

## **SYLLABUS - AMERICAN GOVERNMENT: POLI 101 (07)**

**On Line with Scheduled Meetings via Zoom**

**This is a 3 Credit-Hour Course**

Spring 2022

Zoom Class Time: Monday and Wednesday: 2:00-3:15PM

Instructor: Rhett Dunaway

Office Hours: By Appointment on Zoom or by Telephone (843) 442-9696

dunawayrc@cofc.edu

### **Course Introduction and Objectives:**

This is a survey course covering American Government and politics. Because this is a survey course, we will cover a broad range of topics – some in depth and others we will just touch on. I really enjoy teaching this course. I hope my enthusiasm and interest in this subject will rub-off on you and that you too will enjoy it. The elephant in the room (maybe virtual room) is COVID, but I hope to provide you a great academic experience this semester despite the Pandemic. There will be a significant amount of reading. This course will provide you with a thorough understanding of how and why the United States government came to be and how it has developed over time. Starting with the Declaration of Independence and the drafting of the Constitution we will explore the early history of our political institutions and learn how they have evolved. We will examine present day politics with an eye towards this foundational history. This course examines the structure, context, functions and problems of American national government.

### **REQUIRED READINGS**

Each week's readings will be found in the course schedule or announced by email or in our Zoom class. Standalone texts, etc. will be made available on OAKS. Please understand that each reading is required and should be read in its entirety. The readings beyond the textbook are not "supplementary", but are necessary to develop your understanding of American politics. Students who complete the following readings will receive credit per the College's "Founding Documents" requirement:

- The United States Constitution
- The Declaration of Independence
- The Emancipation Proclamation
- The Federalist Papers (1,2,9,51 and 68)
- Dr. King's Letter from Birmingham Jail

With the exception of the textbook We The People (Ginsberg, Lowi, et al), your newspaper reading and any assigned movies, everything you need for this course can be found in OAKS. That includes our weekly schedule, tests, outside readings, written lecture outlines, and video lectures.

**Important: To access our course materials in OAKS you must always login with your CofC Google email account. You can't use any personal accounts – only your CofC email.**

Because this is an online course, it is very important that we stay in close contact. Please check your CofC email frequently and our Course OAKS page for announcements. I will also ask you to please provide me with a good phone number where I can reach you. Also, I would like to know where you are located this semester (Charleston, overseas, in a different time zone, etc.) so I can have a sense of what time it might be for you if you are not here in Charleston. I will try to get this information from you at our first Zoom meeting. Whenever you email me it is helpful for you to include your full name and our course and section number (POLI 101- 07).

Now, because you will be experiencing this class online, it will have some alterations from my typical classroom-based course. There are some definite positives to an online approach – one obvious one is that you can watch and re-watch the lectures. This should give you an advantage in studying for the tests. I will be available to you at our weekly Zoom class to answer any Course related questions you may have, or you are welcome to email me. For personal issues or questions please email or call me. We can also set up a private Zoom meeting if that works best for you.

Please be in contact with me if you need help or if there is an issue that will prevent you from succeeding in the class. I can't fix a problem if I don't know about it. Please reach out to me with any issues. If you are SNAP student or have any learning issues, again, please let me know immediately. **After** the test or assignment is the wrong time to tell me about an issue.

We will have four online, True/False and Multiple Choice style tests. The material for the tests will come from the video lectures, textbook, outside readings, our Zoom classes, and any movies that you are assigned to watch. I do not test you on anything from the textbook that I do not teach you from the textbook. There are sections of chapters and entire chapters that we will not cover in the textbook and I will not test you on that material. You must take the tests during the period of time when they are available to you. Typically the tests open on-line to you on a Wednesday at 7PM and close the following Saturday night at 11:30PM. There are no "make up tests" if you fail to take the test during the allotted time.

Attending our weekly Zoom meeting is mandatory. Your participation grade will be based on your attendance and contributions to these Zoom classes. Please communicate with me to let me know if you will be, or if you have been, absent for our Zoom class. If you feel sick you should stay home and avoid coming into contact with other people. Because our lectures are online and our meetings are via Zoom, it is possible to be in quarantine or self-isolated and still be able to watch the lectures and meet safely for our Zoom class. Of course, if you are too sick to do so, or if you have any other issues that cause you to miss assignment deadlines or our scheduled Zoom class time, then please let me know immediately.

You will be required to submit a two-page Reflection Paper on an assigned topic this semester as well as a short essay relating a contemporary newspaper story to a Constitutional Amendment. More about these assignments as the semester progresses.

Submitting late assignments will have a negative effect on your grade. I give you plenty of notice of tests and assignment dates. Record them on your calendar and stick to the schedule. It is your responsibility to submit your assignments on time or communicate to me a valid excuse as to why you failed to do so.

Towards the bottom of this syllabus you will find the breakdown (%s) of the various graded assignments.

When you enter into our weekly scheduled Zoom class, initially, please Mute yourself, and turn on your Video. That's right, we all need to see each other on Zoom, so please dress accordingly. It almost goes without saying, but I will expect everyone to be respectful of anyone speaking while on Zoom. I am fine with differences of opinions but disagreeing in a respectful manner is expected. Rude or unkind behavior towards your fellow classmates will not be tolerated. Our Zoom Class will typically be held every Wednesday during our scheduled class time.

### **How To Succeed:**

I think the key to success is to stay on top of your work. Log in to check our Course OAKS page every day as well as messages from me sent to your CofC email. Keep track of your assignment and test due dates. Don't procrastinate and don't fall behind. There is a lot to do and a lot of material to cover.

Watch the lectures – multiples times if you want – take notes on the material, read your book for more guidance and ask questions if you are unclear on anything. The prevailing opinion is that we all learn better when we don't watch a lecture for a long period of time. Some of the Chapter lectures are longer than others. I would recommend that you pace yourself and watch the Chapter video lectures in thirty minute installments. This should boost your comprehension and retention of the material. For each of the video-taped lectures there is a PDF outline. Refer to the outline as you watch the lectures and use it as a starting point for your lecture notes. I think taking notes also increases your learning of the material. Similarly, pay close attention to the assigned movies. I hope you enjoy them – but they are assignments. Watch them with a critical eye and don't just have them on as background noise.

In addition to the textbook (We the People, Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, Tolbert & Campbell, 12<sup>th</sup> Edition) some outside reading will be assigned. You may be required to obtain access to and view several movies online. Additionally, we could have guest speakers during our Zoom Class. There may be a short, written assignment related to the movies or guest speakers. .

You will be expected to have read the assigned material for the lectures and the tests and if the technology allows, you can expect to view several short videos during our Zoom class. Additionally, you will be required (weekly) to read a national newspaper, identify and be prepared to share briefly with the class a topical political issue. You will be expected to tie this current political topic into what we are learning from the textbook and the lectures. I want and

expect you to attend every Zoom class, take good notes and actively participate in class discussions. Taking accurate and thorough hand-written notes is a great way to retain and learn new lecture information.

In other classes students have asked me if buying a textbook is really necessary? I think it is essential. In the past, students who seemed to perform best in this class told me that they would review the chapter in the textbook before the lecture and then after the lecture would read the chapter more closely while referring to their lecture notes. I offer this as a method that has been successful for other students. I recognize that this method takes time - but doing well in any class takes time!

**Political Science Learning Outcomes:** By the end of this semester, 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; and (4) Develop an analytical, social scientific disposition toward American politics.

This course is required for all Political Science majors and minors. It must be completed within the first 15 hours of political science courses.

**General Education Student Learning Outcomes:**

This course also fulfills a General Education Social Science requirement. By successfully completing this course you will earn a social science general education credit. The College of Charleston has established a General Education learning outcome for students that specify that upon completion of the course, students can identify, describe and apply a social science concept, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions. Students will be evaluated in a short essay question on a scheduled assignment or a test question to evaluate these goals.

Throughout the semester you will be required to read a National newspaper and identify current political topics so that you can begin to understand them in the context of what we are learning in class.

**Midterm Grades** will only reflect the average of your first two tests. No additional grading areas will be included in this grade.

**Final grades** will be based on class attendance and participation (10%), a short essay relating a contemporary newspaper story to a Constitutional Amendment (10%), as well as a two page Reflection Paper (10%), and four in-class tests (18.75% each test for a total of 70%).

If there are any special circumstances that will hinder your ability to complete the course work, tests or other requirements, or any issues that will limit your potential to succeed in the class – then please let me know.

**Final Grading Summary:**

Class attendance and participation	10%
Topical newspaper write up	10%
Two page Reflection Paper	10%
4 in-class tests – each 18.75% for a total	70%
	-----
Total	100%

**Grading Policy:**

A 94-100 A- 90-93 B+ 87-89 B 83-86 B- 80-82 C+ 77-79 C 73-76 C- 70-72 D+ 67-69 D 63-66 D- 60-62 F below 60

**The Center for Student Learning (CSL)** offers academic support services for assistance in study strategies, speaking and writing skills, and course content. Services include tutoring, supplemental instruction, study skills appointments and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and these services are available to you at no cost. Their website is <http://csl.cofc.edu> and their phone number is (843) 953-5635. Their office is located on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Room 116 of the Addlestone Library. This is free help for students – so take advantage of what they have to offer.

I encourage you to take advantage of the Writing Lab in the Center for Student Learning (Addlestone Library, first floor). Trained writing consultants can help you with writing for this course and all of your CofC courses. They offer one-to-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, call them at (843) 953-5635 or visit them at <http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab/>.

**Mental Health and Physical Wellbeing:** If you find yourself experiencing physical illness, please reach out to student health services (843-953-5520). If you are experiencing mental health issues (anxiety, depression, stressful life events, sleep deprivation, loneliness or homesickness, etc.) please contact either the Counseling Center (professional counselors at <http://counseling.cofc.edu>) 843-953-5640 located on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Robert Scott Small Building, or Students 4 Support (certified volunteers through texting “4support” to 839863 or visit <http://counseling.cofc.edu/cct/index.php>) or meet them in person on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of the Stern Center. These services are here to help you cope with difficulties you may be experiencing and to maintain optimal physical and mental health.

**Food & Housing Resources:** Many CofC students report experiencing food and housing insecurity. If you are facing challenges in securing food (such as not being able to afford groceries or get sufficient food to eat every day) and housing (such as lacking a safe and stable place to live), please contact the Dean of Students for support (<http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/about/salt.php>). Also, you can go to <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/student-food-housing-insecurity/index.php> to learn about food and housing assistance that is available to you. In addition, there are several resources on and off campus to help. You can visit the Cougar Pantry in the Stern Center (2<sup>nd</sup> Floor), a student-run food pantry that provides dry-goods and hygiene products at no charge to any student in need.

**Disability/Access:** The College abides by section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a documented disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see an administrator at the Center for Disability Services (SNAP) (843-953-1431) or me so that an accommodation may be arranged. If you are already a SNAP student, then please present me with your SNAP letter in the first days of class.

**OAKS**, including Gradebook, will be used for this course throughout the semester to provide the Syllabus and class materials and grades for each assignment, which will be regularly posted.

**Recording of Classes (via Zoom):** Class sessions on Zoom may be recorded – both voice and video recording. By attending and remaining in the class, the student (you) consents to being recorded. Recorded class sessions are for instructional use only and may not be shared with anyone who is not enrolled in the class.

**Online Courses with Exam Proctoring:** There are no final exams in this class so there will be no Exam Proctoring services required.

**Inclement Weather, Pandemic or Substantial Interruption of Instruction:** In the event that 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 at CofC to provide students with these essential tools. Because this course is scheduled as an on-line course with on-line scheduled meeting times, we are well suited to be able to continue with our course in the event of the school's closure. If you are required to leave campus, please be prepared to bring along your laptop, textbook, notes and class materials with you. If you have access to the internet - wherever you might be – then our class can continue.

**Inclusion:** The College of Charleston offers many resources for LGBTQ+ students, faculty and staff along with their allies.

**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 the deception involved.

As is true with all College of Charleston classes, lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of the Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of the deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student's actions are related more to a misunderstanding or 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 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 and placed in the student's file. 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://deanofstudents.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>.

**Statement on "Religious Accommodation for Students":** The College of Charleston community is enriched by students of many faiths that have various religious observances, practices and beliefs. We value student rights and freedoms, including the right of each student to adhere to individual systems of religion. The College prohibits discrimination against any student because of their religious belief or any absence thereof.

The College acknowledges that religious practices differ from tradition to tradition and that the demands of religious observances in some traditions may cause conflicts with student schedules. In affirming this diversity, like many other colleges and universities, the College supports the concept of "reasonable accommodation for religious observance" in regard to class attendance and the scheduling of examinations and other academic work requirements, unless the accommodation would create an undue hardship on the College. Faculty are required, as part of their responsibility to students and the College, to ascribe to this policy and to ensure its fair and full implementation.

The accommodation request imposes responsibilities and obligations on both the individual requesting the accommodation and the College. Faculty members are expected to reasonably accommodate individual religious practices. Examples of reasonable accommodations for student absences might include: rescheduling an exam or giving a make-up exam for the student in question; altering the time of a student's presentation; allowing extra-credit assignments to substitute for missed class work or arranging for an increased flexibility in assignment dates. Regardless of any accommodation that may be

granted, students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives, requirements and prerequisites as defined by the instructor and by the College.

A list of recognized religious holidays can be found on the CofC Dean of Students' web page.