



Master Course Syllabus

For additional course information, including prerequisites, corequisites, and course fees, please refer to the Catalog: <https://catalog.uvu.edu/>

Semester: Spring

Year: 2025

Course Prefix: POLS

Course and Section #: 1100 - 003

Course Title: American National Government

Credits: 3

Course Description

Studies history and structure of American National Government, rights and responsibilities of citizens, political institutions, political processes, and governmental policies.

Course Attributes

This course has the following attributes:

- General Education Requirements
- Global/Intercultural Graduation Requirements
- Writing Enriched Graduation Requirements
- Discipline Core Requirements in Program
- Elective Core Requirements in Program
- Open Elective

Other: *Click here to enter text.*

Instructor Information

Instructor Name: Jamie Nelson

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion, students should be able to:

- 1 - Explain the key principles and philosophies that influenced the creation of the U.S. Constitution and the American system of government
 - 2 - Differentiate between the civil rights and civil liberties protected by the U.S. Constitution
 - 3 - Discuss the development and influence of public opinion in the American system of government
 - 4 - Describe the American election process, including the nomination and general election processes for local, state, and national offices
 - 5 - Explain the function and operation of the institutions of government at the national, state, and local levels of the American political system
 - 6 - Analyze current political debates, trends, and challenges facing American society and government
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Course Materials and Texts

Krutz, G., & Waskiewicz, PhD, S. (2021). American Government 3e. OpenStax.

Course Requirements

Course Assignments, Assessments, and Grading Policy

Course Assignments (All assignments should be submitted through Canvas)

A) In Class Participation (25% of total grade)

Students are expected to participate in class discussions and activities. Each week students will receive points for attending class and participating in discussions. Discussions will include questions regarding the reading for that week. Students who are present and visibly engaged in discussions (regardless of the number of comments made) will receive full participation points. Students can miss two days without an excuse before losing participation points. – Your ePortfolio assignment will be part of your participation grade. For ePortfolio credit, post one of your three writing assignments (below) and provide a reflection as described in Canvas.

B) Weekly Reading Quiz (20% of total grade)

Students will be given a quiz each week with a time limit of 30 minutes. Quizzes will open Monday morning at 12:00 am and will be available until Sunday evening at 11:59 pm.

The quizzes are open book and multiple choice. Questions will be based off of the reading for that week. Two quizzes with the lowest scores will be dropped at the end of the semester.

C) Media Analysis Paper (15% of total grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to analyze your own media habits, compare media coverage on a topic of your choice, and fact check three media articles. This assignment should result in a 3 to 5 page paper. See Canvas for details.

D) Federalism Group Project (25% of total grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to provide students with an avenue to research and provide a critical analysis of the American system of federalism. Students will be divided into groups of 4 to 5 students based on the topic they would like to study. Students will then divide up the components of the issue (state responsibilities, federal responsibilities, major historical events, conflicts of responsibilities, and current events). Each student will then write a 2 to 3 page paper on their component and will give a 10 – 15 minute presentation with the other members of their group. See Canvas for details.

E) Public Meeting and Sphere of Influence Assignment (15% of total grade)

The purpose of this assignment is to identify your “sphere of influence” in your community and identify ways to engage with and advocate for community issues. Students will be asked to attend a local public meeting (either in-person or virtually), identify a local issue that you’re interested in advocating for, write a 2 to 4 page paper addressing how you can advocate for your issue and how the public meeting you attended could provide for further advocacy. See Canvas for details.

Late Policy

Assignments that are late will automatically receive a 10 percent deduction. An additional 10 percent will be deducted for each day after that. Late policy pass: Each student has one (1) late policy passes which can be used on any assignment or quiz excluding in-class participation. Late policy passes are good for a one-week extension after which the late policy will be enforced. You must let me know if you would like to use your late policy pass.

Grading Scale

A = 94-100
A- = 90-93
B+ = 87-89
B = 84-86
B- = 80-83
C+ = 77-79
C = 74-76
C- = 70-73
D+ = 67-69
D = 64-66
D- = 60-63
E = 59 and below

Grades will never be determined based on an individual's opinion but rather on that individual's ability to present and support that opinion.

Required or Recommended Reading Assignments

Required readings are listed under each day and should be completed before each class.

Jan 13 - 17 | Media Literacy

Hubert, David – Common Fallacies Handout (found on Canvas home page)

Pew Research Center – 2023 Salient Issues (linked on the Canvas home page)

Kurtz, Glen – Chapter 8

Jan 20 - 24 | Introduction to Democracy

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 1

Jan 27 - 31 | The Founding and The United States Constitution

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 2

The Declaration of Independence

The Constitution

Federalist Paper #51

Feb 3 - 7 | Federalism

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 3

Feb 10 - 14 | The Legislature and The Process of Law Making

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 11

Feb 17 - 21 | The Executive Branch

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 12

Feb 24 - 28 | The Bureaucracy

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 15

Mar 3 - 7 | The Judiciary

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 13

Mar 24 - 28 | Political Parties & Interest Groups

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 9 & 10

Federalist #10

Mar 31 - Apr 4 | Civil Liberties

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 4

Howard, Robert M. et. al. "State Courts, The US Supreme Court, and Civil Liberties"

Apr 7 - 11 | Civil Rights

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 5

Library of Congress "The Civil Rights Act of 1964: A Long Struggle for Freedom"

Apr 14 - 18 | Elections and Voting

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 7

Apr 21 | Measuring Public Opinion (No class April 23 & 26)

Kurtz, Glen - Chapter 6

General Description of the Subject Matter of Each Lecture or Discussion

Week 1 | What is government?

Week 2 | Media Literacy

Week 3 | Introduction to Democracy

Week 4 | The Founding and The United States Constitution

Week 5 | Federalism

Week 6 | The Legislature and The Process of Law Making

Week 7 | The Executive Branch

Week 8 | The Bureaucracy

Week 9 | The Judiciary

Week 10 | Federalism Student Presentations

Week 11 | Political Parties & Interest Groups

Week 12 | Civil Liberties

Week 13 | Civil Rights

Week 14 | Elections and Voting

Week 15 | Measuring Public Opinion

Week 16 | Finals

Required Course Syllabus Statements

Generative AI

You may use ChatGPT and similar LLMs as a learning assistant, not as a crutch. Similarly to copying and pasting from results in a search engine, you must cite anything you get from ChatGPT or another LLM. If you use generative AI, use it with caution. Generative AI can be useful in getting started on an assignment, but it should be used with caution. Because of the internal mechanisms in these LLMs, they are known to both lie and steal, so if you take information directly from generative AI without checking it against other sources, you run the risk of appearing to lie and steal as well. It is important to know, not

only how to use the technology that is at your disposal, but to communicate without the aid of such technology.

Using Remote Testing Software

This course does not use remote testing software.

This course uses remote testing software. Remote test-takers may choose their remote testing locations. Please note, however, that the testing software used for this may conduct a brief scan of remote test-takers' immediate surroundings, may require use of a webcam while taking an exam, may require the microphone be on while taking an exam, or may require other practices to confirm academic honesty. Test-takers therefore shall have no expectation of privacy in their test-taking location during, or immediately preceding, remote testing. If a student strongly objects to using test-taking software, the student should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester to determine whether alternative testing arrangements are feasible. Alternatives are not guaranteed.

Required University Syllabus Statements

Accommodations/Students with Disabilities

Students needing accommodations due to a permanent or temporary disability, pregnancy or pregnancy-related conditions may contact UVU [Accessibility Services](#) at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu or 801-863-8747.

Accessibility Services is located on the Orem Campus in BA 110.

Deaf/Hard of Hearing students requesting ASL interpreters or transcribers can contact Accessibility Services to set up accommodations. Deaf/Hard of Hearing services can be contacted at DHHservices@uvu.edu

DHH is located on the Orem Campus in BA 112.

Academic Integrity

At Utah Valley University, faculty and students operate in an atmosphere of mutual trust. Maintaining an atmosphere of academic integrity allows for free exchange of ideas and enables all members of the community to achieve their highest potential. Our goal is to foster an intellectual atmosphere that produces scholars of integrity and imaginative thought. In all academic work, the ideas and contributions of others must be appropriately acknowledged and UVU students are expected to produce their own original academic work.

Faculty and students share the responsibility of ensuring the honesty and fairness of the intellectual environment at UVU. Students have a responsibility to promote academic integrity at the university by not participating in or facilitating others' participation in any act of academic dishonesty. As members of the academic community, students must become familiar with their [rights and responsibilities](#). In each course, they are responsible for knowing the requirements and restrictions regarding research and writing, assessments, collaborative work, the use of study aids, the appropriateness of assistance, and other issues. Likewise, instructors are responsible to clearly state expectations and model best practices.

Further information on what constitutes academic dishonesty is detailed in [UVU Policy 541: Student Code of Conduct](#).

Equity and Title IX

Utah Valley University does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age (40 and over), disability, veteran status, pregnancy, childbirth, or pregnancy-related conditions, citizenship, genetic information, or other basis protected by applicable law, including Title IX and 34 C.F.R. Part 106, in employment, treatment, admission, access to educational programs and activities, or other University benefits or services. Inquiries about nondiscrimination at UVU may be directed to the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights or UVU's Title IX Coordinator at 801-863-7999 – TitleIX@uvu.edu – 800 W University Pkwy, Orem, 84058, Suite BA 203.

Religious Accommodation

UVU values and acknowledges the array of worldviews, faiths, and religions represented in our student body, and as such provides supportive accommodations for students. Religious belief or conscience broadly includes religious, non-religious, theistic, or non-theistic moral or ethical beliefs as well as participation in religious holidays, observances, or activities. Accommodations may include scheduling or due-date modifications or make-up assignments for missed class work.

To seek a religious accommodation, a student must provide written notice to the instructor and the Director of Accessibility Services at accessibilityservices@uvu.edu. If the accommodation relates to a scheduling conflict, the notice should include the date, time, and brief description of the difficulty posed by the conflict. Such requests should be made as soon as the student is aware of the prospective scheduling conflict.

While religious expression is welcome throughout campus, UVU also has a [specially dedicated space](#) for meditation, prayer, reflection, or other forms of religious expression.