

Political Science 101 American Politics

University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point, Spring 2018

Instructor:	Dr. Saemyi Park
Class Location & Time:	CCC 321 & T/R 11:00AM-12:15PM
Instructor's Office:	CCC 468
Office Hours:	W 10:00AM-2:00PM & by appointment
E-mail:	spark@uwsp.edu
Phone:	715-3346-4107

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to study of American government and politics with an emphasis on the Constitution, branches of government, civil liberties and civil rights, public opinion, the media, and campaigns and elections. My goal is to help you be informed about the basis of American political system.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES & ASSESSMENT

Student Learning Outcomes at the end of this course,	Course Topics	Evaluation of Outcome
Students should be able to:	The following topic(s) will address this outcome:	This outcome will be evaluated primarily by:
Understand the foundations and significance of the US Constitution	"Understanding American Politics" "The Constitutions"	Midterm examination Film Analysis Paper I
Recognize the structure and function of each branch of government	"Federalism" "Presidency" "Congress" "The Courts"	Midterm examination Final examination
Comprehend conflicts and challenges in the civil liberties and civil rights debate	"Civil Liberties" "Civil Rights"	Film Analysis Paper I Class Activity
Evaluate the influence of mass media in public opinion and its consequences to the policy-making process	"Public Opinion" "The Media"	Final examination Film Analysis Paper II
Understand the components of the US electoral process	"Elections"	Final examination Film Analysis Paper II

REQUIRED READINGS

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

- William T. Bianco and David T. Canon, *American Politics Today*. Fourth Core Edition. W.W. Norton, 2014.

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.

READING IN THE DISCIPLINES

This semester, a unique opportunity will be offered to students enrolled in this course. “Reading In the Disciplines” discussion groups attached to this course will be available. The groups are **one-credit, pass/fail courses** that meet once a week for 50 minutes. The groups will start meeting around Week 3 of the semester and will allow students opportunities to:

- Meet once a week with fellow classmates and a trained peer discussion leader
- Work to improve understanding of the course material
- Ask questions in a comfortable and exploratory environment

The peer facilitator for these groups will be coming in to our class at the beginning of the semester to share more about this voluntary opportunity. While there are no guarantees, research has shown that students who participate in discussion sections tend to do better in the parent-course. More information about the program can be found here <http://www.uwsp.edu/tlc/Pages/Reading-In-the-Disciplines-Groups.aspx>

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

	Weight	Due Date
Midterm Exam	25%	March 8 (TH)
Final Exam	25%	May 14 (M)
Class Activity	10%	March 1 (TH)
Film Analysis Paper I	15%	March 1 (TH) by 11:59PM
Film Analysis Paper II	15%	May 17 (TH) by 11:59PM
Quiz	10%	Throughout the semester w/o announcement
Total:	100%	

The grades for the course will be based on two exams, two papers, one class activity, and quizzes. **Students MUST complete all the required work** in order to be eligible to receive a passing grade in the course. **You do NOT have the option to “take a zero” on each assignment.** Not submitting all the required work will result either in a final grade of incomplete until the work is submitted or a F for the course. In calculating the final grade, number grades rather than letter grades will be averaged.

GRADING SCALE

Grades will be determined according to the university’s standard scale. I have incredibly high standards for my grades. If you meet the basic requirements for assignments, you will get a C. If you want an A or B, you need to go above and beyond the exact requirements for an assignment. For individual assignments, I will define the A-F grade base in the following way:

Criteria						
Outstanding	A	93-100	A-	90-92		
Above average	B+	87-89	B	83-86	B-	80-82
Average	C+	77-79	C	73-76	C-	70-72
Below average	D+	67-69	D	63-66	D-	60-62
Unsatisfactory	F	Below 60				

ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION

A. Exam (25% per each exam)

All are *online* exams, and the exam will be open for a day so that you can take it anytime during the day. Each exam will cover materials you’ve learned up to that point. That is, the final exam is NOT cumulative. The format of exams is a combination of multiple-choice questions and short identification essays. We will have a review session before each exam. I will also distribute a study guide a week prior to the exam day. It is very important to remember that there is **NO MAKE-UP EXAM** since exams are online. If you are required to attend the university-sponsored activities (athletic games etc.) or if you are seriously ill and incapable of taking the exam, I may consider you to take a make-up test. However, you must provide an official document to prove your excuse and I reserve the right to determine if you will be given the make-up exam opportunity or not. Make-up exam is all short identification essays, which is a lot harder for students to do well on it. And, you will take it on the final day of class in my office.

B. Quiz (10%)

During the semester, 12 classes will begin or end with a one-question quiz intended to determine if you complete the reading and to check your attendance. This means that you will take each quiz WITHOUT a notice, and there will be NO make-up quiz you miss. Each quiz is

worth 10 points, and 5 points will be awarded simply for attending class. Out of 12 quizzes you will take throughout the semester, two quizzes with the lowest score will be dropped from the final quiz grade.

C. Class Activity (10%)

We will have class-wide activity on Thursday, March 1. The activity will be a small group discussion and debate round. It will cover the topics such as the Constitution, Federalism, and Civil Liberties. A separate worksheet will be distributed.

E. Film Analysis Paper (15% per each paper)

You will analyze two films shown in class in light of the lecture materials and assigned readings for this course. You are free to write on any topic related to American politics addressed in the documentaries, as long as they are able to incorporate and demonstrate your thorough understanding of the different assigned course readings. A separate worksheet will be distributed in class for more details. Late papers accepted without a penalty **ONLY** in the extraordinary cases of medical and family emergency with proof of evidence. Of course, you must have my permission in advance to submit assignment late.

GENERAL RULES

Readings: Students are required to complete each week's required readings before that lecture. You need to bring your book, assigned readings, and lecture notes to each class.

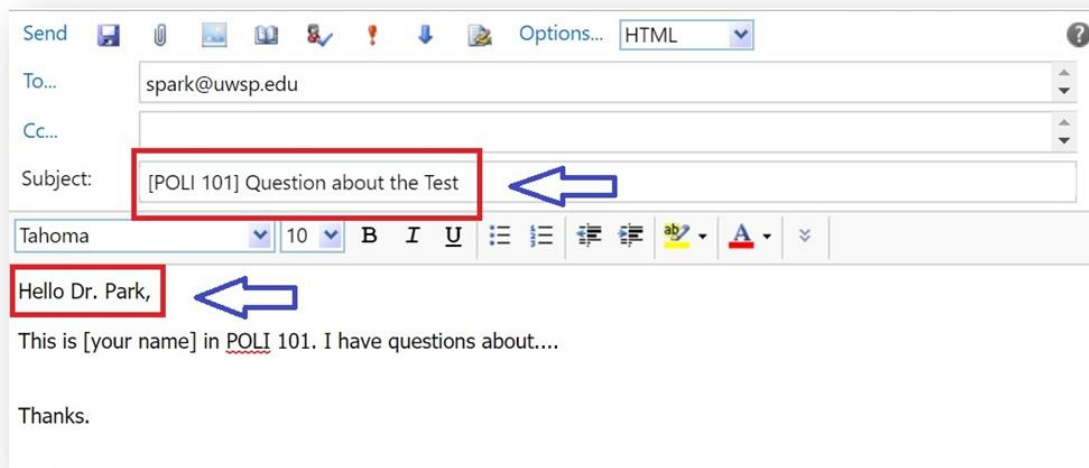
Assignments: online submission through Dropbox at D2L is required for writing assignment. Late submission or email submission is **NOT** accepted except for a very rare case as written in the previous section. You must faithfully follow the instruction regarding the format, style, and length of these assignments.

D2L: This course will have a site on the Desire 2 Learn (D2L) system. The address for D2L is <http://www.uwsp.edu/d2l> or you can click on the D2L quick link from the UWSP homepage. The site will be used to share course materials including, but not limited to, lecture note, and additional readings. Make sure that you check this site before every class.

Lectures: Before we begin a topic in class, I will post an outline of the lecture material on the course website at D2L. The outlines give you the framework of the lecture but do not give you the entire script. If you wish, you can print these outlines and bring them with you to class to use as a base for note taking. You will learn and remember better when you write things down yourself. Regarding note taking, make sure you take notes that will be meaningful to you later when you are reviewing your notes, rather than focusing only on transcribing the slides verbatim.

Office Hours: Feel free to drop by during my office hours or make an appointment to see me. I always WELCOME students.

Email: Email is a convenient way to continue contact between professor and student outside of class. Email is best for 1-2 sentence responses, and conceptual questions do not lend themselves well to email. If you have any questions regarding your papers, please visit my office hours for in-depth consultation. I will NOT consult on your written assignment via email. While students should take advantage of this email communication opportunity with me, you should also do so in a professional manner. I will NOT reply to emails that do not include a salutation (“Dear Prof. ...” or “Hello Dr. ...”).



I will also NOT respond to emails that ask for answers to questions that can easily be found on the syllabus or the lecture notes. If you have a question regarding lectures or assigned material that you just cannot seem to master, then ask a question in class, or come to me during office hours. I will only respond to questions about coursework or academic requirements, and I will not respond to questions of a personal nature. I will be able to respond your email during weekdays (not weekend), but please email me again if you do not receive my response within 48 hours.

Attendance: you are required to attend all class sessions. It is your interest too. Students who regularly attend class generally enjoy the course more, learn more, and get the most out of their education with higher grades. In addition, you are expected to enrich the learning experience of fellow students and teachers through regular attendance and active participation in class.

Respect: I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. I am intolerant of disruptive behavior in the classroom, including talking during lectures, reading newspapers, frequently going to use a restroom, and especially playing with digital devices. Students engaging in

disruptive behavior will be asked to leave the classroom in order to preserve the learning environment for other students. Class discussions are expected to be civil, rational, and respectful of others' opinions. Please do not intimidate, patronize, or ridicule anyone else during the course of classroom activities. This course is open to a variety of ways of interpreting history, theories, and policies. Students are encouraged to share their questions and ideas in lecture. Since there will be differences and disagreements, students are expected to show respect to the comments and positions of fellow students and me.

Technology Policy: Technology devices are NOT allowed to be used in class. Out of respect for your fellow students, your professor, and the educational process, all technology devices (cell/smart phones, iPad, Kindle, Laptop, etc.) must be powered down and put away, not on the desk or in your hoodie pocket, or on your lap, during class. If texting, using social media, and attending to tasks other than the class material is more important than paying attention for 75 minutes, please do not come to class. If you feel you have an emergency situation that requires your phone to be on vibrate, please clear this with the professor before class begins. Students who disregard the policy will be asked to leave class.

Honesty: Any instance of academic misconduct will be taken seriously and may result in failure of the course. Misconduct will result in notification to the Dean of Students. If you are having a problem, it is much better to talk to me about it. Do not struggle by yourself. I want you to learn and do well in this course, not punish you with a lower grade. Talk to me if you are having a problem so I can try to help you work out a solution. In addition, there is a great resource for your study in the campus. The Tutoring-Learning Center provides a variety of services to support your needs such as Writing Lab and One-On-One Assistance for Study Skills. Please contact Learning Resource Center (715-346-3568 & tlctutor@uwsp.edu & www.uwsp.edu/tlc) for more information.

Students with disabilities: Any student with a special documented disability (sight, hearing, language, mobility, etc.) which may affect class activities should contact the Disability and Assistive Technology Center (715-346-3365). Please find more information from: <https://www.uwsp.edu/disability/Pages/default.aspx>

COURSE CALENDAR

(Topics, readings, and schedule subject to announced change by instructor.)

Topic	Tentative Dates	Readings
Introduction	1/23	
Understanding American Politics	1/25	Chapter 1
The Constitution	1/30 & 2/1 & 2/6	Chapter 2
Federalism	2/8 & 2/13	Chapter 3
Film Presentation I	2/15	
Civil Liberties	2/20 & 2/22 & 2/27	Chapter 4
Class Activity	3/1	
Review Session & Midterm Exam	3/6 & 3/8	
Civil Rights	3/13 & 3/15	Chapter 5
Congress	3/20 & 3/22	Chapter 11
Spring Break (no class)	3/27 & 3/29	
The Presidency	4/3 & 4/5	Chapter 12
The Courts	4/10 & 4/12	Chapter 14
Public Opinion	4/17 & 4/19	Chapter 6
The Media	4/24 & 4/26	Chapter 7
Film Presentation II	5/3	
Elections	5/8 & 5/10	Chapter 9
Review Session & Final Exam	5/10 & 5/14 (M)	