
WINTHROP UNIVERSITY

THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE FALL 2018

Course: PLSC 201 Section 001: American Government (3 credit hours)
Time & Location: Tuesday/Thursday 9:30am – 10:45am ♦ Owens 104
Instructor: [Dr. Adolphus G. Belk, Jr.](#)
Office Location: 332 Bancroft
Office Hours: Wednesdays and Thursdays 2:00pm – 3:30pm, or by appointment
Contact Info: Phone: 803.323.4581 ♦ Fax: 803.323.2568 ♦ E-mail: belka@winthrop.edu

“We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice”
– The Constitution of the United States ([1787](#))

“...ignorance, allied with power, is the most ferocious enemy justice can have.”
– James Baldwin, *No Name in the Street* (1972)

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Welcome to PLSC 201: American Government. This course introduces students to the fundamentals of U.S. government and politics. Throughout the term, politics will be seen as inextricably linked to economics. Thus, the culture of American politics, the founding, the political process, the institutions of American government, and the evolution of public policies will be viewed within the shifting economic context that affects and is influenced by their development. The role of race, class, and gender in American politics is a concomitant focus of the course.

This is a **social science** course in the **General Education Program** that fulfills the state’s and University’s **constitution requirement**. It has a **broad liberal arts orientation** and a **writing component**. In addition, it contributes to the mastery of the following [university-level competencies](#) (ULCs):

3. **Winthrop graduates understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live.**
Winthrop University graduates comprehend the historical, social, and global contexts of their disciplines and their lives. They also recognize how their chosen area of study is inextricably linked to other fields. Winthrop graduates collaborate with members of diverse academic, professional, and cultural communities as informed and engaged citizens.
4. **Winthrop graduates communicate effectively.**
Winthrop University graduates communicate in a manner appropriate to the subject, occasion, and audience. They create texts – including but not limited to written, oral, and visual presentations – that convey content effectively. Mindful of their voice and the impact of their communication, Winthrop graduates successfully express and exchange ideas.

Finally, this course participates in the [Global Learning Initiative](#). One of the global learning components of the class will be a comparison of [the Bill of Rights](#) and [the Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#).

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the close of the semester, students will be able to think critically about American political culture, politics and political behavior, institutions, and the role of government in the economy. More specifically, students will be able to identify and analyze:

1. The core concepts and main themes of the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, and the *Federalist Papers*.
2. The branches of the U.S. government and their powers and functions.
3. Federalism and the separation of powers.
4. At least three means by which citizens may be involved in American government and politics.
5. The founders' vision of American politics and government, and how it has changed over time.

Lastly, at the end of the term students will have acquired sufficient knowledge to carry out future work in the subfields of American government and public administration.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

It is my sincere hope that each student will do well in the course. For this to happen, students must live up to the responsibilities and requirements outlined in this syllabus. Therefore, each student must:

1. **Complete the readings** prior to the class in which the material will be discussed.
2. **Attend class, participate, ask questions, and take notes.** Attendance is not required. The lectures and class discussions, however, are designed to build upon the readings—they do not simply regurgitate them. Participation—which requires your presence—will raise or lower grades on the borderline. Moreover, regular attendance and thorough lecture notes will be two of your most valuable resources for the examinations. Ergo, **it will be to your advantage to attend all class meetings.**
3. **Show sensitivity and respect** for your colleagues and the instructor. This includes *turning off all cell phones*. (Note: I will answer your phone if it rings. Also, if you are caught sending a text message, then you will be summarily dismissed. Ask about me.) For more details, please see [the College of Arts and Science Policy for Appropriate Use of Hand-held and Wireless Technology](#).
4. **Hand in assignments on the date they are due; take examinations on the date they are scheduled.** Please note that a **late assignment** will be penalized *one full letter grade* for each day it is overdue. A student may, however, submit an assignment late in the case of an emergency. In such cases, the student must call or email the instructor on the due date of the assignment and be prepared to provide documentation of the emergency. I will then determine the degree of penalty (if any) that will be assessed on late assignment.

A student who fails to take an exam on the scheduled date—and who also fails to offer proper documentation to explain her or his situation—**will have 25 points deducted** from whatever grade is earned on the make-up exam. In addition, any unauthorized use of personal

electronic devices—including but not limited to cell phones—during examinations will be taken as *prima facie* evidence of academic misconduct. I will immediately confiscate the examination of any student caught using such devices. The student will not be permitted to complete the test and the incident will be reported to University authorities.

5. **Upload the writing assignment to [TurnItIn.com](https://www.turnitin.com).**
6. **Inform the instructor of any concerns.**
7. **Make suggestions** on how the course could be improved.
8. **Abide by the Winthrop University [Code of Conduct](#).**

REQUIRED READINGS

Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, and Caroline J. Tolbert, *We the People: An Introduction to American Politics*, Core 11th Edition (Hereafter referred to as GLWT)

You can purchase the textbook at the Winthrop Bookstore or other bookstores or online vendors. Additional readings will be available via [Blackboard](#), the Internet, or placed on reserve at [Dacus Library](#).

STUDENT LEARNING ACTIVITIES, EVALUATION, AND GRADING SYSTEM

Students will participate in the following learning activities and will be evaluated and graded based on the criteria described below:

1. **Class Participation (10%):** Participation includes raising *relevant* questions, answering *relevant* questions, and, from time to time, taking part in in-class assignments or exercises.
2. **Quizzes (10%):** Quizzes will be both announced and unannounced. *Be prepared.*
3. **Examinations (60%):** There will be 3 examinations, each worth 20 percent of your final grade. Students must take exams *when they are scheduled* on the syllabus. Tests will begin at the appointed time and will be a combination of essay and multiple-choice questions. The comprehensive final examination, though, will be comprised of 75 multiple-choice questions.
4. **Writing Assignment (20%):** Each student will write a **"point/counter-point" essay** that explores two opposing sides of a current issue in American government and politics. The assignment must be **7 pages** in length (no more, no less), typed, double-spaced, stapled, and have standard margins and consecutively numbered pages. Students also must include a reference page that shall list **no fewer than 10 sources**. (Note: A cover sheet and/or reference page *will not* count toward the allotted number of pages.) Please do not use a font smaller than Times New Roman 12. **The paper must be formatted using the [APSA Style Manual](#).**

Roughly 5 to 6 pages of the assignment should be devoted to each side the issue (e.g., the case for the DREAM Act; the case against the DREAM Act). With the final section of the paper, the student must articulate her or his own perspective concerning the issue. Your argument must be persuasive, substantiated by relevant research, and well written. You might start the project by exploring sites such as [Opposing Viewpoints in Context](#), [Jstor](#), and [Google Scholar](#).

Note that the following sources are **inappropriate** for the assignment: Wikipedia, About.com, Infoplease.com, Spark Notes or other dubious online sources not vetted by an editor or peer reviewed (blogs, personal websites, and the like are examples); encyclopedias; textbooks.

Finally, students must upload their papers to [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com). Our class ID number is **18552594** and the password is **PLSC201**. **I will penalize assignments that fail to adhere to these basic guidelines.**

Grading:

- A** 93-100 = A **Designates work of superior quality**
90-92 = A- Class participation is voluntary, frequent, relevant, and reflects you have both read and thought about the material. Performance on exams is consistently strong; demonstrates complete mastery of facts and concepts. Written work is clear, well organized and thought provoking, and free of grammatical or mechanical errors.
- B** 87-89 = B+ **Designates work of high quality**
83-86 = B Class participation is voluntary, frequent, and reflects you are keeping up with the assigned materials. Performance on exams is strong; demonstrates mastery of facts and concepts. Written work reflects a good understanding of the issues and concepts. Writing is clear with minimal errors.
80-82 = B-
- C** 77-79 = C+ **Designates work that minimally meets the course requirements**
73-76 = C Class participation is occasional and/or rarely voluntary, with comments that reveal only a superficial grasp of issues and concepts. Performance on exams demonstrates acceptable degree of mastery of facts and concepts. Written work may contain arguments that are confusing, with minimal evidence of organization. Writing is marred by errors.
70-72 = C-
- D** 67-69 = D+ **Reflects minimal clarity and comprehension**
63-66 = D Class participation is minimal, never voluntary, and reveals you have either not read the assigned materials or did not understand the readings. Performance on exams demonstrates minimal mastery of facts and concepts. Written work is confusing, contradictory, repetitive, and/or not supported by either your own ideas or your sources. Writing is marred by errors.
60-62 = D-
- F** 0-59 = F **Unsatisfactory performance** along most (or all) measures.

The “N” Grade and S/U Issues

This semester, the deadline to withdraw from a course with an automatic grade of “N” is **Friday, October 19**. **Students may not withdraw from the course after this date without documenting extenuating circumstances to the Registrar.**

ASSIGNMENT AND EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

Examination No. 1	Week 6	Thursday	September 27
Writing Assignment	Week 10	Friday	October 26, 12pm
Examination No. 2	Week 12	Thursday	November 8
Examination No. 3 (Final)		Friday	December 7, 11:30am

SYLLABUS CHANGE POLICY AND COURSE CALENDAR

Note: The syllabus and/or course calendar will be adjusted to accommodate events that provide significant learning opportunities for students, weather conditions, etc. Additionally, a more detailed syllabus and/or course calendar may be issued at the instructor's discretion.

PART I: FOUNDATIONS

Week 1	Tue.	August 21	Introduction
	Thu.	August 23	American Political Culture GLWT Ch. 1; Hartz , Smith
Week 2	Tue.	August 28	The Founding – The Declaration of Independence and the Articles of Confederation GLWT Ch. 2, p. 39-52; D.O.I. ; A.O.C.
	Thu.	August 30	The Founding – The Constitution and the People GLWT Ch. 2, p. 52-73; Constitution ; Federalist 10 , 51 The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Week 3	Tue.	September 4	Federalism in American Government GLWT Ch. 3; Demographics of a Disaster Video: The Storm
	Thu.	September 6	Civil Liberties GLWT Ch. 4, p. 112-132
Week 4	Tue.	September 11	Civil Liberties GLWT Ch. 4, p. 133-151
	Thu.	September 13	Civil Liberties Civil Liberties (Gallup) ; Breslow Video: Spying on the Home Front
Week 5	Tue.	September 18	Civil Rights GLWT Ch. 5, p. 152-174 Videos: A Class Divided ; 60 Years after Brown...
	Thu.	September 20	Civil Rights King ; GLWT Ch. 5, p. 174-189; Cooper ; Childress Video: Freedom Summer
Week 6	Tue.	September 25	Civil Rights and Review for Exam No. 1 The Declaration of Sentiments ; GLWT Ch. 5, p. 189-197; Newport (Gallup) ; Patten
	Thu.	September 27	EXAM No. 1

PART II: POLITICS AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR

Week 7	Tue.	October 2	Political Socialization GLWT Ch. 6, p. 198-229
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	Thu.	October 4	Public Opinion GLWT Ch. 6, p. 229-247; Overby ; Oremus
Week 8	Tue.	October 9	The Media GLWT Ch. 7; Pew Video: News War – Part III
	Thu.	October 11	Political Participation GLWT Ch. 8, p. 286-310
Week 9	Tue.	October 16	Political Participation – Voting Behavior GLWT Ch. 8, p. 310-325; File ; Frey
	Thu.	October 18	Political Parties GLWT Ch. 9
Week 10	Tue	October 23	Campaigns and Elections GLWT Ch. 10, p. 368-382
	Thu.	October 25	Campaigns and Elections GLWT Ch. 10, p. 383-417 Video: Boogie Man
	Fri.	October 26	PAPER DUE at 12pm at 332 Bancroft
Week 11	Tue.	October 30	Groups and Interests GLWT Ch. 11, p. 418-436 Video: Big Sky, Big Money
	Thu.	November 1	Groups and Interests and Review for Exam No. 2 GLWT Ch. 11, p. 436-455
Week 12	Tue.	November 6	ELECTION DAY: NO CLASS
	Thu.	November 8	EXAM No. 2

PART III: INSTITUTIONS

Week 13	Tue.	November 13	The Legislative Branch GLWT Ch. 12, p. 456-480; Manning ; Bump ; DeSilver
	Thu.	November 15	The Legislative Branch GLWT Ch. 12, p. 480-503 Video: Is the U.S. Senate Broken?
Week 14	Tue.	November 20	The Executive Branch GLWT Ch. 13, p. 504-521
	Thu.	November 22	THANKSGIVING BREAK: NO CLASS
Week 15	Tue.	November 27	The Executive Branch GLWT Ch. 13, p. 521-543 Video: Cheney's Law

Thu. November 29 The Judicial Branch
[Hamilton](#); GLWT Ch. 15

Fri. Dec. 7, 11:30am FINAL EXAMINATION

INSTITUTIONAL SUPPORT SERVICES

Academic Success Center (ASC)

Winthrop's Academic Success Center is a free resource for all undergraduate students seeking to perform their best academically. The ASC offers a variety of personalized and structured resources that help students achieve academic excellence, such as tutoring, academic skill development (test taking strategies, time management counseling, and study techniques), and group/individual study spaces. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. **Tutoring for this specific course is offered through the office.** If you wish to request a tutor, you must attend ONE Tutee Seminar, offered every Friday until October 21st. Please contact the ASC at [803-323-3929](tel:803-323-3929) or success@winthrop.edu if you have any questions. For more information on ASC services, please visit www.winthrop.edu/success.

Dacus Library

Not everything can be found online. Dacus Library is the primary on-campus provider of scholarly information in all forms from print to electronic. To fulfill its mission, the library provides information quickly, efficiently, and in sufficient depth to promote excellence in all academic programs offered by the university. Additionally, the library maintains depository status for federal and state publications. For information on library hours call (803) 323-2362.

The Writing Center

Students who wish to improve their writing skills should seek assistance from the Writing Center, located at 242 Bancroft. Tutors works with students on an individual basis in all phases of the writing process and on academic and writing projects in any discipline. Call (803) 323-2138 for information regarding hours of operation and services.

The Office of Accessibility – Students with Disabilities/Need of Accommodations for Access:

Winthrop University is committed to providing access to education. If you have a condition which may adversely impact your ability to access academics and/or campus life, and you require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact the Office of Accessibility (OA) at (803) 323-3290, or accessibility@winthrop.edu as early as possible to discuss your concerns.

The Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (ONCA)

The Office of Nationally Competitive Awards is here to help you find and apply for scholarships, fellowships, and awards for everything from study abroad to graduate school tuition. Please check out the ONCA website at www.winthrop.edu/onca and fill out a Student Information Form, then email Dr. Leslie Bickford at onca@winthrop.edu to make an appointment. The right nationally competitive award is out there for YOU! Let's get started.

The Office of Victims Assistance

The Office of Victims Assistance (OVA) provides services to survivors of sexual assault, intimate partner violence, and stalking as well as educational programming to prevent these crimes from occurring. The staff assists all survivors, regardless of when they were victimized in obtaining counseling, medical care, housing options, legal prosecution, and more. In addition, the OVA helps students access support services for academic problems resulting from victimization. The OVA is located in 204 Crawford and can be reached at (803) 323-2206. In the case of an after-hours emergency, please call Campus Police at (803) 323-3333, or the local rape crisis center, Safe Passage, at their 24-hour hotline, (803) 329-2800.

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

The [Student Conduct Code](#) notes, “A fundamental tenet of all institutions of higher learning is academic honesty. Academic work must depend upon respect for an acknowledgement of the research and ideas of others. Misrepresentation of someone else’s work as one’s own is a most serious offense in any academic setting.” Winthrop University is no exception. In short, academic integrity is very important and misconduct, in any form, will not be condoned. If you have any questions regarding academic honesty and student conduct, please review **Section V** of the Student Conduct Code.

Political Science Department Statement on Plagiarism and Academic Misconduct

The Winthrop University Political Science department abhors all forms of academic misconduct, and faculty members aggressively investigate all incidents of suspected cheating. This includes, but is not limited to, using turnitin.com.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is by far the most common form of academic misconduct in the Political Science department. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- Using the words or ideas of others as one’s own;
- Reproducing, in whole or in part, principal ideas from a fellow student’s work;
- Granting a fellow student permission to copy one’s paper, or to reproduce some or all of its principal ideas;
- Quoting or paraphrasing material from sources without any citation;
- Quoting or paraphrasing material without sufficient and/or proper citation;
- Omitting some or all sources used in a paper; and
- Submitting a paper written for one course – whether in Political Science or another discipline – to meet a course requirement in a second course, *without the express permission of all instructors involved*. This is the case even though many paper topics may be relevant to several different courses.

All incidents of suspected academic misconduct are investigated with equal vigor.

When a faculty member suspects that a student engaged in academic misconduct, the faculty member will follow the appropriate procedures outlined in the *Student Handbook*. The faculty member will apply whatever sanctions s/he deems appropriate. Possible sanctions include, but are not limited to:

- Failing the assignment;
- Requiring a student to repeat an assignment for reduced credit;
- Requiring a student to repeat an assignment for no credit; or
- Failing the course.

Academic misconduct applies equally to required assignments and extra credit assignments.

Human Subjects Research and IRB Approval: Consistent with University Level Competency #2, Personal and Social Responsibility, all students engaging in research on human subjects will undergo [CITI training](#), and apply for approval by the [Winthrop University Institutional Review Board](#), even if their projects are exempt under 45CFR46. The applications must be complete and include all necessary signatures.

Any student seeking IRB approval may not begin to collect data for her/his research until s/he has received IRB approval or been informed that the research is exempt. Collecting data prior to receiving IRB approval is grounds for an academic misconduct charge.

All incidents of academic misconduct will be reported to the Department Chair, the Dean of Students, the Dean of Arts and Sciences and the student's academic advisor. The University may impose its own sanctions in addition to sanctions imposed by the faculty member or the department. The University may impose sanctions even after a student has graduated, and may include revoking a student's diploma.

In addition, students who engage in more than one incident of academic misconduct may be declared ineligible for departmental awards, ineligible for employment in the department or its affiliated programs, and ineligible to volunteer as a peer advisor.