Sara Moats
Political Science 102: Introduction to American Government
West Virginia University
Spring 2013
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Office: 306J Woodburn Hall, Online Office on the 102 Class Homepage
Office Hours:
> **Tuesday and Thursday 9:00am-2:00pm (306J Woodburn Hall)**
> **Monday 2:00pm-4:00pm (Online) Also by appointment**

Overview

Political Science 102 is a web-based introductory course in American government and politics. The course deals with all aspects of the American political system, including the fundamental principles of government, structure of government, political institutions, and the political attitudes and activities of individual citizens and groups.

Required Text

Christine Barbour and Gerald Wright, <u>Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics</u>, 5th edition (The Essentials) (QC Press, 2011)

Tests and Grades

The final grade for this class will be based on class discussion, two written assignments, midterm exam, a cumulative final exam, and class attendance. The total points in this class will be based on the following:

Assignment One:	100 Points
Assignment Two:	100 Points
Discussion:	150 Points (Total)
Attendance:	50 Points (Total)
Midterm Exam:	100 Points
Final Exam:	100 Points
Total Points Available:	***600***

Grade Distribution:

600-540:	A
539-480:	B
479-420:	C
419-360:	D
359-0 :	F

Letter Grades

A:	100%-90%
B:	89.999%-80%
C:	79.999%-70%
D:	69.999%-60%
F:	59.999%-0

Technical Requirements:
- Internet Browser

- Adobe Acrobat Reader
    o (Free at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/alternate.html)

- Program to compose written assignments (Microsoft Word, Corel WordPerfect, Open Office)

In addition to an Internet browser, students must be able to compose written assignments (using Microsoft Word or Corel WordPerfect) and submit them using the assignment tool in the WVU eCampus classroom. If using a Mac, save assignments in RTF format.

Technical problems can sometimes come up unexpectedly. Students should have a backup plan for Internet and e-mail access in case your home or work computer connection goes off line or crashes. Always keep a back-up copy of all assignments and e-mails in a safe place. Though they are rare, major system outages and failures do happen. **Remember that individual technical problems are not an acceptable excuse for late assignments.**

Throughout the semester, readings, announcements, notes of clarification, and grades will be placed in the WVU eCampus classroom. To access these, students will need to enter the electronic classroom regularly (at least three times each week). Detailed instructions are available at https://ecampus.wvu.edu/ . Be certain to do a browser check-up so that you will be able to see and access all the features in the WVU eCampus classroom.

All technical problems should be directed to the OIT Help Desk by phone at **304-293-4444** or online at http://oit.wvu.edu/support/helpdesk/index.html . Be certain to **request and note the "trouble ticket" number** which will be used to verify any claims of a system failure.

This class will use the WIMBA live classroom. Students must be able to access and use the WIMBA live classroom software. To get the most out of the WIMBA experience, a headset (microphone and headphones all in one) is recommended, but not required. Lectures will be every Monday from 6:00pm-7:15pm. More information about how to use WIMBA is available on the WIMBA Classroom Getting Ready Guide found in the "WIMBA Live Classroom" folder on the homepage of the 102 classroom.

Discussion:
Discussion boards are an essential part of this online course. They are designed to stimulate thought, distribute information, clarify concepts, share ideas, explore course materials in detail, and to examine the course concepts from a new or different perspective. Each Monday a discussion question will be posted on the discussion board. Students will have until Sunday at 11:59pm of that week to post a response to the question. Questions are worth a total of ten (10) points per week. There will be fifteen questions posted for a total of one hundred and fifty (150) points. **Any student who does not post a response to the discussion question by 11:59pm on Sunday will receive a zero for that week.** There are no make-ups on discussion questions without prior approval from the instructor.
Remember: Some of the topics have no right or wrong answer. It is fine to disagree. However, be respectful of your classmates' opinions. Expect different beliefs and perspectives. Your classmates may express ideas that are foreign to you because this class is diverse. If you disagree with someone, disagree with their ideas. Listen and learn from your fellow students!

Assignments:
Assignments are designed to allow students to demonstrate their knowledge of the material in written form. Assignments should be completed in essay format and are worth one hundred (100) points each.
Remember: All assignments are due by **9:00am Eastern Time** on the due date. No late assignments will be accepted after 9:00am. All assignments not turned in by 9:00am on the due date will be issued a zero. Any extension for a particular assignment must be arranged with the instructor prior to the assignment due date. Also, grade disputes must be brought to the instructor's attention no later than one (1) week after the grades are returned.
Notes:
1. Copying from the textbook or cutting and pasting sections from websites or other reference materials or presenting someone else's ideas as your own is plagiarism and will not be tolerated and will result in zero (0) points for that assignment. In addition, all work submitted must be original for this class.

2. This class will utilize the *Turn It In* originality software.

3. If the instructor is unable to open an assignment attachment, the assignment must be resubmitted within 48 hours or the assignment will be issued a zero.

4. Always check the uploaded attachment is correct. After the deadline passes, the content submitted will be used for grading.

Exams:
A midterm and a comprehensive final exam will be given. Respondus Lockdown Browser is required to take the exams. Instructions for downloading and using Respondus Lockdown Browser can be found in the "Getting Started" folder on the homepage of the 102 classroom. A practice exam will be available shortly after the start of the semester. Students should take the practice exam prior to the midterm exam to test their computer settings.
Remember: Any student who does not take the midterm and or final exam during the allotted time will receive a zero for that exam. Any arrangements concerning a particular exam must be made prior to the exam and approved by the instructor.

Class Attendance:
As stated above, this class will utilize WIMBA Live Classroom. Please review the WIMBA Classroom Getting Ready Guide found in the "WIMBA Live Classroom" folder on the homepage of the 102 classroom. Students should run the setup wizard prior to the first class to ensure all settings are correct. Class will be held every Monday at 6:00pm. Throughout the semester, roll will be taken ten (10) times for a total of five (5) points each time. Class attendance is worth fifty (50) points total.
Any student who is unable to attend Monday classes due to a time conflict should contact the instructor during the first week of class. Also, any student who is unable to attend a particular class should contact the instructor prior to that class. No student will lose attendance credit due to work or prior commitment. When a student is unable to attend a live class, the student must watch the class archive by the following Sunday at 11:59pm to receive attendance credit. In addition, the student must enter the archive for attendance credit. NO CREDIT will be given for downloading the class as an MP3 or MP4 file.

Social Justice Statement:
West Virginia University is committed to social justice. The instructor concurs with that commitment and expects to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. West Virginia University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestion as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. Any student with a disability that anticipates needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise the instructor within the **first week of class** to make appropriate arrangements. Please contact Disability Services (304-293-6700) with any questions.

Class Cancellation for Weather and Other Emergencies:
At some point during the semester, it may be necessary for the University to cancel all or some classes due to poor weather, power failures, or other emergencies. Because of the very nature of an online class in which students are participating from all over the world, a University class cancellation or closure will not automatically apply in this course. The WVU eCampus will still be operational in times of a University shutdown. In times of a power outage or system wide failure, the instructor will make an announcement in the WVU eCampus classroom as soon as information becomes available. **Assignment due dates are firm and will not automatically change if the University is closed. Always check the eCampus for updates and announcements concerning the class.**

Student Evaluation of Instruction:
Effective teaching is a primary mission of West Virginia University. Student evaluation of instruction provides the university and the instructor with feedback about the student's experience in the course for review and course improvement. Student participation in the evaluation of course instruction is both strongly encouraged and highly valued. Results are strictly confidential, anonymous, and not available to the instructor until after final grades are released by Admissions and Records. Information about the evaluation will be provided towards the end of the semester.

Special Notice:
Students enrolled in extended learning web-based courses at West Virginia University are subject to special fees. Please see the Office of Extended Learning web site at http://www.elearn.wvu.edu/ for further information.

<u>**Course Schedule**</u>

Week One January 14- January 18:
    Introduce yourself to the class using the discussion tool and familiarize yourself with the
    eCampus.
    Topics: What is Politics?
    Reading: *Chapter One*

Week Two January 21-25:
    Topics: Political Culture
    Reading: *Chapter Two*
    Monday January 21st MLK Day Recess: No Class

Week Three January 28- February 1:
    Topics: The Founding the American Political System
    Reading: *Chapter Three*

Week Four February 4- February 8:
    Topics: American Federalism
    Reading: *Chapter Four*

Week Five February 11- February 15:
    Topics: Public Opinion
    Readings: *Chapter Eleven*
    Assignment One Due Monday February 11th by 9:00am

Week Six February 18- February 22
    Topics: The Media
    Readings: *Chapter Fifteen*
    Friday February 22nd 8:59am -8:59pm:
        Midterm Exam Open

Week Seven February 25- March 1:
    Topics: Political Parties
    Reading: *Chapter Twelve*

Week Eight March 4- March 8:
    Topics: Campaigns & Elections
    Reading: *Chapter Fourteen*

Week Nine: March 11- March 15:
    Topics: Interest Groups
    Reading: *Chapter Thirteen*

Week Ten March 18 – March 22:
     Topics: Congress
     Reading: *Seven*

Week Eleven March 25- March 29:
     Topics: None
     Reading: *None*
     Spring Break Recess

Week Twelve April 1 – April 5:
     Topics: The Presidency
     Reading: *Chapter Eight*

Week Thirteen April 8- April 12:
     Topics: The Courts
     Readings: *Chapter Ten*

Week Fourteen April 15- April 19:
     Topics: The Bureaucracy
     Readings: *Chapter Nine*

Week Fifteen April 22- April 26:
     Topics: Civil Rights & and Civil Liberties
     Readings: *Chapters Five & Six*
     Assignment Two Due Monday April 22nd by 9:00am

Week Sixteen April 29- May 3:
     Topics: Case Study
     Readings: *TBA*

Final Exam Week May 6-May 10:
     Final Exam Open: Wednesday May 8th 8:59am -8:59pm

Notes:
1. The instructor reserves the right to modify this syllabus should the need arise.

2. Any student having a prior commitment any time during the semester should notify the instructor by the first week of class to make any necessary arrangements.

3. Any student requiring accommodations of any sort should notify the instructor by the first week of class to make any necessary arrangements.

4. Grade disputes must be brought to the instructor's attention no later than one (1) week after the grades are returned. This includes grades on assignments, exams, discussion questions, and roll calls.