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# Syllabus

POLI 2051, version 1.2

Effective: August 18, 2017

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## POLI 2051-American Government

**Course Description:** Principles, structures, processes and functions; emphasis on national government.

### Textbooks and Other Materials

ODL is *not* responsible for student purchases that result in *the receipt of the wrong materials*. It is the responsibility of the student to order the correct textbook materials. Courses are written to specific textbook editions; edition substitutions *are not allowed*.

**Textbooks:** (available from Amazon and other online vendors)

George W. Carey and James McClellan. *The Federalist: Gideon Edition*. Second ed. Liberty Fund, 2001.

**ISBN-10:** 0865972893

**ISBN-13:** 978-0865972896

Isaac Kramnick and Theodore J. Lowi. *American Political Thought: A Norton Anthology*. W.W. Norton and Co., 2009.

**ISBN-10:** 0393928861

**ISBN-13:** 978-0393928860

Kathleen Hall Jamieson and Paul Waldman. *The Press Effect*. Oxford University Press, 2003.

**ISBN-10:** 0195152778

**ISBN-13:** 978-0195152777

### Ordering Information

Please review the following tips for ordering your course materials:

1. Do not purchase your textbooks until your enrollment is approved. During the processing period, a new section may be opened that could require a different textbook or edition.
2. *Always order by the ISBN.* Publishers and vendors often offer the same textbook title under different ISBNs. You must have the correct ISBN to access your online website.
3. If you are having problems locating a textbook, contact us at [Answers@outreach.lsu.edu](mailto:Answers@outreach.lsu.edu) for assistance.

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### Other Materials and Resources

**Software:** Microsoft Word, Web Browser, Adobe Acrobat Reader

It is recommended that you use Mozilla Firefox or Google Chrome as your web browser. Internet Explorer is not compatible with your Moodle course site.

Adobe Acrobat Reader is required to view PDF document files.

**Hardware:** *Web cam with a microphone (built-in or external), headphones or working speakers, and high speed internet*

Proctored exams are completed online and require the hardware listed above. Students are encouraged to review the technical requirements provided on the ProctorU website and to perform a test on their equipment prior to enrolling in this course to make sure they have the necessary resources available. There is a separate charge for each proctored exam.

**Technical Requirements:** <http://www.proctoru.com/tech.php>

**Equipment Test:** <http://www.proctoru.com/testitout/>

## Nature and Purpose of the Course

### Course Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students are expected to be able to:

1. Identify and understand the philosophic and political ideas that serve as the foundations of American political life.
2. Identify the institutions of American government, how these institutions were designed to function, how they actually function in modern political life, and how these institutions affect the lives of American citizens.
3. Explain the role that citizens play in the process of American politics.

As an overview of American government, this course has two purposes: first, to help foster a knowledge of the workings and historical foundations of American political life and, second, to cultivate the knowledge and virtue necessary for a healthy and engaged citizenry. This is accomplished through the close study of the documents and ideas that serve as the intellectual foundations of American political thought, culture, and institutions.

Using a combination of historical writings, documents from the various branches of the United States government, and contemporary analyses, this course traces the development of American political life from its intellectual roots to its modern condition. You will learn what ideas served as the impetus for the founding of the United States, and how those ideas remain with us today in contemporary political life. You will examine the institutions that make up the American government, how they were formed, and what they look like today in practice. Finally, you will learn how the government of the people, by the people, and for the people actually interacts with the lives of American citizens on a daily basis. This includes not just the role government plays in our lives, but also the role we are meant to play in it.

This is a general education course and as such students will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference and demonstrate an understanding of historical, cultural, and philosophical complexity which supports sophisticated discourse.

### **Working With the Course Materials**

Remember, this course covers an entire semester of work or the equivalent of a classroom course lasting 15 weeks. That means that each module in this course equals nearly a week of course work and will require the same time and effort on your part. *Do not expect to complete each module in a single study session. Understand, too, that if you choose to submit assignments at a very high pace, your instructor may not be able to grade your work at the same rate.*

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Each module contains information, activities, and assignments organized under a consistent series of headings. Get familiar with how the module is organized. Each module in this course is organized into the following sections: the Module Learning Objectives, the Reading Assignments, Lecture Notes for each Module, and the graded Module Assignment. You should work through these parts of the module in order. Specific recommendations are provided in a link to the course module instructions, which you should review before beginning the first module.

This course does not have a conventional textbook. Instead, your readings will consist of a number of smaller writings, excerpts, documents, and contemporary analyses meant to give you a broad understanding of the ideas of American politics and the workings of American political life. All readings which do not come from the three required books will be provided for you electronically within each module. In order to help facilitate your understanding of these various readings, a set of informal lecture-style notes will be provided for you in each module as well. Please do not assume that these lectures will be sufficient for your understanding of the course and the material. They are meant not as a primary vehicle for learning, but instead as a way to help explain and contextualize what else you have been assigned to read.

Finally, some modules will contain a few visual aids to help demonstrate points from the readings/lecture. These will be referenced by name in the lecture for any module where they may be found and will be available on the Moodle page with the rest of the module materials.

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### Suggested Study Techniques

1. Carefully review the module objectives to help you focus on the information that will be covered on the exams.
2. Concentrate on the reading assignments, the module lecture material, and any additional resources provided. This review should include a detailed examination of any illustrative problems and examples. After an assignment has been completed, a rapid re-reading of the related text and other materials is strongly recommended.
3. Put yourself on a definite schedule. Set aside a certain block of hours per day or week for this course and work in a place where distractions are minimal.
4. Try to submit one assignment each week or at least every two weeks. Delays in submitting assignments usually result in lagging interest and the inability to complete the course.
5. Review your module assignments after they have been graded, paying special attention to any instructor feedback provided. (We suggest that you wait for assignment feedback before you submit subsequent assignments.)

6. Regardless of how you complete your graded assignments, keep in mind that module completion should not be your sole preparation for your exams. As with any college course, you should study for your exams.

## Reading Assignments

To do well in this course, it is essential that you read and study *all* the course materials that precede the module assignment. Do not begin the module assignment until you have done so.

Each module's assignment will vary depending on the type and number of readings assigned. Some modules will focus on historical documents, some on primary sources such as presidential speeches or Supreme Court opinions, and some on contemporary writings such as excerpts from book chapters, articles from the internet, or articles from scholarly journals. While each of these source types presents different benefits and challenges for the reader, when taken together they allow for a rounded and nuanced understanding of American political life. All readings and visual materials that are not found in the three assigned books will be provided for you electronically within each module.

You will read an average of 40-50 pages per module. Specific reading assignments will be given in each module.

## Topic Outline

This course covers the following specific topics:

Module	Topic
01	The Foundations of American Political Thought
02	The Declaration of Independence
03	The Articles of Confederation
04	The Foundations of the Constitution and the Separation of Powers
05	Federalism
06	Institutions—Congress
07	Institutions—The Presidency
08	Institutions—The Courts
	<b>Mid-Course Examination</b>
09	The Evolution of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights
10	Civil Liberties
11	American Political Culture
12	The Media
13	Public Opinion and Public Policy

### Final Examination

## Module Assignments

After completing the required reading for each module, you will be given a short written assignment. These assignments will be in the form of short, essay-style questions, and there will typically be three to four questions for each module. For *each question* within the assignment, you will be expected to write a double-spaced two- to three-page essay. Successful essays will not merely recite the information from the readings and lecture notes, but demonstrate an ability to explain the importance of this information and to synthesize this information with the material that has been covered in prior sections of the course. A simple recitation of facts will not be considered sufficient for a well-written essay.

Each assignment will be worth 10 points toward your final grade. While each individual assignment may not seem valuable toward your overall course grade, a passing grade will be difficult to obtain without satisfactory effort on the module assignments.

You will be permitted to use your book and any assigned readings (including the lecture notes) in aiding your responses. Since your assignments require you to discuss topics and ideas from so many sources, all assignments will be scanned for originality and plagiarism by TurnItIn upon being submitted to Moodle. Because of this, any information that comes from your course materials should be appropriately cited. Citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) is not important. I am only concerned that I can find where you got your information from, to confirm both its accuracy and context. Outside sources should be avoided whenever possible. Should you wish to introduce an outside source, please ensure that you clearly and accurately cite the information. Any sources cited incorrectly, or not cited at all, will be detected by TurnItIn and points will be deducted from your total assignment grade as a result.

Please prepare all modules assignments in MS Word.

You will only have one opportunity to submit module assignments, so be careful when you do so. Study the assigned readings, lecture notes, and any miscellany in each module before you begin to prepare the module assignments. When uploading assignments to Moodle, please use the following naming convention when saving your files:

CourseNumber\_Version\_Section\_LastName\_FirstName\_ModuleNumber  
(Example POLI2051\_1.2\_1\_jones\_sam\_M01)

You should submit each module assignment as soon as it is completed. Some courses have restrictions that require that a grade be received before you can submit additional assignments. Specific information on assignment submission is included in the Module Instructions. Please be sure to follow these instructions.

You must have a *grade posted in the Moodle grade book for the **Module 14 Assignment** in order to unlock access to the Final Exam.* Please allow at least *seven days* for the final assignment grade to be posted in the gradebook. Once you *submit* an assignment, you cannot revise it, so be sure to check your work. Your instructor will normally post a grade for your assignment within *seven calendar days*. Understand that occasional delays will occur, such as during holidays and semester breaks or if you submit several module assignments within the same week. You must have been enrolled in the course for *at least three weeks*, regardless of when the modules and other exams are completed.

Do not rely too heavily on your textbook or other resource material when preparing your assignments. If you do, you may not realize until exam time that the perfect response you prepared for an assignment was only possible because you referred to resource material without really learning or understanding the material and concepts. Therefore, *you should attempt each assignment without referring to the resource material*, and if you find it necessary to look up an answer, be sure you have actually learned the concept and material rather than merely reflecting it in the answer.

## Academic Integrity

Students in Online Distance Learning (ODL) courses must comply with the *LSU Code of Student Conduct*. Suspected violations of the academic integrity policy may be referred to LSU Student Advocacy & Accountability (SAA), a unit of the Dean of Students. If found responsible of a violation, you will then be subject to whatever penalty SAA determines and will forfeit all course tuition and fees.

## Plagiarism

Students are responsible for completing and submitting their own course work and preparing their own modules. All work submitted in the course modules must be the student's own work unless outside work is appropriate to the assignment; all outside material must be properly acknowledged. It is also unacceptable to copy directly from your textbook or to use published answer keys or the teacher's edition of a textbook.

## Collaboration

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Unauthorized collaboration constitutes plagiarism. Collaborative efforts that extend beyond the limits approved by the instructor are violations of the academic integrity policy. Students who study together are expected to prepare and write their own individual work for submission and grading.

For more information and links to the *LSU Code of Student Conduct* and the SAA website, go to the [ODL Academic Integrity policy](#) on our website.

## Examinations and Grading Policy

There will be two exams given in this course: a mid-course exam following Module 08 and a cumulative final exam following Module 14.

These exams will be essay based. They will consist of four essay questions related to the material covered in the modules which precede them. The mid-course exam will cover material from Modules 01-08. The final exam will consist of two questions in relation to Modules 09-14 and two broad questions in relation to the larger themes of the course. Given the nature of the material, you are free (and in fact encouraged) to draw on material from throughout the course in all instances. Exam questions will be similar in style to those found in the module assignments. However, you will be expected to expand, explain, and draw connections between material to a greater degree when answering exam questions. For each question in the exam, you will be expected to write an essay of three to four pages. As with the module assignments, successful exam answers will not only recite the information from the readings and lecture notes, but demonstrate an ability to explain the importance of this information and to synthesize this information with the material that has been covered in prior sections of the course. A simple recitation of facts will not be considered sufficient for a well-written essay. Both the mid-term and the final exam will be closed-book.

You will have a maximum of *three* hours to complete the exam.

- Module assignments count **10** points each.
- Exams are **100** points each.
- Course grade = total points earned out of **340**.

The following grading scale applies:

97%–100% = A+

93%–96% = A

90%–92% = A-

87%–89% = B+

83%–86% = B

80%–82% = B-

77%–79% = C+

73%–76%	= C
70%–72%	= C-
67%–69%	= D+
63%–66%	= D
60%–62%	= D-
0%–59%	= F

### **YOU MUST PASS THE FINAL EXAMINATION IN ORDER TO PASS THE COURSE.**

**IMPORTANT:** The final exam cannot be taken until you meet the following requirements. Under no circumstances may the final exam be taken earlier.

1. You must have been enrolled in the course for *at least three weeks*, regardless of when the modules and other exams are completed.
2. You must have a *grade posted in the Moodle grade book for the **Module 14 Assignment*** in order to unlock access to the Final Exam. Please allow at least 7 days for the final assignment grade to be posted in the gradebook.

To read the full exam policy and other policy statements, visit <http://www.outreach.lsu.edu/Distance-Learning/Online-Distance-Learning/Guidelines-Policies/Policies/Academic-Integrity>. Go to Continuing Education's homepage. Click on *Extended Campus*, select *Online Distance Learning*, and then click the link for *Guidelines and Policies*.

### **Taking Your Examinations**

You are *required* to create a Louisiana State University ODL ProctorU account and to take your examinations through ProctorU, a remote proctoring service that allows you to take exams anywhere with internet access (some restrictions apply). Information on creating your ProctorU account can be found in the *Getting Started* module. You cannot use an account created through another university, so if you already have an account, you will still need to create an account associated with LSU Online Distance Learning (ODL).

The ProctorU website provides links you can use to find out how ProctorU works and to check your computer to see that it meets the technical requirements. In addition, to test using ProctorU, you need *access to a web cam with a microphone (built-in or external), headphones or working speakers, and high speed internet* to use this service. A complete list of technical requirements is available from the ProctorU website.

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You should schedule your exams about a week before you are ready to take them in order to avoid any additional charges.

## Transcript Information

After you have completed this course, your grade will be filed with the Office of the University Registrar. If a transcript is needed, it is your responsibility to make a request to the registrar. If you would like to order a transcript, visit the Office of the University Registrar Transcript Requests page to view your options (<http://sites01.lsu.edu/wp/registraroffice/student-services/transcript-request/>).

## Copyright

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