

Fall 2016

POS 2041 American Government

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University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee
POS 2041, 3 Credit Hours
American National Government
Fall 2016, B333

Instructor: Eric Hodges, Ph.D.
E-Mail:

Office:
Office Telephone:
Office Hours: T./Th. – 3:30-5pm

The penalty for not participating in politics is that you end up being governed by your inferiors. - Plato

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE DESCRIPTION: We live at a time of both great potential and great peril for the American experiment in popular government. We have the world's largest economy, largest military, and have invented virtually every important technological advance in the past century. However, we also have the world's highest incarceration rate, are currently being plagued by racial violence and mass shootings, have an ever-widening income gap between the top 1% of wage-earners and the other 99% of citizens, and seem to be in a perpetual war against terrorism.

So, where does this class fit into all that? Our government is the mechanism by which we as a society determine how we collectively address these issues. And, guess what? You have more power in determining our nation's actions than you currently realize. However, in order to realize that power, you have to know both the rules of the game and how to play the game. This course is intended to introduce you to both the rules and the strategies for playing that game.

COURSE TOPICS: This course will cover the following topics:

- The U.S. Constitution
- American Citizenship
- The Policy-Making Process
- Politics
- Federalism
- Media Politics

COURSE OBJECTIVES: The objectives of the course are to:

- Gain political literacy, including enhanced appreciation of the importance of political participation and public service.
- Identify and explain the prominent political ideologies in United States politics and describe their respective beliefs, values, and attitudes.
- Compare and contrast the powers of the U.S. Congress, the Presidency and the Judiciary.
- Describe and interrelate some of the basic theories of American politics that appeared in the Federalist Papers and the U.S. Constitution.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify a vital political problem
- Present a persuasive and clear argument to a group of citizens about a vital political problem
- Gather and assess relevant information regarding a vital political issue
- Conduct a stakeholder analysis in order to identify the parties associated with a particular political problem.
- Effectively communicate a political issue to various audiences
- Advocate for a pressing political issue
- Identify and evaluate the desired traits and abilities for the office of the U.S. President

TEXTS

1. *America, the Owner's Manual: Making Government Work for You* (2010), Senator Bob Graham.

CANVAS USE

The class syllabus is posted in CANVAS, an online course management system. In this class CANVAS will be used for course scheduling, announcements, assignment instructions, and submission of assignments. Please check CANVAS on a daily basis.

Information on how to use CANVAS is available at:
<http://usfsm.edu/information-commons/our-services/#>

Canvas Support is available through USFSM E-Learning staff from 9am to 5pm Monday through Friday. Please call or email Anthony Spall at 941-359-4202 (aspall@sar.usf.edu).

The USF Tampa IT help desk also provides 24-hour support for CANVAS. Please call 813-974-1222 or email: help@usf.edu if you need assistance outside of USFSM's E-Learning hours.

CANVAS tutorials can be found in the Student Quick-Start Guide at <http://guides.instructure.com/m/8470>.

COMPUTER LAPTOP USE

USFSM requires all students to have laptops that can be brought with them to class. On certain days, I will require you to bring your laptop to class. I will notify you in advance of this requirement. In addition, you may bring your laptop to class whenever you wish; however, laptops may be used for note taking, assignments, and library research only. If you are found to be using your laptop for purposes other than those listed, you will be asked to leave class and will be considered absent for the day.

PLAGIARISM SOFTWARE

The University of South Florida has an account with an automated plagiarism detection service which allows student assignments be checked for plagiarism. I reserve the right to ask students to submit their assignments to Turn-it-in through CANVAS. Assignments are compared automatically with a database of journal articles, web articles, and previously submitted papers. The instructor receives a report showing exactly how a student's paper was plagiarized.

Pursuant to the provisions of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), prior to submitting work to Turn-it-in, students are requested to delete any personal information (e.g., name, address, telephone) from the work being submitted. This protects students from having personal information disclosed to vendors or other outside agencies. By your submission, you are also agreeing to release your original work for review for academic purposes to Turn-it-in.

GRADING, EVALUATION AND ATTENDANCE POLICIES

Grading

I will use the following grading scale to calculate your final grade. Please note that grades for this course are calculated based on points, not percentages. Do not rely on the percentage listed in the Canvas gradebook.

Final Grade Point Scoring

A+	500-485	A	484-463	A-	462-448
B+	447-433	B	432-413	B -	412-398
C+	397-383	C	382-363	C-	362-348
D+	347-333	D	332-313	D-	312-298
F	297-0				

Evaluation

Reading quizzes	50 points
Presidential qualification exercise	150 points
<i>Demos</i> project	200 points (total)
• Project pitch	-40 points
• Project research	-40 points
• Stakeholder analysis	-40 points
• Stakeholder engagement	-40 points
• Advocacy	-40 points
Final presentation	100 points
Total	<hr/> 500 points

Assignments

Reading quizzes – there will be a very short quiz every class on the assigned readings/podcast/video. Each quiz is worth 5 points. I will only count the top 10 quiz grades. No make-up quizzes will be given.

Demos project – this project is the primary assignment for this course and is carried out in groups. Many of our class meetings will be dedicated to helping you complete this project. The exercise is broken up into five distinct parts.

- Project pitch – A class period will be devoted to allowing students to “pitch” an idea for a political project to engage with throughout the semester. Students will choose which project(s) to undertake by voting for the most compelling pitches.
- Research – once your projects are chosen, you will be responsible for obtaining the relevant facts regarding your project.
- Stakeholder analysis – in this exercise you will identify the important political and non-political actors involved with your issue
- Stakeholder engagement – the next part of the challenge will be to contact five of the stakeholders you previously identified and persuade them of the merits of your policy proposal
- Project advocacy – this assignment will involve publicizing your project through the media, social media, and other outreach activities

Presidential qualification exercise – For this exercise, you will identify the key knowledge, skills, and abilities preferred for the U.S. President. Then, after identifying those traits, you will rate each of the current U.S. Presidential candidates on each dimension.

Final presentation – your group will present the design, results, and implications of your *Demos* project for your final exam.

❖ **More detailed assignment guidelines will be posted to Canvas regarding each assignment.**

Attendance

I expect you to attend each class. I will take attendance. Failure to attend class will negatively affect your grade. If you have a legitimate reason for missing class, please email me as soon as possible. If you know that you are not able to attend when an assignment is due, contact me as soon as possible. Late assignments will not be accepted unless previously discussed with the instructor.

USFSM AND USF SYSTEM POLICIES

Policies are available in the [USFSM Catalog](#) and at regulationspolicies.usf.edu.

- A. Academic Dishonesty:** The University considers any form of plagiarism or cheating on exams, projects, or papers to be unacceptable behavior. Please review the [USF System Regulation USF3.027 Academic Integrity of Students](#) and the [USF System Regulation USF6.0021 Student Code of Conduct](#).
- B. Academic Disruption:** The University does not tolerate behavior that disrupts the learning process. Please review [USF System Regulation USF3.025 Disruption of Academic Policy](#).
- C. Contingency Plans:** In the event of an emergency, it may be necessary for USFSM to suspend normal operations. During this time, USFSM may opt to continue delivery of instruction through methods that include but are not limited to: Canvas, online conferencing/collaboration tools, email messaging, and/or an alternate schedule. It is the responsibility of the student to monitor Canvas for each of their classes for course specific communication, as well as the USFSM website, their student email account, and [MoBull](#) messages for important general information. The USF hotline at 1 (800) 992-4231 is updated with pre-recorded information during an emergency. See the [Campus Police Website](#) for further information.
- D. Disabilities Accommodation:** Students are responsible for registering with the Office of Students with Disabilities Services (SDS) in order to receive academic accommodations. Reasonable notice must be given to the SDS office (typically 5 working days) for accommodations to be arranged. It is the responsibility of the student to provide each instructor with a copy of the official Memo of Accommodation. Contact Information: Disability Coordinator, 941-359-4714, disabilityservices@sar.usf.edu, <http://usfsm.edu/disability-services/>
- E. Fire Alarm Instructions:** At the beginning of each semester please note the emergency exit maps posted in each classroom. These signs are marked with the primary evacuation route (red) and secondary evacuation route (orange) in case the building needs to be evacuated. See [Emergency Evacuation Procedures](#).
- F. Religious Observances:** USFSM recognizes the right of students and faculty to observe major religious holidays. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class for a major religious observance must provide notice of the date(s) to the instructor, in writing, by the second week of classes. Instructors canceling class for a religious observance should have this stated in the syllabus with an appropriate alternative assignment.
- G. Protection of Students Against Discrimination and Harassment:**
 - 1. **Sexual Misconduct/Sexual Harassment Reporting:** USFSM is committed to providing an environment free from sex discrimination, including sexual harassment and sexual violence ([USF System Policy 0-004](#)).
 - 2. **Other Types of Discrimination and Harassment:** USFSM also is committed to providing an environment free from discrimination and harassment based on race, color, marital status, sex, religion, national origin, disability, age, genetic information, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, or veteran status ([USF System Policy 0-007](#)).

The Counseling and Wellness Center is a **confidential** resource where you can talk about incidents of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, gender-based crimes, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. This confidential resource can help you without having to report your situation to either the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities (OSSR) or the Office of Diversity, Inclusion, and Equal Opportunity (DIEO), unless you request that they make a report.

Please be aware that in compliance with Title IX and under the USF System Policy, educators **must** report incidents of discrimination and harassment, including sexual harassment, gender-based crimes, sexual assault, stalking, and domestic/relationship violence. If a student discloses any of these situations in class, in papers, or to a faculty member personally, he or she is required to report it to OSSR or DIEO for investigation. Students who are victims or who have knowledge of such discrimination or harassment are encouraged to report it to either OSSR or DIEO. The Deputy Coordinator for USFSM is Allison Dinsmore, Coordinator of Disability Services & Student Advocacy, 941-359-4714 or adinsmore1@sar.usf.edu.

Campus Resources:

Counseling Center and Wellness Center 941-487-4254
Victim Advocate (24/7) 941-504-8599

List of off-campus resources:
HOPE Family Services: 941-755-6805
Safe Place & Rape Crisis Center (SPARCC) – Sarasota: 941-365-1976
First Call for Help- Manatee & Sarasota: 941-366-5025
Centerstone: 941-782-4800; 24-hr Hotline 941-708-6059

- H. Web Portal Information:** Every newly enrolled USF student receives an official USF e-mail account. Students receive official USF correspondence and Canvas course information via that address. The web portal is accessed at <http://my.usf.edu>.

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

A. Contacting Me

I hold regular office hours on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 3:30–5pm. I am also happy to schedule meetings by appointment. The best way to contact me is by email (ebhodes@sar.usf.edu). If you send me an email during the weekend or in the evenings, please do not expect to hear back right away. I cannot guarantee that I will read my email on a Saturday or Sunday, or after 5pm. If you email me during the week, I will respond within 24 hours.

B. Academic Support Services

[The Information Commons](#) provides students with individual and group study spaces, computers, printers, and various media equipment for temporary use. Librarians, learning support faculty, tutors, and technology and e-learning specialists staff Information Commons. Students challenged by the rigors of academic writing, mathematics, or other course content are urged to contact their professors early in the semester to chart out a plan for academic success, and/or regularly use the tutoring services provided by Learning Support Services, which are provided at no cost to students.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Topic	Readings	Assignments
August 23	Intro	Syllabus	
August 25	Blaming the young	Dalton, Ch. 1 (Canvas)	
August 26 – Last day to drop without financial penalty			
August 30	In the arena	Graham, Ch. 1	
September 1	What’s your problem?	Graham, Ch. 2	
September 6	Policy entrepreneurship	Policy entrepreneurs and the policy making process (Canvas)	
September 8	How to pitch an idea	Shark Tank, S4E7: Scrub Daddy	
September 13	Project pitch	No reading	Project pitch
September 15	How to do research	No reading	
September 20	How to work in teams	Teamwork basics (Canvas)	
September 22	How to work in teams	TBD	
September 27	Conducting a stakeholder analysis	Graham, Ch. 3	Project research exercise
September 29	Conducting a stakeholder analysis	Graham, Ch. 7	
October 4	Creating the U.S. Constitution	John Adams, Episode 2	
October 6	Federalism	Federalist paper #10 (Canvas)	
October 11	The Anti-federalists	Essay of Brutus #5 (Canvas)	Stakeholder analysis
October 13	Meeting etiquette	TBD	
October 18	Origins of presidential power	U.S. Constitution, Article 2 (Canvas)	
October 20	Electoral process	Informational guide to the 2016 Presidential election (selections) (Canvas)	
October 25	Electoral college	Who elects the President? (Canvas)	
October 27	Campaigns	How to run for President – Brooks (Canvas)	
October 29: Last day to drop with a “W”: no refund, no academic penalty			
November 1	The candidates	Candidate websites	
November 3	The role of the media in political campaigns	TBD (Canvas)	
November 8	Election day!	No reading	
November 10	U.S. Political Culture	“One Nation: Slightly Divisible. A Report on ‘Red’ and ‘Blue’ America.” –Brooks (Canvas)	
November 15	Public opinion	“Monica Lewinsky’s contribution to political	Stakeholder engagement

		science.” (Canvas)	
November 17	Media politics	Why Americans hate the media. (Canvas)	
November 22	Recount film	No reading	
November 24	Thanksgiving!		
November 29	You’ve won/you’ve lost	Graham, Ch. 10	Advocacy exercise
December 1	Conclusion	No reading	
December 6	Final presentations		Final presentations
December 16 th – Final Grades available online			