

Winthrop University
Fall 2018
Political Science 201-003: American Government
Three credit hours
Mon./Wed., 11:00 AM-12:15 PM, Owens 202

Dr. John Holder

Bancroft 340 (Mailing address: Bancroft 346)

(803) 323-4665

holderj@winthrop.edu

Office Hours: MW 12:15-1:30 PM, TR 2:00-3:15 PM, or by appointment

<http://faculty.winthrop.edu/holderj/plsc201003.html>

Turnitin class ID: 18659370, enrollment key: holder201

This class will examine the structures and processes of the American governmental and political systems. We will study the Constitution and the philosophical basis of the American republic; the institutions of American government; institutions outside government such as political parties, interest groups and the media; the election process; and the public policy process, which involves all of these ideas and institutions. The objective is for you to learn more than you already know about how the government and political systems of the United States work, and why you should care about it, both of which are necessary for the development of informed, responsible, politically empowered and effective members of society. You will be exposed to a wide variety of issues and political viewpoints – from the readings, from the lectures, and from your peers in class discussions. I ask that you consider them with an open mind and respond to them respectfully even when you disagree. Whatever your political beliefs are, or whatever they may become, the successful completion of this class will give you a better understanding of how governmental decisions affect you, and will make you a more knowledgeable and better-informed citizen, and a more articulate advocate for your viewpoint.

Political Science 201 satisfies Winthrop University's Constitution requirement and General Education requirement in Social Sciences. This class also contributes to student achievement of Winthrop University Level Competency 3: Winthrop graduates understand the interconnected nature of the world and the time in which they live; and Competency 4: Winthrop graduates communicate effectively.

Reading materials:

Susan Welch, John Gruhl, Sue Thomas and Maryanne Borrelli, *Understanding American Government*, Wadsworth Cengage Learning, 14th edition (2014). This is available for your choice of purchase or rental in print or as an e-book through the Winthrop University Bookstore, or online. Please bring this book (or have access to it) to every class meeting.

The Articles of Confederation: http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/artconf.asp.

Jennifer E. Manning, "Membership of the 115th Congress: A Profile," Congressional Research Service, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44762.pdf>

United Nations General Assembly, Universal Declaration of Human Rights:
<http://www.un.org/en/documents/udhr/index.shtml>.

Additional readings may be assigned throughout the semester and posted on the class Webpage. This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.

Grading:

The course will use Winthrop University's +/- grading system. Final grades will be assigned as follows. (I reserve the right to round up if you are less than half a point from a higher letter grade.)

93-100 = A

90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

67-69 = D+

63-66 = D

60-62 = D-

59 or below = F.

Grading factors:

20% each: Two midterm exams, in class on Wed., Sept. 26 and Mon., Oct. 22.

30%: Writing assignment, due to turnitin.com before the beginning of the last class on Mon., Dec. 3.

30%: Final exam, 8:00-10:30 AM, Thurs., Dec. 6.

Writing Assignment:

Visit <http://usa.abalancingact.com/>. Compose a balanced budget proposal for the next fiscal year, through some combination of spending cuts and revenue increases. Write an essay (minimum 1500 words) discussing your policy choices (for example, if you choose to cut Medicaid, discuss the impact of that choice).

The exams will include a combination of multiple choice questions, short answers/definitions, and essay questions. A review guide for each exam will be posted approximately one week in advance, and the last class before each exam will include time for review. Makeup exams will not be given without documentation of extenuating circumstances. The final exam is not cumulative, but assumes knowledge of concepts covered earlier in the semester.

Administrative announcements:

Class cancellations, changes in schedule, guest speakers, etc., will be announced via the class listserv, to which you will be automatically subscribed through your winthrop.edu e-mail address if you register for the class before the beginning of the semester. If you register after classes have

begun, you will need to manually subscribe to the listserv using the instructions at <http://www.winthrop.edu/technology/default.aspx?id=7081>

The class is plsc201003. Check your WU e-mail frequently. You may use the listserv for discussion or to share information with classmates, review for exams, or ask questions about course material. Note that anything you post to the listserv will be seen by everyone in the class.

Attendance:

Attendance will be taken by means of a sign-in sheet circulated at the beginning of each class meeting. In accordance with Winthrop's attendance policies, if you are absent without excuse from seven of the 28 class meetings, you will receive an N or an F, as appropriate. In this class, signing in an absent classmate is considered an act of academic dishonesty. I do not require documentation for absences unless you miss an exam or want to submit a paper late without penalty.

Technology:

You are welcome to use a computer to take notes in class. However, this class follows the College of Arts and Sciences policy on use of technology in the classroom. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic communication devices during class meetings, except when authorized. If you need to leave your phone on during a particular class for emergency reasons, please let me know in advance.

The use of any kind of electronic device, including a phone, iPod or Internet access, during an exam constitutes academic dishonesty.

<http://www.winthrop.edu/uploadedFiles/artscience/AppropriateUseOfHandHeldWirelessTechnologyApprovedPolicyMar2010.pdf>

Academic Honesty and Integrity:

Any act of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the class. This class follows the policies of Winthrop University and the Department of Political Science, which are linked below, on academic misconduct and plagiarism. Please be aware of these policies and abide by them.

In addition to the failing grade imposed by the instructor, academic misconduct of any kind will result in referral to the Dean of Students for possible additional sanctions.

Political Science Department policy statement:

<http://www.winthrop.edu/cas/politicalscience/default.aspx?id=19401>

Office of Academic Affairs policy statement:

<http://www2.winthrop.edu/public/policy/fullpolicy.aspx?pid=252>

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.

OA Staff (located on the third floor of the Bancroft Annex):

- Tina Vires – Program Director, extension 6174; virest@winthrop.edu
- Shardae Nelson– Assistant Coordinator, extension 6188; nelsons@winthrop.edu
- Hope Williams – Administrative Specialist, extension 3290; accessibility@winthrop.edu, Bancroft 307
- From off campus – 803/323-3290

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

(This schedule is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.)

Wed., Aug. 22: Introduction to the Course

Week of Aug. 27: The Purpose of Government; American Political Thought (Welch, Introduction and Ch. 1); Declaration of Independence (Welch, pp. 503-504); Articles of Confederation (online, linked above)

Mon., Sept. 3: *No Class – Labor Day.*

Wed., Sept. 5/Mon., Sept. 10: The Constitution (Welch, Ch. 2 and pp. 505-513); Federalist Papers #10 and #51 (Welch, pp. 514-518)

Wed., Sept. 12/Mon., Sept. 17: Universal Declaration of Human Rights (online, linked above); Congress (Welch, Ch. 9; Manning, online, linked above).

Wed., Sept. 19/Mon., Sept. 24: The Presidency; The Bureaucracy (Welch, Chs. 10-11).

Wed., Sept. 26: *First Exam.*

Mon., Oct. 1: The Judiciary (Welch, Ch. 12)

Wed., Oct. 3/Mon., Oct. 8: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Welch, Chs. 13-14)

Wed., Oct. 10/Wed., Oct. 17: Political Parties, Campaigns, Elections, and Voting (Welch, Chs. 7-8)

Mon., Oct. 15: *No Class – Fall Break.*

Wed., Oct. 17: The Media (Welch, Ch. 5)

Mon., Oct. 22: *Second Exam.*

Wed., Oct. 24/Mon., Oct. 29: Public Opinion; Interest Groups (Welch, Chs. 4 and 6)

Wed., Oct. 31/Mon., Nov. 5: State and Local Government (Welch, Ch. 3)

Wed., Nov. 7/Mon., Nov. 12: Health Care, Economic and Environmental Policy (Welch, Focus On...Health Care Reform”, "Focus On...Spending and Taxing” and “Focus On...Environmental Policy”)

Wed., Nov. 14/Mon., Nov. 19: Social Security and Welfare Policy (reading TBA)

Wed., Nov. 21: *No Class – Thanksgiving Break.*

Week of Nov. 26: Foreign Policy (reading TBA)

Mon., Dec. 3: *Last class.* Papers due. Class evaluation administered in class (please bring an Internet-capable device); review for Final Exam.

Thursday, Dec. 6, 8:00-10:30 AM: *Final Exam.*

Additional Winthrop University Resources:

Winthrop’s Office of Nationally Competitive Awards (ONCA) identifies and assists highly motivated and talented students to apply for nationally and internationally competitive awards, scholarships, fellowships, and unique opportunities both at home and abroad. ONCA gathers and disseminates award information and deadlines across the campus community, and serves as a resource for students, faculty, and staff throughout the nationally competitive award nomination and application process. ONCA is located in Dinkins 222A. Please fill out an online information form at the bottom of the ONCA webpage www.winthrop.edu/onca and email onca@winthrop.edu for more information.

Winthrop’s Academic Success Center (ASC) 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), group and individual study spaces, and academic coaching. The ASC is located on the first floor of Dinkins, Suite 106. Please contact the ASC at 803-323-3929 or success@winthrop.edu or www.winthrop.edu/success.

Winthrop’s 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 hot-line, (803)329-2800. For more information please visit: <http://www.winthrop.edu/victimsassistance/>