

## **Introduction to American Government (POLS – 1100-01) Spring 2018**

Rev. Richard Quirk, Ph.D.

Time: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 10:00 am to 10:50 am  
McGannon Hall 211

E-mail: [quirkrj@slu.edu](mailto:quirkrj@slu.edu)

Hours: By appointment

### *Texts (Required) & notes on other readings:*

- We the People: An Introduction to American Government, Eleventh Edition (2011), By: Thomas E. Patterson
- Handouts will be distributed throughout the semester from scholarly journals and current events publications. You are responsible for knowing their contents.
- The *New York Times* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* are available (free) on campus. These papers will be referred to as the political climate warrants. You may want, from time to time, to refer the class to an article or op-ed piece off the internet to the class for group discussion.

### **Course Description**

This is an especially important time to know and understand the traditional and institutional structure of our system of American government. We will begin by discussing our present political culture and how society seems to view our classic institutions and structures. This will lead to what will be the overarching theme of the class: how to best develop our duties as citizens, throughout our lives, to assure the continuation and celebration of our American republic.

We will study and learn to critically think about our founding documents; the concept of Federation; understanding civil liberties and individual rights and ongoing struggles toward equality. We will study the function of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government. We will explore the influences and power of the media, public opinion, bureaucracies, internet groups, religion, and domestic and foreign policy makers.

## **Learning Objectives/Outcomes**

### **Social Science Core Requirement**

**Student Outcomes:** Student will acquire conceptual tools and methodologies to analyze and understand their social world. With these tools, they will be able to act in their world more effectively and become forces for positive change. They will gain a better understanding of human diversity. Students will be able to think and write critically about human behavior and community. They will become aware of the various methodological approaches used by social scientists.

Each student should be able to intellectually engage in the following activities:

- Gain a better understanding of the issues, institutions, and history of American government.
- Become an informed citizen—able to culturally think about American systems, politics, and policies.
- Describe the various aspects of political behavior and the role “interpretations” of various participants.
- Describe how “representative” democracy works.
- Improved ability to discuss American government activities in a global context, beyond personal opinion.
- Better comprehension of competing theories and claims, based on observed data and events.
- Improved oral and written presentation skills.
- Become comfortable and confident in raising questions about values and social justice concerns in the “public square”.

### **Diversity in the US**

This class fulfills the core Diversity in the U.S. requirement. The Cultural Diversity in the United States requirement is designed to help students gain a better understanding of the cultural groups in the United States and their interactions. Student who complete a Cultural Diversity course in this category will gain a substantial subset of the following skills:

1. Analyze and evaluate how various underrepresented social groups confront inequality and claim a just place in society.

2. Examine how conflict and cooperation between social groups shapes U.S. society and culture.
3. Identify how individual and institutional forms of discrimination impact leaders, communities, and community building through the examination of such factors as race, ethnicity, gender, religion, economic class, age, physical and mental capability, and sexual orientation.
4. Evaluate how their personal life experiences and choices fit within the larger mosaic of U.S. society by confronting and critically analyzing their own values and assumptions about individuals and groups from different cultural contexts.
5. Understand how questions of diversity intersect with moral and political questions of justice and equality.

### **Grading Scheme**

All students are expected to complete the **readings and written assignments** and be ready to actively participate in class. (10 percent of overall grade)

**Mid-term Exam** – In class, test will primarily focus on vocabulary, definitions and concepts taken from the readings and lectures. (30 percent of overall grade)

**Final Exam** – In class, test will cover text chapters, presented after mid-term and some questions covering the whole semester (40 percent of overall grade) Written Assignment or Oral Presentation following Midterm. Details following Mid-January.

A	100-93	C+	79-77
A-	92-90	C	76-73
B+	89-87	C-	72-70
B	86-83	D	69-60
B-	82-80	F	Below 60

**Ethics and Politics**  
**Reading Assignments**  
**Listed by week # M-W-F**  
**(WP=We the People)**

Week 1 -	Jan 17,19 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction, Expectations</li> <li>• Review Syllabus</li> </ul>
Week 2 -	Jan 22,24,26 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 1—Culture/Citizenship</li> </ul>
Week 3 -	Jan 29,31, Feb 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 2—Constitution</li> <li>• Read—The Constitution (pg. 577—WP)</li> </ul>
Week 4 -	Feb. 5,7,9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 3—Federation</li> <li>• Read—Federalist No. 10 (pg. 595—WP)</li> </ul>
Week 5 -	Feb 12,14,16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 4—Civil Liberties</li> </ul>
Week 6 -	Feb 19,21,23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 5—Equal Rights</li> </ul>
Week 7 -	Feb 26,28, March 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 6—Opinion and Socialization</li> </ul>
Week 8 -	March 5,7 ( <b>MID-TERM EXAM</b> ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 7—Participation</li> </ul>

Week 9 -	March 12- 17 <b>Spring Break, NO CLASS</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 8—Parties, Candidates</li> </ul>
Week 10 -	March 19,21,23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 9—Internet Groups</li> </ul>
Week 11 -	Oct. 31, Nov. 2, 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 10—News Media and Personalities</li> </ul>
Week 12 -	April 4,6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 12—The Presidency</li> </ul>
Week 13 -	April 9,11,13 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 11, 13—Congress and Bureaucracy</li> </ul>
Week 14 -	April 16,18,20 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 14—Judicial System)</li> </ul>
Week 15 -	April 30, May 2,4,7(Last Class) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reading: WP—Chp. 15, 16, 17—Public Policy Issues</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>May 9- 12:00-1:50 FINAL EXAM in regular room!</b></p>

## **University Syllabus Information**

*Spring 2018*

I will attempt to respond to your e-mails generally within 24 hours.

### **Title IX Statement**

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX coordinator, Anna R. Kratky (DuBourg Hall, room 36; akratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK. To view SLU's sexual misconduct policy and for resources, please visit the following web address: <http://www.slu.edu/general-counsel-home/office-of-institutional-equity-and-diversity/sexual-misconduct-policy> and [www.slu.edu/here4you](http://www.slu.edu/here4you).

### **Student Success Center Statement**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center, a one-stop shop, which assists students with academic and career related services, is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331) and the School of Nursing (Suite, 114). Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, academic coaching, career services, and/or facets of curriculum planning) by visiting the Student Success Center or by going to [www.slu.edu/success](http://www.slu.edu/success).

### **Disability Services Academic Accommodations Statement**

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Please contact Disability Services, located within the Student Success Center, at [Disability\\_services@slu.edu](mailto:Disability_services@slu.edu) or 314.977.3484 to schedule an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services and viewed within Banner via the instructor's course roster.

## **Statement on Academic Integrity**

*Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors.* The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy was adopted in Spring 2015, and can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at:  
[http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic\\_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%206-26-15.pdf](http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%206-26-15.pdf).

Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has adopted its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites. All SLU students are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions, and appeals. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Dean/Director of the College, School or Center in which your program is housed.

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in *an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment* and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including,

but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and/or dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty:  
<http://www.slu.edu/college-of-arts-and-sciences-home/undergraduate-education/academic-honesty>.

### **Attendance Policy – Reprinted with Permission**

**Class attendance is highly recommended.** When you register for this class, you make a commitment to put forth your best effort. Attending class is a significant step towards achieving this goal. Although a syllabus and textbook are provided, reading the textbook is not an adequate substitute for attending class. The textbook is meant to supplement what happens in class, not replace it. Additionally, lectures will often include material either not covered in the textbook or covered from a different perspective than the material in the textbook. If you try to learn the material on your own, you will waste a lot of time and miss out on the opportunity to ask questions as the material is discussed. Absences will be understood but repeated absences will be noted and will negatively affect your grade.

Of course, you may need to miss a class a couple of times during the semester, but it is to your benefit to keep the number of absences as low as possible. If unavoidable circumstances necessitate an extended absence, please make arrangements with me as soon as possible, preferably in advance.

### **University Writing Services**

I encourage you to take advantage of the University Writing Services; getting feedback benefits all writers. Trained writing consultants can help with any writing, multimedia project, or oral presentation. During one-on-one consultations, you can work on everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. *These services do fill up*, so please make an appointment. Also, bring your assignment description, and a few goals, to the consultation. For more information, or to make an appointment, visit [www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml](http://www.slu.edu/writingservices.xml) or call 977-3484.

### **Cell Phones**



Please turn off cell phones before class. There is no cell phone use or text messaging allowed during class. Also, no use of a PDA, Blackberry, Bluetooth, iPod, iPhone/iTouch, or any 3G or 4G network devices. Not appropriate for class.

### **Laptops**

Use of laptop computers for any purpose other than note taking is not allowed.

### **Weather Policy**

In cases of extreme weather, call 314.977.SNOW (314.977.7669) for more information.

### **Evaluation**

Toward the end of the semester you will be encouraged to evaluate the class on-line or in the classroom. Please do so! It is an important element of the classroom experience.

**NOTE:** I reserve the right to modify the syllabus and provide you with notice. All of these items and other concerns are subject to the discretion of the instructor. My sincere hope is that class will be an enjoyable learning experience for all.

January 2018

