How this class will function during COVID 19
At the time of writing, we only have 24 students signed up for a 60-person class. If our final number stays below 36 (the maximum we can have in our room while social distancing), everyone will simply come in for every class. If our class exceeds 36 students when the add/drop period is over, we will have to rotate with some students coming in and some students watching from home. To determine which days people will come in, I will randomly choose names. I will watch our numbers closely and keep the class informed about this. Regardless, you must wear a mask and social distance when you are in the classroom, leaving 6 feet between you and those around you.

What materials are required?
Texts: There is one book required for this course: We the People: An Introduction to American Government. 12th Edition. I hate assigning textbooks, but it's nearly impossible to do POLI 101 without one. I recommend renting the e-Book which is about $40 online.

Internet: This course is slated to be a hybrid course where some students are in the room and some students are watching from home online due to social distancing measures. If our class size goes over 36, we will use that method and you will need reliable Internet. However, the class is currently at less than half capacity at the time of writing, so we have plenty of space in our room to social distance. If we stay as a full in-person class, reliable Internet is less of an issue.

Student Learning Outcomes
This course is designed to familiarize students with structure and functions of different parts of the American government. It will also serve to give students a basic understanding of political life in the mass public including voting, social movements and public opinion. A special emphasis will be put on the features of democracy and how to recognize when those features are being threatened or dismantled.

As defined by the Dept of Political Science, upon completion of the course, you should be able to:
1) Identify and explain the central principles, institutions, procedures, and decision-making processes of the American political system
2) Evaluate the basic strengths and weaknesses of the American political system through the application of political concepts and ideas
3) Relate historical events and/or developments to contemporary political issues, debates, and outcomes in the United States
4) Develop an analytical, social science disposition toward American politics.

As part of a **general education learning outcome**, students can apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions. This outcome will be assessed with the Gen Ed Assignment
SLO 1 will be assessed with Participation, the Random Object Paper, Test 1, Test 2
SLO 2 will be assessed with Participation, the Gen Ed Assignment, Test 1, Test 2
SLO 3 will be assessed with the Participation, Gen Ed Assignment, Test 1, Test 2
SLO 4 will be assessed with Participation, the Socialization Paper, the Position Paper

**Grade percentage breakdown (10 points = a letter grade)**

- Participation: 10 points
- Political Socialization Paper: 5 points
- Contemporary Issues Position Paper: 10 points
- Random Object Paper: 15 points
- Gen Ed Assignment Paper: 10 points
- Midterm Exam (first half of course): 25 points
- Final Exam (second half of course only): 25 points

**Grading Scale for Final Grades**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100-94 A</td>
<td>79-77 C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>93-90 A-</td>
<td>76-74 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-87 B+</td>
<td>73-70 C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-84 B</td>
<td>69-67 D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-80 B-</td>
<td>67-64 D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63-60 D-</td>
<td>59-0 F</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>89-87 B+</td>
<td>73-70 C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86-84 B</td>
<td>69-67 D+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83-80 B-</td>
<td>67-64 D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Short Explanation of Written Assignments:**

You have 4 short papers to write for this class. Detailed instructions will be given for each as the semester progresses. The **Political Socialization** paper is a reflection paper about your own political socialization process. The **Contemporary Issues Position Paper** asks you to write a identify and explain a contemporary problem with the way institutions (Presidency, Congress, Supreme Court or the news media) function and then take a position on whether they should be reformed. The **Random Object Paper** is a mini-research paper in which you show how a random object of your choosing is related to government and politics. The **Gen Ed assignment** asks you to identify and explain a debate or issue from the country’s founding and then apply that debate to a contemporary issue in American politics. The due dates for these assignments are in red in the agenda below, but the **Position Paper** will be due a week after the reading you choose to do it on, so that due date depends on which one you choose.

**How to get a good participation grade:**

First and foremost: Come to class! See attendance policy below. Aside from that, there are a number of ways to participate. Mainly, you can speak during class by answering questions about the readings, sharing your insights into the course material, and asking questions (yes – that counts! It shows me you’re listening and thinking!) However, I understand that it can be intimidating to speak in class and it’s not everyone’s jam – although it’s really fun and something you can remember fondly about college. Therefore, I will always put up a discussion board for each class topic and anyone can add their questions, comments and insights before or after the class discussion. This counts just as much for participation as speaking in class!
Attendance Policy
Attendance will be taken in the beginning of the semester, per the school’s attendance verification policy. After those first couple of weeks, attendance is not mandatory, but factors into your participation grade. Please take attendance seriously. Being present in class is crucial to passing the course and tends to correlate with the quality of work people turn in. Moreover, we are so lucky to be in the higher education system in the United States- do not take this for granted!

Late Assignments, Incompletes and Extensions:
I want to be as flexible as possible during coronavirus. However, there still need to be some rules in place for turning work in. There will be a 5% deduction for each 24 hours an assignment comes in late. However, if you are having a health, family, work or personal issue and need an extension, please let me know and we will talk it through. I will probably assess each request on a case-by-case basis. You should tell me if you anticipate an issue as soon as possible. I am more likely to be flexible if you tell me someone in your family is ill and you may need an extra day or two prior to the deadline rather than telling me 2 weeks after the deadline that someone was sick and you were helping them out. The latter does not strike an instructor as “being kept in the loop.”

Extra Credit:
Students will have the opportunity to earn up to 2 points of extra credit. This will likely be in the form of attending virtual events (or in person events if the school has them) or finding examples of course work in the real world and doing a short write up. You cannot get the extra credit until you are caught up with all the assignments.

Disability/SNAP Accommodations:
Any student eligible for and needing accommodations because of a disability is requested to speak with the professor during the first two weeks of class or as soon as the student has been approved for services so that reasonable accommodations can be arranged.

Honor Code and Academic Integrity:

“Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when suspected, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to misunderstanding and confusion will be handled by the instructor. The instructor designs an intervention or assigns a grade reduction to help prevent the student from repeating the error. The response is recorded on a form and signed both by the instructor and the student. It is forwarded to the Office of the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having
knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive an XXF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This status indicator will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the XX to be expunged. The F is permanent.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at: http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php.”

**Inclement Weather, Pandemic or Substantial Interruption of Instruction**

If in-person classes are suspended, faculty will announce to their students a detailed plan for a change in modality to ensure the continuity of learning. All students must have access to a computer equipped with a web camera, microphone, and Internet access. Resources are available to provide students with these essential tools.

**Course Agenda**

*Readings will be posted soon. About half will come from the textbook and the others will be linked through OAKS*

**Tuesday Jan 12: Introduction and Syllabus**

**Thursday Jan 14: Vocabulary and Socialization**

**Tuesday Jan 19: Democracy vs. Autocracy and Authoritarianism**

**Thursday Jan 21: The Founding and the Constitution**

**Tuesday Jan 26: Federalism**

**Thursday Jan 28: Civil Liberties and the Bill of Rights**

- POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION PAPER DUE

**Tuesday Feb 2: Political Parties I**

**Thursday Feb 4: Political Parties II: Contemporary Issues**

**Tuesday Feb 9: Congress I**

**Thursday Feb 11: Congress II: Contemporary Issues**
Tuesday Feb 16: The Presidency I

Thursday Feb 18: The Presidency II: Contemporary Issues
  - Congress Position Paper due today if you choose to do that one

Tuesday Feb 23: Supreme Court I

Thursday Feb 25: Supreme Court II: Contemporary Issues
  - Presidency Position Paper due today if you choose to do that one

Tuesday March 2: Ideology and Polarization

Thursday March 4: NO CLASS

Tuesday March 9: MIDTERM EXAM

Thursday March 11: Bureaucracy

Tuesday March 16: Campaigns and Elections I (Primaries)

Thursday March 18: Campaigns and Elections II (General Elections)

Tuesday March 23: Campaigns and Elections III (General Elections)

Thursday March 25: Topic TBD
  • Gen Ed Assignment Paper Due

Tuesday March 30 Media I

Thursday April 1 Media II

Tuesday April 5 Public Opinion

Thursday April 8 Social Movements I
- **MEDIA POSITION PAPER DUE TODAY IF YOU CHOOSE TO DO THAT ONE**

**Thursday April 15 Social Movements II**

**Tuesday April 20 Democracy vs. Authoritarianism Revisited**
- **RANDOM OBJECT PAPER DUE**

The FINAL EXAM date and time is currently slated to be Thursday, April 29th from 8-10am. According to the school’s website, this is subject to change. I will continue to monitor this date/time.