updated syllabus will be posted on Blackboard Learn and students will be notified via Crimson email. All times listed are in Central Time.

Week	Date	Readings	Other Info
1	Aug. 21	Syllabus Review	
	Aug. 23	Ch 1: Understanding American Politics	
2	Aug. 26	Ch 1: Understanding American Politics	
	Aug. 28	Ch 2: Constitution and the Founding	Last day to drop a course without a "W"
	Aug. 30	Ch 2: Constitution and the Founding	
3	Sep. 2	NO CLASS	LABOR DAY
	Sep. 4	Ch 3: Federalism	
	Sep. 6	Ch 3: Federalism	
4	Sep. 9	Ch 3: Federalism	
	Sep. 11	Ch 4: Civil Liberties	
	Sep. 13	Ch 4: Civil Liberties	
5	Sep. 15	Writing Assignment #1: Federalism due by 11:59 PM	
	Sep. 16	Ch 4: Civil Liberties	
	Sep. 18	Ch. 5: Civil Rights	
	Sep. 20	Ch. 5: Civil Rights	
6	Sep. 23	Ch. 5: Civil Rights	
	Sep. 25	Review Session	
	Sep. 27	Exam #1	
7	Sep. 30	Ch 6: Public Opinion	
	Oct. 2	Ch 6: Public Opinion	
	Oct. 4	Ch 7: The Media	
8	Oct. 7	Ch 7: The Media	
	Oct. 9	Ch 8: Political Parties	Mid-Term Grade Entry Deadline: 11:59 PM

	Oct. 11	Ch 8: Political Parties	
9	Oct. 14	Ch 9: Elections	
	Oct. 16	Ch 9: Elections	
	Oct. 18	Ch 10: Interest Groups	
10	Oct. 20	Writing Assignment #2: Presidential Nomination Acceptance Speeches due by 11:59 PM	
	Oct. 21	Ch 10: Interest Groups	
	Oct. 23	Ch 11: Congress	
	Oct. 25	Ch 11: Congress	
11	Oct. 28	Review Session	
	Oct. 30	Exam #2	Last Day to drop a class with a "W"
	Nov. 1	NO CLASS	FALL BREAK
12	Nov. 4	Ch 12: The Presidency	
	Nov. 6	Ch 12: The Presidency	
	Nov. 8	Ch 13: The Bureaucracy	
13	Nov. 11	Ch 13: The Bureaucracy	
	Nov. 13	Ch 14: The Courts	
	Nov. 15	Ch 14: The Courts	
14	Nov. 17	Writing Assignment #3: The Presidency due by 11:59 PM	
	Nov. 18	Ch 15: Economic Policy	
	Nov. 20	Ch 16: Social Policy	
	Nov. 22	Ch 16: Social Policy	
15	Nov. 25	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING BREAK
	Nov. 27	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING BREAK
	Nov. 29	NO CLASS	THANKSGIVING BREAK
16	Dec. 2	Ch 17: Foreign Policy	
	Dec. 4	Ch 17: Foreign Policy	
	Dec. 6	Review session	
17	Dec. 10	EXAM #3 (FINAL): 10:30 AM-12:30 PM	

	Dec. 13	ALL INQUIZITIVE QUIZZES DUE BY 11:59 PM
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University of Alabama Policies & Statements

COVID-19 Policy Statement

All University faculty, staff, and students are expected to maintain a commitment to the health and safety of our campus community. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, specific health and safety standards are in place to minimize exposure and community spread on campus. In the interest of your health and safety and that of all UA students, faculty and staff, the University reserves the right to change the mode of instruction or schedule of instruction at any time, based upon prevailing public health and other guidance. While the method of delivery may change, educational instruction and opportunities will continue. As such, the University will not provide a refund of tuition, in whole or in-part, based on any such changes. Detailed information on changes in format or schedule can be found at studentaccounts.ua.edu and financialaid.ua.edu. UA students, faculty and staff are required to comply with UA System Comprehensive Health and Safety Task Force guidance regarding social distancing, face coverings and other measures. Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself and our herd. COVID-19 vaccines are being administered by the University Medical Center, the Student Health Center and various businesses and healthcare providers. Students who report proof of their vaccination status will receive Bama Cash as a thank you gift for doing their part.

Notification of Changes

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

Online Proctoring and Room Scan

This course may include online proctored exams that may require a room scan of your testing environment using your webcam. The room scan is required to ensure academic integrity. It is your responsibility to identify a testing location that allows you to comfortably complete the room scan without compromising your personal privacy. Students who are unable to identify an appropriate testing location for the room scan or who otherwise do not wish to take the exam online, should contact the course's instructor to discuss alternative testing options, including taking the exam in-person at an approved location. If you choose an in-person testing option, it is your responsibility to coordinate with the instructor to reserve your space in the testing location prior to the date of the exam. Additionally, you will be responsible for all fees associated with in-person proctoring and for presenting an approved form of identification at the testing location. Further, if the course uses any online exams developed by third party textbook publishers, you will also be subject to the publisher's terms and conditions related to online exams.

AI Use Statement

Students are welcome to explore generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT, to seek support for their assignments or other activities. However, students should follow the "verify everything" approach to the content generated by these AI tools. These tools learned the models from the public internet, which means they may reproduce substantial text from other sources. It is the student's responsibility to check the original sources to be sure they are not plagiarizing someone else's work. Students should also cross-check the content and citations generated by these tools to ensure they are accurate and properly referenced.

Students should incorporate the subsequent statement in their assignments when using a Generative AI Tool: "For this assignment's preparation, the author(s) have utilized [Generative AI Tool Name], a language model created by [Generative AI Tool Provider]. Within this assignment, the [Generative AI Tool Name] was used for purposes such as [e.g., brainstorming, grammatical correction, writing paraphrasing, citation, specific sections of the assignment]."

Policy on Academic Misconduct

All students in attendance at the University of Alabama are expected to be honorable and to observe standards of conduct appropriate to a community of scholars. The University expects from its students a higher standard of conduct than the minimum required to avoid discipline. Academic misconduct includes all acts of dishonesty in any academically related matter and any knowing or intentional help or attempt to help, or conspiracy to help, another student. The Academic Misconduct Disciplinary Policy will be followed in the event of academic misconduct.

Statement on Disability Accommodations

ODS works with faculty and other members of the University community to provide individualized academic accommodations while promoting student responsibility and self-advocacy. It is the student's responsibility to make known a need for academic accommodations and services by

- (1) completing an application and providing appropriate documentation of the disability to ODS,
- (2) formally requesting accommodations during an intake interview with an ODS Accommodations Specialist,
- (3) using the ODS Online Portal to provide each instructor the Faculty Notification Letter, and
- (4) meeting with each instructor to discuss the implementation of accommodations.

Students can apply for academic accommodations and submit disability documentation by logging into the ODS Online Portal with their MyBama username and password.

For more information about services for students with disabilities, including documentation requirements, visit ods.ua.edu or call 205-348-4285 (voice), or 205-348-3081 (TTY). Office hours for ODS are Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:45 p.m.

Severe Weather Protocol

In the case of a tornado warning (tornado has been sighted or detected by radar; sirens activated), all university activities are automatically suspended, including all classes and laboratories. If you are in a building, please move immediately to the lowest level and toward the center of the building away from windows (interior classrooms, offices, or corridors) and remain there until the tornado warning has expired. Classes in session when the tornado warning is issued can resume immediately after the warning has expired at the discretion of the instructor. Classes that have not yet begun will resume 30 minutes after the tornado warning has expired provided at least half of the class period remains.

UA is a residential campus with many students living on or near campus. In general classes will remain in session until the National Weather Service issues safety warnings for the city of Tuscaloosa. Clearly, some students and faculty commute from adjacent counties. These counties may experience weather related problems not encountered in Tuscaloosa. Individuals should follow the advice of the National Weather Service for that area taking the necessary precautions to ensure personal safety. Whenever the National Weather Service and the Emergency Management Agency issue a warning, people in the path of the storm (tornado or severe thunderstorm) should take immediate life-saving actions.

When West Alabama is under a severe weather advisory, conditions can change rapidly. It is imperative to get to where you can receive information from the National Weather Service and to follow the instructions provided. Personal safety should dictate the actions that faculty, staff and students take. The Office of Public Relations will disseminate the latest information regarding conditions on campus in the following ways:

- Weather advisory posted on the UA homepage
- Weather advisory sent out through Connect-ED--faculty, staff and students (sign up at myBama)
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA at 90.7 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over Alabama Public Radio (WUAL) at 91.5 FM
- Weather advisory broadcast over WVUA 7. WVUA 7 Storm Watch provides a free service you can subscribe to that allows you to receive weather warnings for Tuscaloosa via e-mail, pager or cell phone. Check <http://www.wvua7.com/stormwatch.html> for details.

Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the UAct website.

Religious Observances

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent

from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines.

UAct Statement

The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website (www.ua.edu/uact) provides extensive information on how to report or obtain assistance with a variety of issues, including issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual violence or other Title IX violations, illegal discrimination, harassment, hate or bias incidents, child abuse or neglect, hazing, threat assessment, retaliation, and ethical violations or fraud.

Wellness Resources

College can be a stressful time

If you or someone you know is facing a challenging time or dealing with academic or personal stress, anxiety, depression, or other concerns, we strongly encourage and support you to seek assistance or to help friends find the care that they may need.

Also, if you are experiencing a personal crisis and need urgent assistance, you can also contact the following resources:

Counseling Center

Monday-Friday during routine Center hours (205-348-3863).

Weekends, holidays, after-hours (contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 and ask to speak with the on-call counselor).

You may also text BAMA to 741-741 to text with a trained volunteer.

Women and Gender Resource Center

Monday-Friday during routine Center hours (205-348-5040).

Weekends, holidays, after-hours (contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 and ask to speak to the on-call advocate for the WGRC).