

# University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

## American Government

Political Science 1010 Sec 3 (3 credit hours)  
Fall, 2014  
Office: Fletcher Hall 417E

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CRN #: 21726

<http://www.utc.edu/political-science-public-administration-nonprofit-management/profiles/nfw641.php>

Class Meeting Time: MWF 11:00 a.m. –11:50 a.m.

Location: Fletcher 100

Office Hours: M, W, F: 9:30-10:30; TTH, 9:30-10:30; or by  
appointment

### TEXTS

The following text for the course is available at the UTC bookstore and should be purchased or rented at your earliest convenience:

Susan Welch, John Gruhl, Sue Thomas, and Maryanne Borrelli, *Understanding American Government*. Fourteenth Edition (Wadsworth, 2012)

The following text is on reserve at the library circulation desk: Herbert M. Levine, *Point-Counterpoint. Readings in American Government*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. There are two assignments from this book of readings listed on the syllabus below. You can also access these pages on Blackboard under Syllabus.

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The foundations, institutions, processes and policies of American national government with attention to the Constitution and such topics as elections, political and civil rights and liberties, federalism, public policy, public opinion, political culture, interest groups, and the role of citizens in governance. Attention will be paid to how the field of Political Science, as a behavioral science, yields important insights into American politics beyond what day to day news coverage provides.

### EXPLANATION OF COURSE CONTENT

Political Science 101 fulfills one of the general education requirements in the category of Behavioral and Social Sciences. The course has six objectives. The first is to familiarize students with the theories of several of the most important political philosophers who have discussed the nature of politics and government. The second is to ensure comprehension of the key principles of the American system, including natural rights, popular sovereignty, separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, war powers, civil liberties, and judicial review. The third is to ensure that students become familiar with the structure and workings of the American political system, including the balance of power between the central government in Washington and state and municipal governments. The fourth is to analyze the powers of the modern presidency, the Congress, and the

federal courts. The fifth is to understand the rules of American elections, with special attention to the presidential nominating process and the functioning of the Electoral College in the selection of Presidents. The sixth is to familiarize students with behavioral science perspectives on American politics, including the devices and resources that political scientists, campaign strategists, and media outlets utilize to measure public opinion and predict election outcomes.

### FORMAT

The course will be presented in a lecture format. Lectures will supplement rather than repeat the course text. Examination questions will test your understanding of the material presented in both lectures and course readings.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

There will be four examinations in the course. Two of the exams will consist exclusively of multiple choice and true/false questions. The other two exams will be part essay and part multiple choice and true/false questions. The essay portions will be weighted the same for grade determination as each set of multiple choice and true/false questions, resulting in six grades to be averaged at the end of the course. Twenty percent of the questions on exam four will repeat questions from exams one, two, and three. At the discretion of the instructor, announced quizzes may provide an additional grade component beyond the six components mentioned above.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY

Doing well in this course will require regular attendance. Moreover, you will learn things in class that will not appear on exams and will not therefore affect your grade, but will nonetheless be part of your overall education. Thus the following attendance policy will be used. More than seven unexcused absences will result in the reduction of the course grade by one letter, i.e. an A grade will be reduced to a B etc. More than twelve unexcused absences will result in a reduction of two letter grades, i.e. an A grade will be reduced to a C etc. More than twenty absences will result in a reduction of three letter grades, i.e. an A will be reduced to a D etc. More than twenty five unexcused absences will result in an F for the course.

Students requesting excused absences as a result of illness or other situations precluding attendance on a given day must send an e-mail to the instructor explaining the reason for the absence. The need for such excused absences must also be documented in a follow-up conversation.

### HOW TO DO WELL IN THE COURSE

Like all freshman-level survey courses presenting basic facts about a given discipline, this is a challenging course with a large amount of information to be mastered. To do well, considerable time and effort will be required. You will need to read assigned portions of the text very carefully, and you will also need to record and comprehend the information presented in lectures.

You will need to compile notes on course lectures, and it may be useful to compare your notes with those of some other students enrolled in the class in order to ensure that your own notes are comprehensive. You should study lecture notes regularly rather than waiting until just before course exams to review them. In addition, all assignments should be read in advance of the class period for which they are listed on the syllabus.

### MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS

**Make-up examinations will be given only to students presenting valid and authenticated reasons for missing an examination.** In addition, notification of absence on an examination day must be communicated to the instructor by telephone (425-4229) or email message prior to the examination.

### COMMUNICATION

To enhance student services, the University uses your UTC email address for all communications. Please check your UTC email on a regular basis. If you have problems with accessing your UTC email, contact the Call Center at (423) 425-4000.

The course syllabus is available on Blackboard. Blackboard will also be utilized for the posting of short reading assignments that are not in the course text.

### ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

**ADA STATEMENT: Attention:** If you are a student with a disability (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, etc.) and think that you might need special assistance or a special accommodation in this class or any other class, call the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 425-4006 or come by the office, 102 Frist Hall <http://www.utc.edu/Administration/DisabilityResourceCenter/>.

### COUNSELING CENTER STATEMENT

If you find that personal problems, career indecision, study and time management difficulties, etc. are adversely affecting your successful progress at UTC, please contact the Counseling and Career Planning Center at 425-4438.

### HONOR CODE PLEDGE

UTC has an honor court system to ensure that the highest standards of academic integrity are maintained. The honor code pledge that obligates UTC students is as follows: I pledge that I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid on any test or assignment. I understand that plagiarism constitutes a serious instance of unauthorized aid. I further pledge that I exert every effort to insure that the Honor Code is upheld by others and that I will actively support the establishment and continuance of a campus-wide climate of honor and integrity.

### COURSE OUTLINE

August 18: Introduction to the Course

**Topic I: Philosophical Perspectives on Politics: The Theories of Plato, Locke, and Madison on Authoritarianism, Natural Rights, and Factions**

August 20: Plato (427-347 B.C.E.) on Justice and Rule by Elites

**Reading:** “Plato and the Value of Justice,” on-line at [www.philosophypages.com/hy/2h.htm](http://www.philosophypages.com/hy/2h.htm), pp. 1-9

August 22: John Locke (1634-1704) on Natural Rights, the Social Contract, and the Origins of Liberal Theory

**Reading:** “Locke: Social Order,” on-line at [www.philosophypages.com/hy/4n.htm](http://www.philosophypages.com/hy/4n.htm), pp. 1-6

August 25: The Theory of Interest Group Politics: James Madison (1751-1836) on Republics, Factions, and Pluralism

**Reading:** *Federalist Paper* #10 in Welch, Appendix C, pp. 514-516

## **Topic II: Founding the New Nation: The Articles of Confederation and the Constitution**

**General Reading for Topic II:** Welch, chapter 2, pp. 34-51; full text of the original, unamended Constitution, in Welch, Appendix B, pp. 618-623

August 27: America’s First Constitution: the Articles of Confederation

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 37-39

**August 29: No Class: Instructor Out of Town to Attend Professional Meeting**

**September 1: No Class: Labor Day Holiday**

September 3, 5, 8: Drafting the Constitution: The Major Decisions of the American Constitutional Convention, 1787

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 39-47

September 10: Ratifying the Constitution; Amending the Constitution

**Reading:** Welch, p. 47-51; Constitution; Articles V and VII, in Welch, Appendix B

**September 12: Exam I**

## **Topic III: Elections**

**General Reading for Topic III:** Welch, chapter 8, pp. 172-217

September 15: Selecting Presidential Nominees: The System of Primaries and Caucuses

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 187-194

September 17, 19, 22, 24: The Electoral College Method of Electing the President

**Reading:** Welch, 194-210; A Proposal to Abolish the Electoral College by Richard Durbin, in Levine, ed. (on reserve), pp. 184-191; A Defense of the Electoral College by Judith Best, in Levine, ed. (on reserve), pp. 191-196

## **Topic IV: The Presidency**

**General Reading for Topic IV:** Welch, chapter 10, pp. 253-267; 274-281

September 26: Presidential Powers

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 264-266

September 29, Oct. 1, 3: War Powers of the President: The Vietnam War, the War Powers Resolution of 1973, and Congressional Authorizations of Military Actions in Iraq and Afghanistan

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 336-338; War Powers Resolution on-line at: [http://www.policyalmanac.org/world/archive/war\\_powers\\_resolution.shtml](http://www.policyalmanac.org/world/archive/war_powers_resolution.shtml) and Tonkin Gulf Resolution on-line at <http://www.hbci.com/~tgort/tonkin.htm>

## **October 6: Exam II**

### **Topic V: Public Opinion**

**General Reading for Topic V:** Welch, chapter 4, pp. 74-93

October 8: What Do You Believe?

October 10: What Do Polls Measure and How Do Polls Affect Campaigns?

### **Topic VI: The Judiciary**

**General Reading for Topic VI:** Welch, chapter 13, pp. 310-335

October 13: The Role of the Judiciary in American Society

**Reading:** <http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa78.htm>

October 15: Origins of Judicial Review: *Marbury v. Madison* (1803)

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 329-331; [www.lawnix.com/cases/marbury-madison.html](http://www.lawnix.com/cases/marbury-madison.html)

October 17, 22: Interpreting the Constitution: The Competing Theories of Original Intent and the Living Constitution

**Reading:** J. Clifford Wallace, “The Case for Judicial Restraint,” in Levine pp. 280-288 (on reserve and on Blackboard); Jeffrey Shaman, “The Supreme Court’s Proper and Historic Function,” in Levine, pp. 289-296 (on reserve and on Blackboard )

**October 20: No Class: Fall Break**

## **Topic VII: Federalism**

**General Reading for Topic VII:** Welch, chapter 3, pp. 58-63

October 24, 27, 29, 31: Supreme Court Decisions Defining the Relative Powers of the National Government and the State Governments, 1819 to the present

## **November 3: Exam III**

## **Topic VIII: Civil Liberties**

**General Reading for Topic VIII:** Welch, chapter 13, pp. 338-372

November 5, 7: Freedom of Speech and the Press

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 341-351

November 10, 12: The Constitution and Religion

**Reading:** Welch, 351-358

November 14: *Griswold v. CT* and the Right to Privacy

**Reading:** Welch, p. 363-364

November 17: *Roe v. Wade* and Abortion Rights

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 364-367

November 19, 21: Rights of Gays

**Reading:** Welch, pp. 367-371

November 24, Dec 1: Catch-Up Days

**November 26, 28: No Class: Thanksgiving Vacation**  
**Exam IV: December 8: 10:30-12:30**

