

POSC 150-010: Introduction to American Politics Spring 2020

Lecture

Monday/Wednesday 9.05-9.55am, Willard 007

Discussion section 020D

Friday, 9.05-9.55am, Gore 115
Jiwon Nam

Discussion section 023D

Friday, 10.10-11.00am, Gore 102
Jiwon Nam

Discussion section 021D

Friday, 9.05-9.55am, Gore 114
Amjad Molaeb

Discussion section 024D

Friday, 10.10-11.00am, Gore 208
Amjad Molaeb

Discussion section 022D

Friday, 9.05-9.55am, Gore 308
CJ Mays

Discussion section 025D

Friday, 10.10-11.00am, Drake 024
CJ Mays

Instructor

Professor Phil Jones
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Office hours:
Monday, 2.00-4.00pm, Smith 302

Teaching Assistants

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Monday, 10.00am-12.00pm, Smith 333

What will I get out of this course?

This course introduces students to the fundamentals of how American politics works. We will focus on three main areas: (1) how the Constitution sets up the “rules of the game” that citizens and government officials have to follow; (2) what kinds of input the American public gives to our democratic system; and (3) how government institutions like Congress, the President, and the courts make policy in response. Throughout, we’ll be focusing on what democracy is and how it works in this country. After successfully completing the course, you will have a better understanding of politics, the skills to think critically about why government produces the policy outcomes it does, and — we hope! — a greater interest in learning more about American politics in the future.

What do I need for this course?

- Christine Barbour and Gerald C. Wright, *Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics*, 8th Brief Edition [referred to as “KTR” from here on]. There are lots of editions, make sure you get the right one (ISBN: 9781544316215).
- Access to the [Canvas site](#), where all grades and course information are posted. We will use the Announcements tool to contact you; make sure you are signed up for notifications by going to Account > Settings > Notifications > Course Activities and setting “Announcement” to “ASAP”.
- An i>clicker, which you must register on Canvas and bring to every class. It is your responsibility to bring your clicker to every class and to ensure that it is working correctly. If you are having technical difficulties with your clicker, see [ATS’ site](#).

How will my work be assessed?

Your overall grade for the course will be calculated as follows:

3 exams	22% each
Lecture participation	12% total
Section quizzes	10% total
Section participation and discussion assignments	12% total

Assignment dates are **highlighted** in the course schedule and you should make good note of them now.

We will use clickers for the lecture participation. Responses will not be graded since the aim is to practice for exams, assess how well the class is learning, and get a sense of your opinions. You will receive two points for each question answered (i.e., if there is a correct answer but you select an incorrect one, you still receive the points). It is your responsibility to bring your clicker to every lecture and section and to ensure that it is working correctly.

Late work policy: We will still accept late assignments. However, they will be subject to an automatic 10% penalty for each day they are late (starting on the day they are due).

Re-grading policy: We use rubrics and clearly defined assignments to make grading fair across the entire class. If, however, you think there has been an error in grading one of your assignments, you should do the following: (1) Wait 24 hours until after the grade was returned. (2) Submit an email to Prof. Jones and your TA explaining clearly what you see as the error. Prof. Jones will re-grade your assignment and let you know your new grade. Note well that your score could go down as well as up as a result of this re-grading.

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned according to the following standard cutoff points:

A	93	B+	87	C+	77	D+	67
A-	90	B	83	C	73	D	63
		B-	80	C-	70	D-	60

How can I succeed in this course?

There are three things you can do to make sure you get the most out of our class. First, you need to attend all of the lectures and section discussions. Our meetings will go beyond the assigned readings and will help clarify particularly difficult concepts. Missing class will leave you underprepared for the exams and assignments. It will also, obviously, hurt your lecture participation score.

Second, you need to make sure you are well-prepared and ready to learn at each meeting. At a minimum, this means you need to do the assigned reading for each class before it starts. But you must also help create an environment conducive to learning for the entire class. You must be on time to class, turn off your cell phone, and refrain from talking during lecture.

Finally, if you are having difficulties with the course material, come talk to us in office hours or via email. We can work together to try and solve any problems (for email, see [this general advice](#)).

The Office of Academic Enrichment offers excellent [skill-building academic support](#) and [tutoring services](#). Even if you feel comfortable in the class, this is a good time to invest in new learning skills.

What if I have to miss a class?

You are expected to attend every lecture and every discussion section for this course. However, if you need to miss a class, you should borrow the notes from a classmate, thoroughly do the reading for that class, and come see us in office hours to clarify anything that remains unclear. The additional steps you need to take are as follows:

- Absences due to religious holidays are excused, provided you email your TA before that class begins to let them know. Missed quizzes on these days will not count towards your grade.
- Absences due to official participation in University extracurricular activities and athletics are excused, provided you present your TA with official notification from your coach/group leader before that class begins. Missed quizzes on these days will not count towards your grade.
- For absences that last more than two classes (due to family emergencies, illness, etc), you should contact the Dean's Office of your College (for Arts and Sciences, [see here](#)) to document the reason for your absence. They will then send a letter of verification to all your professors, and I will excuse your absence. Missed quizzes on these days will not count towards your grade.
- Shorter-term absences due to mild illness do not need to be formally excused by the Dean's office. You should still email your TA before class begins to let them know.

This final category of absence will not be formally excused. However, to ensure no one is unfairly penalized for such random mishaps, everyone's three lowest lecture participation scores will be dropped from their total lecture participation at the end of the course. Likewise, everyone's lowest section quiz score will be dropped at the end of the course. You are still expected to attend every lecture and section; this policy simply stops any minor emergencies from hurting your grades.

Please note that deadline extensions and make-up exams are only given in extremely serious extenuating circumstances (and with an excused absence), and only if all arrangements are made before the due date.

Course schedule

The schedule for this course is not set in stone. There may be some changes, but you can expect these will be announced in class and on the course website with adequate notice.

For topics which will have multiple classes, the readings should be completed before the first class. For example, you should read all of Chapter 1 of KTR before our first lecture on Political Systems, and review your notes before your first discussion section and the second lecture on Political Systems.

- M Feb. 10 Introduction to the course
- KTR pxxvii—xxviii
 - “What last year’s students want you to know” (on Canvas)
 - Complete OAE’s [online note-taking workshop](#)

PART ONE: THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK

- W Feb. 12 Lecture: Political Systems I
- KTR Ch 1
- F Feb. 14 Discussion section
- Bring your notes from Political Systems I lecture
- M Feb. 17 Lecture: Political Systems II
- KTR Ch 1
- W Feb. 19 Lecture: The Constitution I
- KTR Ch 2
 - Declaration of Independence, KTR pA7-8
- F Feb. 21 Discussion section
- Discussion assignment #1 due
- M Feb. 24 Lecture: The Constitution II
- KTR Ch 2
- W Feb. 26 Lecture: The Constitution III
- KTR Ch 3
- F Feb. 28 Discussion section
- Quiz on KTR Ch 3 in section
- M Mar. 2 Lecture: The Bill of Rights I
- KTR Ch 4
 - The Bill of Rights, KTR pA16-17

- W Mar. 4 Lecture: The Bill of Rights II
• KTR Ch 4
- F Mar. 6 Discussion section
• Quiz on KTR Ch 4 and the Bill of Rights in section
- M Mar. 9 Lecture: The Bill of Rights III
• KTR Ch 5
- W Mar. 11 Lecture: The Bill of Rights IV
• KTR Ch 5
• Current events example #1 due
- F Mar. 13 Exam #1 in section

PART TWO: THE AMERICAN PUBLIC

- M Mar. 16 Lecture: Public Opinion I
• KTR Ch 10
- W Mar. 18 Lecture: Public Opinion II
• KTR Ch 10
- F Mar. 20 Discussion section
• Quiz on KTR Ch 10 in section
- M Mar. 23 Lecture: Public Opinion III
• KTR Ch 10
- W Mar. 25 Lecture: Political Participation
• KTR p395-407
- F Mar. 27 Discussion section
• Discussion assignment #2 due
- M Apr. 6 Lecture: Voting and Elections I
• KTR Ch 12
- W Apr. 8 Lecture: Voting and Elections II
• KTR Ch 12
- F Apr. 10 Discussion section
• Quiz on KTR Ch 12 in section

- M Apr. 13 Lecture: The Media I
• KTR Ch 13
- W Apr. 15 Lecture: The Media II
• KTR Ch 13
• Current events example #2 due
- F Apr. 17 Exam #2 in section

PART THREE: INSTITUTIONS AND INTERMEDIARIES

- M Apr. 20 Lecture: Congress I
• KTR Ch 6
• Article I of the Constitution, KTR pA10-13
- W Apr. 22 Lecture: Congress II
• KTR Ch 6
- F Apr. 24 Discussion section
• Quiz on KTR Ch 6 in section
- M Apr. 27 Lecture: The Presidency I
• KTR Ch 7
• Article II of the Constitution, KTR pA13-14
- W Apr. 29 Lecture: The Presidency II
• KTR Ch 7
- F May 1 Discussion section
• Quiz on KTR Ch 7 in section
- M May 4 Lecture: The Bureaucracy
• KTR Ch 8
- W May 6 Lecture: The Courts I
• KTR Ch 9
• Article III of the Constitution, KTR pA14-15
- F May 8 Discussion section
• Discussion assignment #3 due
- M May 11 Lecture: The Courts II
• KTR Ch 9

- W May 13 Lecture: Political Parties
• KTR p355-376
- F May 15 Discussion section
- M May 18 Lecture: Interest Groups
• KTR p376-394
• Current events example #3 due
- F May 22 Exam #3 in Willard 007, 1.00-1.50pm

ADDITIONAL POLICIES

ACADEMIC HONESTY

I have zero tolerance for academic dishonesty of any kind. Please familiarize yourself with [UD's policies in this regard](#). To falsify the results of one's research, to steal the words or ideas of another, to cheat on an assignment, to re-submit the same assignment for different classes, or to allow or assist another to commit these acts corrupts the educational process. Students are expected to do their own work and neither give nor receive unauthorized assistance.

DISCLOSURE OF SEXUAL MISCONDUCT

If, at any time during this course, I happen to be made aware that a student may have been the victim of sexual misconduct (including sexual harassment, sexual violence, domestic/dating violence, or stalking), I am obligated to inform the university's Title IX Coordinator. The university needs to know information about such incidents in order to offer resources to victims and to ensure a safe campus environment for everyone. The Title IX Coordinator will decide if the incident should be examined further. If such a situation is disclosed to me in class, in a paper assignment, or in office hours, I promise to protect your privacy — I will not disclose the incident to anyone but the Title IX Coordinator. More information on sexual misconduct policies, where to get help, and how to report information, is [available online](#). UD provides 24-hour crisis assistance and victim advocacy and counseling. Contact 302-831-1001, UD Helpline 24/7/365, to get in touch with a sexual offense support advocate.

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

The University of Delaware works to promote an academic and work environment that is free from all forms of discrimination, including harassment. As a member of the community, your rights, resources and responsibilities are reflected in the [non-discrimination and sexual misconduct policies](#).

The University of Delaware does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, marital status, disability, religion, age, veteran status or any other characteristic protected by applicable law in its employment, educational programs and activities, admissions policies, and scholarship and loan programs as required by Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and other applicable statutes and University policies. The University of Delaware also prohibits unlawful harassment including sexual harassment and sexual violence.

You can report any concerns to the University's Office of Equity & Inclusion, at 305 Hullahen Hall, (302) 831-8063 or you can report anonymously through UD Police (302) 831-2222 or the EthicsPoint Compliance Hotline at www1.udel.edu/compliance. You can also report any violation of UD policy on harassment, discrimination, or abuse of any person [online here](#).

INCLUSION OF DIVERSE LEARNING NEEDS

Any student who thinks they may need an accommodation based on a disability should contact the [Office of Disability Support Services](#) (DSS) office as soon as possible. The DSS office is located at 240 Academy Street, Alison Hall Suite 130, Phone: 302-831-4643. We will work together to find accommodations for you that ensure you can get the most out of the class as possible.