SYLLABUS

**INSTRUCTOR**: Professor Barbara J. Glowaski

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 **COURSE**: POS 2041- American National Government (#2502)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**: A general education survey course, POS 2041 provides a comprehensive examination of the American political system. Through this course students will become familiar with theory, organization, principles, and function of the American national government, and various elements within the political system that work to shape policy outcomes. This course partially satisfies the writing requirements outlined in the General Education Requirements of the college catalog.

**MEETING INFORMATION**: 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. on Mondays and Wednesdays in PW 705

**COURSE GOALS**: Upon completion of this course, the student will

1. Understand the purpose and function of government.
2. Understand the various elements of the American federal system and how it differs from unitary and confederation systems.
3. Understand the various philosophical, cultural and political experiences that impacted the creation and evolution of the principles and values of the American political system.
4. Understand the influences leading to the American Revolution and the establishment of the Articles of Confederation as the first national government.
5. Understand the events that led up to the replacement of the Articles with a new government and the fundamental principles and features of the Constitution of 1787.
6. Understand the origin and evolution of civil liberties from our nation’s founding through today with emphasis on the Bill of Rights and the role of the Supreme Court in this evolutionary process.
7. Understand the origins and evolution of civil rights from our nation’s founding through today with emphasis on the expansion of the concept of equality and the importance of the Fourteenth Amendment in this ongoing process.
8. Understand the organization and functions of the legislative branch and the role it plays in the system of checks and balances.
9. Understand the organization and functions of the executive branch, the presidential election process, the federal bureaucracy and the role the executive plays in the system of checks and balances.
10. Understand the organization and functions of the federal court system, the origin and types of law as well as the major role played by the principle of judicial review in the expansion of federal powers.
11. Understand the nature of policy-making and the factors, both domestic and foreign, which work to shape policy outcome.
12. Understand the role of political parties, interest groups and the media and the impact of the public opinion and political participation by diverse groups on the American political system.

**TEXT**: The required text for this course is ***American Politics Today Essential Edition* by Bardes, Shelley and Schmidt (18th Edition) ISBN *9781285853154.*  Supplemental** **material** includes local newspapers, *Washington Post*, *Washington Times*, *New York Times,* internet web sitessuch as *the Drudge Report, Huffington Post,* and the various political interview programs broadcast both on the networks, cable and the internet.

**MAJOR COURSE OBJECTIVE FOR STUDENTS**: POS 2041 studies the structure and operation of our federal system of government with the focus on the national government centered in Washington, D.C. Emphasis is not only on achieving a working knowledge of this system, but also developing an appreciation for its strengths and weaknesses. All students are residents of a state and a citizen of a nation, and as such, whether of this nation or another, it is imperative in a democracy that they understand the privileges, protections, duties and obligations inherent in that citizenship.

**GRADING SCALE AND PROCEDURES**: Grades will be based on five (5) objective exams (a combination of multiple choice, true/false, or matching formats) as well as from completion of exam notes and three 600 word essays totaling a minimum of 2000 words responding to topics or issues of a national or international political importance. Entries discussing events in city, county or state government will not be accepted. The three essay entries will be evaluated for a total of 100 points and will count as the sixth exam. Class attendance/ participation are also counted in determining final grades. Further, extra credit points may be earned for voter registration, voting in local elections, working on campaigns, writing opinion pieces on presidential speeches, Sunday morning news/interview programs (ex. *Meet the Press*, *Fox Sunday Morning*, *This Week,* *Face the Nation*, and the *McLaughlin* *Group*), completion sheets and pop quizzes on current events. This extra credit may be earned throughout the semester **but no further extra credit will be awarded or** **any** **work accepted after the last class period on Wednesday, December 2, 2015.** Material may be handed into the Provost’s Office in UP-222 prior to that. Students are strongly encouraged to take advantage of these opportunities by reading the supplemental materials and watching current-events related programming.

90-100 A

80-89 B

70-79 C

60-69 D

0-59 F

You may have points deducted from your final grade for cell phone disruptions during class, carrying on private conversations or any other behavior that would serve as a disruption for either the instructor or the other students. Consideration in determining final grades will also be given for class participation.

**ATTENDANCE**: **Active participation** in this class is defined as attending classes, completing exams, submitting opinion essays when due, and taking part in class discussions as well as asking questions. Class attendance is the key component in student success. Therefore, students are expected to attend all classes and to be in their seats when class starts. Each student starts out with 90 points for attendance at the beginning of the session. Roll will be taken every day usually at the start of class using both a seating chart and a daily sign-in sheet. **Students who arrive after roll has been taken using the seating chart must notify me of their late arrival or the absence will be counted and the points deducted.** Unexcused absences will result in the loss of three points per class period. Absences may be excused due to ill health providing that medical verification is presented or absence due to jury duty or educational requirements is provided. All other absences will be treated as unexcused and three points will be deducted. Students who are late to class or leave early will lose one point per class. Even though a student is absent from class, he/she is still responsible for work done or due (ex. lecture material, exams, or other assignments.) Extra credit opportunities due to absence may not be made up. Exams may be made up only if the student has contacted the instructor by email on the day of the missed exam or the next class period. Any exam not made up by Wednesday, December 2nd at 4:30 p.m. will be counted as zero (0) points in computing the final grade for this course. As required by Board of Trustee’s policy, students who do not complete 2,000 words of original writing in a format acceptable to the instructor will receive a final grade no higher than a D regardless of exam scores.

**CLASSROOM COURTESY**: Enrolling in college is a very different experience than going to high school. Both student and instructor expectations are significantly different and those differences should be noted. What differentiates the two experiences is the expectation of student preparedness, inquiry, research, a synthesis of the information learned and the testing of new ideas and arguments. Accordingly, all members of the learning community should demonstrate respect for the endeavor itself, and more importantly, for each other. Therefore, rudeness or any form of disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Please do not eat or smoke in the classroom. Inappropriate language or gestures are also not acceptable behavior. The use of cell phones or beepers during class time is prohibited, as they are disruptive to other students as well as to the instructor. All of these behaviors are contrary to the Board of Trustee policy in 6Hx23-4.461, Student Affairs and could result in removal from the class. In the event you are dealing with an illness or life-threatening emergency, please notify the instructor prior the start of class to make special arrangements. If you feel at any time that another student is interfering in your education, let me know.

**COURSE ASSIGNMENTS**: You will be given a list of course activities, reading assignments and a schedule for the five exams and the due dates for submission of writing assignments. It is meant as a guide, a roadmap and while I will make every effort to adhere to it, I may have to make adjustments. Amended schedules will be posted in a module entitled Schedule of Assignments in MyCourses.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:**

1. **Course Policies and Procedures:** The student is responsible for knowing all course policies listed in the syllabus and discussed in class.
2. **Class Participation and Etiquette:** The student is responsible for participating in class and coming to class prepared. The student will respect the rights of other students to learn. The student will communicate with others in a courteous and respectful manner at all times, including the instructor.
3. **Assignment Due Dates and Procedures: The student is responsible for knowing when assignments are due, the formats required, and the procedures for completing and submitting assignments. See Assignment Folder under the Lessons Tab on My SPC.**
4. **Academic Honesty:** The student is expected to know the SPC Academic Honesty Policy and to act above suspicion at all times with regard to academic issues.
5. **Attendance: The student is responsible for attending class on time, paying attention in class, and remaining in class until dismissed. The student is responsible for** reviewing the attendance record in MyCourses for inaccuracies and excessive absences.

**INSTRUCTOR RESPONSIBILIES:**

1. **Course Policies and Procedures:** The instructor is responsible for providing a syllabus the first day of class that clearly explains all course policies. The instructor will provide a Student Survey of Instruction for fall and spring semesters. The instructor will post grades in MySPC by the end of the semester.
2. **Class Participation and Etiquette:** The instructor will create a learning environment in the classroom that engages students and facilitates learning. The instructor is responsible for coming to class prepared. The instructor will enforce the right of all students to learn. The instructor will communicate with students in a courteous and respectful manner at all times. The instructor will respond to emails within 48 hours, 5 of 7 days per week.
3. **Assignment Due Dates and Procedures: The instructor will provide clear guidelines and information regarding when assignments are due, the format required, and the procedure for completing and submitting assignments. The instructor will grade all assignments within 7 days of each due date, with additional time for late assignments, if accepted.**
4. **Academic Honesty:** The instructor will enforce SPC Academic Honesty policies at all times.
5. **Attendance: The instructor will begin and end class on time.** The instructor will maintain weekly office hours or come to class one half hour early for questions, as determined by college policy.

**TUTORING:** Tutoring in math, reading, and writing, and academic courses is available free of charge, either by appointment or by an on-call tutor in the Learning Commons (TL104).The number is 727-394-6133. Ask your instructor for more information.

**USING MyCourses:** In order to better serve our faculty and students we are asking that both the instructor and student use the logoff button when completing online course work. By logging off, MyCourses server space is freed, and therefore, optimizing the system. **Students should check their email on MyCourses at least once a day.**

**TECHNICAL SUPPORT:** MyCourses requirements: <http://www.spcollege.edu/ecampus/help/technical/index.shtml>SPC helpdesk: 727-341-4357 onlinehelp@spcollege.edu or www.spcollege.edu/helpdesk

**INVITATION**: Please do not hesitate to speak with or e-mail me if you are having trouble learning or comprehending class lectures, discussions or your textbook. Students with learning or physical disabilities should present the appropriate form from the college’s offices of Student Disabilities for any requested accommodations. I will work to provide the optimum learning environment for all students. My goal is that, working together, you will develop the knowledge and skills to play an active and positive role in the political process. My hope is that every student here today is still to take the final exam on Monday, December 7, 2015.

8/16/2015