
Political Science 101 American Politics – *Online*

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Fall 2020

Instructor:	Dr. Saemyi Park
Online Office Hours:	Every Monday from 12:30PM-2:30PM I will hold the online office hours every Wednesday (from September 7 to December 7). Please join me via Collaborate Ultra from the course site to enhance your distance learning experience! (read p.6 for more information)
E-mail:	spark@uwsp.edu
Important Note:	Please keep in mind that this syllabus, along with course assignments and due dates, are subject to change. Any changes will be clearly noted in a course announcement in Canvas and through email.

A NOTE FOR ALL STUDENTS

I know that this is still an incredibly difficult time for all of us. Many of you are now working in non-ideal conditions. Many of you in this class are first-year college students who could not fully enjoy their campus life. In planning the semester, I have tried to accommodate this in several ways, as you will see below. Here is an outline:

1. **You do not need to be online at a specific time.** We have 11 main topics to cover, so I create eleven main modules along with two modules for film presentation. Each topic is supposed to be covered for a week. I will record lectures and put them on each module. You can watch them when you can. *This means that you do NOT need to attend online classes on our regular class time.* This class is NOT synchronous.
2. **Modules are structured in a similar way, so you will know what you are expected to do for each module.** In each week, you will read the assigned textbook chapter, watch lecture videos, and/or review additional learning materials. You need to take the practice quiz by Thursday and complete the module activity by Friday. For more information, please read “Module Description” in pp. 4-5.
3. **Grading:** My goal for this course is to invite you to discover the importance and relevance of American Politics to your everyday life, not mechanically evaluating your performance with a letter grade. So, I will take into account how hard, stressful, confusing, and complicated life currently is while grading. Everyone should expect to pass this course if you will complete the required coursework by its deadlines. You don’t have the midterm or final exams. You will complete a reasonable amount of work each week. And, I will do my best to be available when you need help. Please utilize my weekly online office hours and **The Muddiest Point Forum** (read p. 7 for more information).
4. **I am very confident that we can make it work and have a great semester!**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This *online* course is designed to study of American government and politics with emphasis on three themes: Foundations, Institutions, and Politics. The first part of class will cover “the foundations” of American politics – the Constitution, federalism, civil liberties, and civil rights. Next, we will discuss about “politics” by specifically focusing on public opinion, elections, and the media. The last part of class will examine “three branches of government” – Congress, the presidency, and the courts.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

After the completion of this class, students will be able to:

1. Explain the foundations and significance of the US Constitution
2. Example the structure and function of each branch of government
3. Analyze conflicts and challenges in the civil liberties and civil rights debate
4. Evaluate the influence of mass media in public opinion and elections as well as its consequences to the policy-making process
5. Identify the components of the US electoral process

REQUIRED REDING

The following book has been ordered at University Bookstore for textbook rental:

- Title: ***American Politics Today*** (Sixth Core Edition, 2019)
- Authors: William T. Bianco and David T. Canon
- Publisher: W.W. Norton

Please find **Textbook Rental Information** for in-person pickup or shipping options at <https://www.uwsp.edu/centers/store/Pages/default.aspx>. Please make sure to have it with you BEFORE the first main module begins.

The Publisher, W.W. Norton, has a “study space” Web site for the textbook that you may find useful for the course. The address is: <http://www.wwnorton.com/college/polisci/american-politicstoday3/full/welcome.aspx>. It includes chapter reviews, study questions, on-line quizzes, links to other political sites, political blogs, vocabulary flash cards, plus other readings and resources.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	Points	Due
Practice Quiz	120 pts	
Syllabus Quiz	10 pts	by September 4
11 Module Quizzes	110 pts (11 Quizzes x 10 pts)	by Thursday each week
Module Activities	140 pts	
Introduce Yourself Forum	10 pts	by September 4
11 Module Activities	110 pts (11 Activities x 10 pts)	by Thursday each week
11 Peer Reviews	20 pts	by Sunday each week
Film Analysis Paper	30 pts	
Film Analysis I	15 pts	by October 18
Film Analysis II	15 pts	by November 15
Event Activity	10 pts	
I Vote!	5 pts	by November 3
It's Thanksgiving!	5 pts	by November 29
Total	300 pts	

Your coursework is attached to the modules. More detailed descriptions of module activities will appear in next few pages. I will be flexible and lenient for the distance learning course. If you complete the required activities for each module by its deadline as well as submit two Film Analysis Papers that meets the guideline, you should expect the passing grade. I will assist you to achieve your goal for the course if you want a higher grade beyond a passing grade. Please feel free to contact me for further assistance.

GRADING SCALE

A	279-300	C+	231-239
A-	270-278	C	219-230
B+	261-269	C-	210-218
B	249-260	D+	201-209
B-	240-248	D	189-200
		F	Below 188

I will use the point system and follow the university's standard grading scale for letter grade. There is *no curve*, so you receive what you earn.

MODULE DESCRIPTION

	Module	Topics	Date	Reading
	Module 0	Introduction	September 3	None
The Foundation	Module 1	Understanding AP	The week of Sept. 7	Ch. 1
	Module 2	The Constitution	The week of Sept. 14	Ch. 2
	Module 3	Federalism	The week of Sept. 21	Ch. 3
	Module 4	Civil Liberties	The week of Sept. 28	Ch. 4
	Module 5	Civil Rights	The week of Oct. 5	Ch. 5
	Module 6	Film Presentation I	The week of Oct. 12	None
Politics	Module 7	Public Opinion	The week of Oct. 19	Ch. 6
	Module 8	Election	The week of Oct. 26	Ch. 9
	Module 9	The Media	The week of Nov. 2	Ch. 7
	Module 10	Film Presentation II	The week of Nov. 9	None
The Institutions	Module 11	Congress	The week of Nov. 16	Ch. 11
	Module 12	The Presidency	The week of Nov. 30	Ch. 12
	Module 13	The Courts	The week of Dec.	Ch. 13

Please note that there is no module assigned during **the week of November 23** (Nov. 23 & Nov. 26) because I want you to fully enjoy the Thanksgiving break.

All course activities occur in the course site at Canvas. Each module is supposed to be done in a week, and it is structured in a similar way so that you can expect what you are invited to do. You need to complete the module to move to the next module. I will publish several modules at once, so you can complete module activities in advance if you want.



As shown in the above figure, you are invited to do the following activities for each module:

1. Read the Reading and Complete Lecture Videos.

- It is your best interest to read the assigned textbook chapter first BEFORE watching the lecture videos.
- Please keep in mind that **lecture videos and learning materials are NOT sharable outside of POLI 101**. For the detailed policy of FERPA, please read p. 7.

2. Take the Practice Quiz by Thursday.

- You MUST take the practice quiz in each module.
- Each quiz is designed to cover the learning materials (lectures & the chapter).
- It is worth 10 points. **You can take it repeatedly until you get 100% on it.**
- There is no time limit.

3. Submit the Module Activity by Friday.

- Each module asks you to complete a brief activity. It could be answering the discussion questions or submitting the assignment featuring the class topic.
- It does NOT require any outside research. Reviewing lecture videos and reading the textbook chapter are sufficient to complete this task.
- Each module will have a different task. More information is given in each module.
- It is worth 10 points.

4. Complete TWO Peer Reviews on the Module Activity by Sunday.

- For each module activity, you are also invited to review two other students' assignments. It is designed to promote the free flow of opinions and interaction between peers.
- Once you submit the original activity by the deadline, you will be automatically assigned to TWO peers for reviewing their work.
- Your comment on the peers should be written in a respectful way. It must be about the contents, not about its format.
- More information about "Peer Reviews" is provided in the course site.

DESCRIPTION OF NON-MODULE ACTIVITIES

A. Two Analytical Papers

Throughout the semester, you will watch TWO films. You will be asked to write 2 analytical papers on the topics covered in the film and modules. The deadline is by Sunday of each film presentation week: the first paper is due by October 18, and the second paper should be submitted by November 15. The essay must make a concise and argumentative point on the given questions, and it should not simply summarize the movies, readings, lectures, and/or classroom discussions. The essence of this assignment is to incorporate learning materials to analyze the film to answer the questions.

The paper should be about 1-2 pages in single space (or about 1,000 words). If you get help from UWSP Writing Lab's Online Consultation, you will earn extra 3 points. Late submission is not permissible unless you receive the permission from the instructor in advance. Unexcused late papers will incur a 5% (out of 100%) deduction per day. You must submit both papers. More details will be provided in the course site.

B. Event Activity

I will offer two fun activities for you to earn credits:

“I Vote!” Although Covid-19 abruptly changed our daily lives, the year of 2020 is exciting for many of you as you will be able to vote for the first time! For others who have been already participating in elections, you will be excited to vote for the next president. You can submit the proof of your vote such as a selfie with “I Vote” sticker, the envelope of absentee vote with your name on it, or whatever to prove your vote. Don’t share the information about whom you vote. I do not care which candidate you vote for. What matter is if you exercise your voting right. Are you under 18? Don’t worry! You can persuade others (parents, relatives, friends, etc.) to vote. You may want to take a picture with an individual who was convinced to vote by you. More information will be provided in the assignment at Canvas.

“It’s Thanksgiving!” As I mentioned in the previous page, there will be no module work during the Thanksgiving week. But I want you to celebrate how successfully you been doing in this class by completing one short activity. Share your Thanksgiving break with a brief reflection. You can post the picture of your Thanksgiving dinner, any Thanksgiving tradition you celebrate, the recipe of foods you eat, or whatever you do during the break. It’s just for fun, and you do not need to reveal too much private information. I will give you more detailed instruction in the course site.

VIRTUAL ONLINE OFFICE HOURS

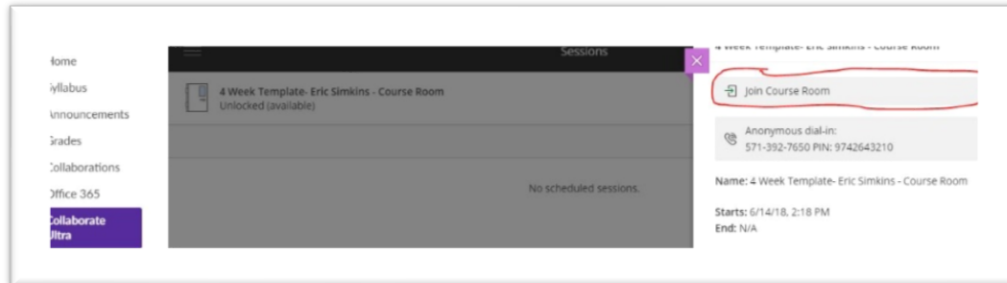
I will do my best to help making your learning experience as smooth and enjoyable as possible. If you have questions, please email me via spark@uwsp.edu. I will check my email twice a day during the weekdays (in the morning & in the afternoon before 5pm). You can expect me to respond your email within 24 hours. If you don’t, please email me again to remind your previous inquiry. Please note that I may not be able to respond you at late night and/or during the weekend.

I will be also available for help **Every Monday from 12:30PM to 2:30PM** (September 7-December 7). I will have virtual online office hours on every Monday throughout the semester. You do NOT need to make an appointment with me in advance. Just join the office hours meeting via **Collaborate Ultra** from this course site. Chrome is recommended to use Collaborate Ultra in the course site.

If my regular online office hours do not work for you, you can certainly schedule an online meeting for the different time and date. Just email me to set up the appointment. These two hours per each week are reserved for you in POLI 101. Please utilize these times for your own benefits. I want to meet you virtually!!!

To meet your instructor online, please take the following steps:

- Click "Collaborate Ultra" in the left navigation menu
- Click the name of the Course Room
- Click "Join Course Room"



THE MUDDIEST POINT FORUM

I create the forum where you can post questions. If you have a general course question (not confidential or personal in nature), please post it to the Muddiest Point Forum found on the course homepage.

- *Do you have hard time to understand concepts or theories?*
- *Do you want to be checked if you correctly comprehend the topics?*
- *Is the paper guideline unclear to you?*

Please post these questions to the Muddiest Point Forum. I will post answers to all general questions there so that all students can view them. Students are encouraged to answer each other's questions too.

FERPA: IMPORTANT POLICY ON INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS

Lecture materials and recordings for POLI 101 American Politics are protected intellectual property at UW-Stevens Point. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or share lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.