

**Political Science 2052**  
**Honors American Government**  
**Fall 2018**

Dr. Hogan  
POLI 2052  
TTH 9:00 – 10:30  
19 Allen

Office Hours: Mon. 9-11 am (or by apt.)  
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### **Course Description**

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of American government and politics. The first part of the course examines the ideological, historical, socioeconomic, and constitutional contexts of politics in the United States. The second part explores components of the political process including interest groups, political parties, and elections. The third part focuses on the institutions of government (executive, legislative, and judicial branches) that create and implement public policies. The preponderance of our time will be spent on national-level politics, but aspects of state and local governments will be incorporated throughout the semester.

As a General Education Course, POLI 2052 is designed to address the following General Education outcomes: “*LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.*”

Please understand that this is not a traditional lecture course where you merely come to class and take notes relayed to you by the instructor. This course requires you to be an active participant in class. In order to effectively take part in discussions, you will need to be prepared for each class by first: (1) reading and taking notes on the assigned text and articles, (2) familiarizing yourself with the outline for the text, and (3) watching (or listening) to video presentations that cover the material for each chapter.

### **Time Requirements**

Please keep in mind the university’s definition of work required for each credit hour: “not less than one hour (50 minutes) of lecture/classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours out-of-class student work across 15 weeks for one semester.” Given that this is a 3-hour course, this means that students are expected to devote a total of 9 hours of work each week: 3 hours in the classroom and an additional 6 hours of course related work outside the classroom (for this class it means reading, studying, and working on the course assignments).

### **Required Reading Materials**

Two books are available for purchase in the bookstore:

- *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy* -- **Revel Access**, 17<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2016 (by George C. Edwards, Martin P. Wattenberg, and William G. Howell), Pearson, ISBN: 9780134628936).
- *How Democracies Die*, 2018 (by Steven Levitsky and Daniel Ziblatt, Crown, ISBN: 9781524762933).

*Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy* is an electronic textbook. Once you have purchased it, follow the instructions listed below for gaining access. NOTE: We will only be using the text for reading. In other words, Pearson’s REVEL product contains various assignments and tests but we are not using these (you are using only the text component).

#### How to Access the On-Line Text You Purchased

This course uses a Pearson digital product throughout the semester. The required link below is unique to this course. Here is how to register:

1. Go to: Go to: <https://console.pearson.com/enrollment/pwpofy>
2. Sign in to your Pearson Account or create one.
3. Redeem your access code or purchase instant access online (a temporary access option for financial aid is also available).

What you should know: Bookmark <https://console.pearson.com> to easily access your materials. Pearson recommends using the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, or Safari with this digital product. A brief video from Pearson explains the registration process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pavN9npktBI>. Also, note that a printed copy of the text is also available. You have the option to upgrade to an unbound version of the text once you have purchased REVEL access direct from Pearson or via an access code card at the bookstore. The cost of the upgrade is \$19.95 and the text is shipped directly to you.

## Student Evaluations and Policies

### Grading

The final grade for this course will be determined by a student's performance in the following areas:

Participation	15%
Writing Assignment	15%
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	25%
Final Exam	25%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Letter grades are assigned as follows based on a student's final numerical average:

<b>A+</b> 97 ≥	<b>B+</b> 87-89	<b>C+</b> 77-79	<b>D+</b> 67-69	<b>F</b> <60
<b>A</b> 93-96	<b>B</b> 83-86	<b>C</b> 73-76	<b>D</b> 63-66	
<b>A-</b> 90-92	<b>B-</b> 80-82	<b>C-</b> 70-72	<b>D-</b> 60-62	

### Course Readings, Outlines, and Video Presentations

On Moodle I provide outlines that accompany each chapter in the book along with a series of videos where I elaborate on points covered in the text. There are about 30-45 minutes of video presentations for each chapter of the text. I encourage you to first read the text, print off the outlines, and then watch the videos. In class, I will highlight some of the major points raised in the text and provide questions to frame our discussion. In order to take part in these discussions, it is important that you be familiar with the material covered in the text (by reading, reviewing the outlines and watching the videos in advance). You will be expected to be an active participant in class discussions. In addition, there is occasionally an additional article (as noted on the schedule and made available on Moodle) that you need to read in advance of class.

### Participation

Classes are generally conducted using a discussion format so it is necessary to keep up with the readings and to come prepared for every class. Students are strongly encouraged to take part in class discussions. In order to do so, it is necessary to complete the readings and watch the video slide presentations *in advance* and to spend time thinking about them in a critical manner. Also, please keep up with current political developments since these will often be used as examples in our discussions. Participation is determined by three equally weighted components:

- **Self-Reported Class Participation:** During each class period I will ask questions about the day's readings and will expect to receive answers. If you have questions about the readings or comments about the substantive topics in the course, please ask them. I will track your participation based upon your self-reported participation. If you have participated in the day's class either in asking questions, answering questions, or providing comments, please hand in a sheet of paper at the end of class indicating what your contribution was for that day (briefly restating your question, answer, or comment). It is expected that you will participate on at least 8 different days during the course of the semester. If you provide substantive comments or ask questions (that a reasonable person would say enlightened the discussion) on 8 separate days, you will receive 100% for this portion of your participation grade (if you participate 7 times your score will be 87.5%, 6 times 75%, and so on).
- **Class Activities:** Several times during the semester I will ask you to provide written comments about a topic, answer a brief question, or take part in a class exercise. Your performance on these activities will be counted as a component of your overall participation grade. There will be several opportunities throughout the semester and your grade is determined by your successful completion of each. If you satisfactorily complete all of them, you will receive 100% for this component of your participation, complete 90% and your grade is 90, 80% is a grade of 80, etc.
- **Periodical Summaries and Presentations:** At three separate points during the semester students are expected to identify a newspaper or magazine article related to an issue being covered in class, write a brief report on the article and make a very brief class presentation. A separate handout describes what is expected for these summaries, where appropriate information can be obtained, and how these summaries should be written and presented.

### *Writing Assignment*

Students are required to write a report on *How Democracies Die*. The 6-7 page report consists of answering a series of questions that will be provided at least two weeks prior to the review's due date (November 8).

### *Exams*

There are two in-term exams and a final (dates are listed on the syllabus). These tests will consist of multiple-choice and brief essay questions. Approximately 80-85 percent of each exam consists of multiple-choice questions based on the text book. The remainder of each exam is based on brief essay responses that usually involve the concepts covered in class. Please note that makeup exams are administered only when a student can produce a valid written excuse. If you anticipate a problem, please let me know as soon as possible. Also, for students who have special needs or require accommodations through Disability Services, please make the necessary plans well in advance of the exam dates.

## **General Policies**

### *Academic Honesty*

Students are required to abide by the academic conduct policies outlined in the LSU Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs>). Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: cheating on exams, plagiarizing, buying or selling assignments, altering grades, intentional deception, and collaborating with others without permission. I reserve the right to investigate when I suspect a violation of any of these policies. All violations of the university's academic conduct policies are turned over to the Dean of Students.

### *Classroom Rules*

Please be respectful to those around you who are trying to listen, take notes, and participate in the class. Please make every effort not to be late. Be seated and ready to begin at the appropriate time and leave early only for emergencies. Turn cell phones and pagers to silent. Most importantly, do not talk during class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave immediately.

Absolutely no audio or video recording devices are allowed to be used unless special permission is granted. Please do not take photographs of the overheads. Photography or videography of any kind is forbidden. This rule is strictly enforced during exams and during review of exam materials. All violators of this policy will be asked to leave the classroom immediately and the incident will be reported to the Dean of Students. These restrictions are in place to ensure the integrity of testing materials and to protect student privacy.

You are free to use laptop computers and other electronic devices for class purposes (e.g., taking notes, looking up relevant information, etc.). But please do not play on the internet, check e-mail, or use social networking sites.

### *Late Assignments and Missed Work*

In an effort to provide a level playing field, I take deadlines very seriously and hold everyone to an identical standard. Make every effort to take scheduled exams and hand in work on time. However, I recognize there are legitimate reasons for missing a deadline or an exam. The following reasons are some, but probably not all, of the excuses that are considered acceptable: a documented illness, a family emergency, some severe mechanical failure (related to transportation, computing, etc.), or a scientifically documented anomaly in the space-time continuum. Please note that most job-related issues are not considered acceptable excuses (although see university regulations concerning military duties, official university-sponsored events, etc.). A penalty for handing in the paper late is assessed based upon the circumstances, but will generally involve a substantial loss of points (5 points for missing the deadline, and 5 points for each 24-hour period thereafter). Recognize that for reasons of fairness to other students in the class, credit cannot be given at the end of the semester for missed exams or papers not handed in. In other words, when you experience a significant problem that prevents you from meeting a deadline or taking a test, it is your responsibility to let me know about it in a timely manner and to make arrangements to make up the missed work. Excuses must be provided within one week of your return to the university, NOT at the end of the semester. Excuse forms are available on this course's Moodle site where they must be submitted along with any other accompanying documentation (a doctor's note, etc.).

### *Graded Work*

I will return your paper and your exams to you in class. During office hours I am happy to review grades with you and talk with you about ways to improve your performance. Please note, however, I will not estimate your current grade for you (the percentage that each grade counts toward your final average is provided earlier on the syllabus).

### *Special Needs*

For students who have special needs or require accommodations through Disability Services, please advise me of your situation so arrangements can be made.

## Course Schedule

- August 21      ***Introduction to the Course***
- No reading assignment.
- August 23      ***Approaches to Studying American Politics***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 1 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
  - Moodle Reading: Noel, Hans. 2010. "Ten Things Political Scientists Know that You Don't," *The Forum*, Volume 8, Issue 3: 1-19.
- August 28      ***Origins of American Government***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 2, Appendix: Declaration of Independence (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- August 30      ***Ratification of the Constitution***
- Text: *Government in America*, Appendix: Constitution and Amendments, Federalist Papers #10 and #51.
  - Moodle Reading: Toobin, Jeffrey. 2013. "Our Broken Constitution," *The New Yorker*, December 9.
- September 4    ***Federalism***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 3 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- September 6    ***Federalism Issues***
- Moodle Reading: News Staff. 2018. "The Biggest Issues for States to Watch in 2018," *Governing*, January.
  - Moodle Reading: Fehrman, Craig. 2016. "All Politics Is National," *Fivethirtyeight.com*, November 7.
- September 11   ***Civil Liberties Policy***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 4 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- September 13   ***Civil Rights Policy***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 5 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- September 18   ***Civil Rights Issues***
- No reading assignment.
- September 20   Exam #1**
- September 25   ***Public Opinion***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapters 6 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
  - Moodle Reading: Doherty, et al. 2017. "The Partisan Divide on Political Values Grows Even Wider," *Pew Research Center*, October 5. **[Pages 1-14 only]**
- September 27   ***Mass Media***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapters 7 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- October 2        ***Interest Groups***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 10 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
  - Moodle Reading: Gilens, Martin, and Benjamin I. Page. 2014. "Testing Theories of American Politics," *Perspectives on Politics*, September.
- October 4        **FALL HOLIDAY**
- October 9        ***Legislatures***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 11 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).

- October 11 ***Political Parties***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 8 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
  - Moodle Reading: Drutman, Lee. 2017. "We Need Political Parties. But their Rabid Partisanship Could Destroy American Democracy," *Vox*, September 5.
- October 16 ***Elections and Voting***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 9 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
  - Moodle Reading: Bump, Philip. 2018. "Democrats Worry about Disenfranchisement. Republicans Worry about Voter Fraud," *Washington Post*, July 17.
- October 18 ***Elections and Voting***
- Moodle Reading: Mutz, Diana C. 2018. "Status Threat, Not Economic Hardship, Explains the 2016 Presidential Vote," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science*.
- October 23 ***Voting Behavior: Turnout and Candidate Choice***
- No reading assignment.
- October 25 Exam #2**
- October 30 ***The Presidency***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 12 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- November 1 ***Bureaucracies***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 14 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- November 6 ***The Judiciary***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 15 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- November 8 ***Book Review***
- *How Democracies Die*, Entire Book.
- \*\*\*\*\* Report on *How Democracies Die* due at the beginning of class \*\*\*\*\***
- November 13 ***Taxing and Spending Policymaking***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 13 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- November 15 ***Economic and Social Welfare Policymaking***
- Text: *Government in America*, Chapter 16 (Moodle outlines and video presentations).
- November 20 ***Economic and Social Welfare Policymaking***
- No reading assignment.
- November 22 **THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**
- November 27 ***National Security Policymaking***
- No reading assignment.
- November 29 ***Summation and Review***
- No reading assignment.
- December 6 Final Exam in this classroom on Thursday, December 6 from 12:30-2:30.**