

American Politics

Marquette University

POSC 20 | Section 1003 | Spring 2009

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Janairo
Class Hours: M/W/F 1:00–1:50 p.m., Wehr Physics 209
Office Hours: M/W/F 12:00–1:00 p.m. or by appointment

Office: Wehr Physics 449
Phone: 414.288.4431
Email: elizabeth.janairo@marquette.edu

Description & Goals: We will explore the problems of organizing and using power at the national level in the United States. In doing so, we will examine the political principles, institutions, participants and policies which sustain and constrain American democracy. By the end of the semester, students should be able to *identify and describe* the parts of the US governmental system and how policy is made; *explain* concepts and debates from the Founding period and the key parts of the Constitution; *examine* how power is wielded, influenced by and denied to different actors and groups; *understand and participate in* current political events and issues that relate to our class discussions; *improve* creative and critical thinking and *sharpen* writing skills.

Required Texts: Books are available at BookMarq or online; please try to get the latest, 7th shorter edition of *WTP*.

- Ginsberg, Lowi & Weir. (2006). *We the People: An Introduction to American Politics*, Shorter, 7th edition. NY: W.W. Norton & Co. Please visit the textbook website (<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/polisci/wtp7e/full/>) that can be used for practice quizzes and some assignments.
- *United States Constitution*, Pocket Constitution, Oxford University Press.
- Students are required to read the *New York Times* and/or *Wall Street Journal* at least weekly (see D2L for links).
- Additional readings will be either Internet-accessible, on reserve, or provided by the instructor.

Course Requirements Breakdown:

Participation/Quizzes	15%
Writing Assignments	20%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	20%
Exam 3 (Final Exam)	30%

Marquette University Grading Scale:

A	93 - 100	C	73 - 77
AB	88 - 92	CD	68 - 72
B	83 - 87	D	60 - 67
BC	78 - 82	F	59 & less

Please note: You cannot pass this class if you do not turn in both exams and all assignments.

Participation includes attendance, informed participation in discussions, in-class journal entries and other activities. Every student is expected to speak in class regularly, asking/answering questions or sharing ideas and reflections. If you are uncomfortable talking in class, you must see me (or email me) during the first two weeks of class so together we can develop a strategy for your effective participation. Attendance is not optional and I take roll at every class; excessive absences may lead to your termination from the course. **Quizzes** are intended to encourage your reading of the textbook. Five multiple choice questions are given for each of the assigned textbook chapters (see schedule).

Writing Assignments: There will be two short take-home writing assignments. Topics and instructions for these assignments will be provided. Each assignment is worth 10% of your final grade.

Exams 1 & 2: Each of the first two exams covers textbook assignments and lectures/discussions and consists of objective questions (multiple choice, true/false, short answer, fill-in-the-blank) and at least one essay question.

Exam 3 (Final Exam): Approximately 1/3 of the final exam will be cumulative and the other 2/3 will cover the textbook assignments and lectures/discussions from the midterm exam. The final exam will consist of objective questions (multiple choice, true/false, short answer, fill-in-the-blank) and several essay questions.

Policy on Missed Quizzes/Exams/Tardy Assignments: Make-up exams are all-essay and allowed only with a verifiable emergency/medical excuse. Quizzes missed due to unexcused absences cannot be made up. Late writing assignments will lose half a grade per day (including weekends), for example, an A assignment will earn an AB after one day late, a B after two days late, a BC after three days late, and so on.

Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism: Plagiarism is the act of submitting another author's work as your own. This includes cutting and pasting text from the Internet, and copying sentences or phrases from other sources without citing them. Plagiarism also includes using other people's *ideas* as your own without citing them (even if you do not use their exact words). The University-wide policy regarding academic honesty is found on pages 46-49 of the 2008-2009 Undergraduate Bulletin. Please see the instructor if you have any questions or need help with correct citation practices.

Assessment: Grades will be based on the quality of work produced by each student for each requirement. The *Grading Criteria* for writing assignments and essay exam answers are provided below. Judgment of the overall quality of a student's performance rests with the instructor.

GRADING CRITERIA: Exam Essay Questions	
<i>Strong</i>	<i>Weak</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct and complete information/knowledge of textbook, lectures and class discussions. • Clearly organized and well written with correct grammar and punctuation. • Offers thoughtful, critical and creative analysis that goes beyond mere summary of information. • Provides appropriate and plentiful examples or explanations of main points. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect or incomplete information/knowledge of textbook, lectures and class discussions. • Unorganized, rambling or wordy; many grammatical/punctuation mistakes. • Merely repeats or summarizes lecture notes or textbook; only superficial analysis. • Provides inappropriate or too few examples or explanations of main points.
GRADING CRITERIA: Writing Assignments	
<i>Strong</i>	<i>Weak</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follows instructions/checklist. • Clearly organized [intro/body/conclusion]; correct grammar and punctuation—few if any mistakes; shows evidence of having been proofread. • Well written, natural voice and clear style. • Shows familiarity with the texts, frequent and correct paraphrasing direct quotes; correct citation format. • Succinct and appropriate examples; thorough explanation of main points. • Thoughtful and original analysis, not mere summary; shows student has genuinely grappled with the question/issue/topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not follow instructions/checklist. • Unorganized, lacks structure, many grammar and punctuation errors; sloppy writing, not proofread. • Rambling, wordy style; attempts to sound too formal. • Lacks direct references to texts; too many long, direct quotes (not enough paraphrasing); incorrect citation format. • Incorrect or inappropriate examples; not enough explanation of main points. • Superficial analysis or mere summary; doesn't show student has grappled with the question/issue/topic.

My Availability: I take my scheduled office hours very seriously. Any change in my schedule will be announced in advance in class or by group email. I will be in my office on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 12:00 to 12:50 p.m., but I am usually on campus from 9 to 11 a.m. as well.

If you have *any* questions or concerns throughout the semester, please contact me. If necessary, I can make arrangements to be on campus at a time convenient to you. ***The best way to reach me is by email or stopping by my office during office hours.*** Remember that you are an important part of the Marquette community! If I can't assist you with a problem, I will help you find the person who can.

D2L (Desire2Learn): There is a D2L website for this course containing the syllabus, handouts and helpful links. You will be required to participate in an online discussion and to turn in a soft (electronic) copy [in addition to a hard copy] of each take-home writing assignment using the D2L dropbox. For these reasons, please contact me early in the semester if you have trouble accessing this course's D2L site.

Class File Box: To minimize the time spent passing out and turning in papers and assignments, I will keep a file box at the entrance to the classroom. This box contains a file folder for each student in alphabetical order by last name. Please use this file box to turn in assignments and to pick up graded papers, assignments and quizzes. If you are absent, I will place whatever handouts you missed in your folder. New handouts will be placed next to the file box at the beginning (or end) of class. You are responsible for checking your folder regularly and making sure you get a copy of all handouts. Electronic copies of all handouts will be posted on D2L.

Student Information/Syllabus Receipt Acknowledgement Form: Please read this syllabus carefully again between now and the next class meeting, fill out the attached form, and turn it in at the next class period (you can put it in your file box folder!).

Class Schedule

The following schedule is tentative and may be altered by the instructor as needed during the semester. Most of my courses include at least one revised schedule as I try to customize the timing and activities to each new group of students. A copy of the revised version of the schedule will be clearly marked, distributed to each student and posted on D2L.

Week 1: Citizenship & Political Culture

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 1

- M Jan 12: Introductions
- W Jan 14: Discuss Political Culture
- F Jan 16: **Practice Quiz**, Discuss Political Culture/American Founding

Week 2: American Founding

Reading Assignments: WTP Chap 2 & Federalist 10, 51
Declaration of Independence/US Constitution

- M Jan 19: NO CLASS: MLK Jr. HOLIDAY*
- W Jan 21: Discuss Founding, **Quiz 1**
- F Jan 23: Discuss Founding

Week 3: Federalism

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 3

- M Jan 26: Discuss Federalism, **Quiz 2**
- W Jan 28: Discuss Federalism
- F Jan 30: Discuss Federalism

Week 4: Civil Liberties

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 4

- M Feb 2: Discuss Civil Liberties, **Quiz 3**
- W Feb 4: Discuss Civil Liberties
- F Feb 6: Discuss Civil Liberties

Week 5: Civil Rights

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 5

- M Feb 9: Discuss Civil Rights, **Quiz 4**
- W Feb 11: Discuss Civil Rights, *Review*
- F Feb 13: **EXAM 1**

Week 6: Public Opinion

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 6

- M Feb 16: Discuss Public Opinion, **Quiz 5**
- W Feb 18: Discuss Public Opinion
- F Feb 20: Discuss Public Opinion

Week 7: Media

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 7

- M Feb 23: Discuss Media, **Quiz 6**
- W Feb 25: Discuss Media
- F Feb 27: Discuss Media

Writing Assignment 1 Due

Week 8: Media Continued

Reading Assignment: Lincoln's Second Inaugural

- M Mar 2: Conclusion of Media Discussion
- W Mar 4: Discuss Lincoln's 2nd Inaugural Speech
- F Mar 6: Mid-Semester Reflections

Week 9: Political Participation

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 8

- M Mar 16: Political Participation In-Class Activity
- W Mar 18: Discuss Political Participation, **Quiz 7**
- F Mar 20: Discuss Political Participation

Week 10: Parties and Elections

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapters 9 & 10

- M Mar 23: Discuss Political Parties, **Quiz 8 (chaps 9 & 10)**
- W Mar 25: Discuss Parties/Elections
- F Mar 27: Discuss Elections

Week 11: Interest Groups

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 11

- M Mar 30: Discuss Interest Groups, **Quiz 9**
- W Apr 1: Discuss Interest Groups, *Review*
- F Apr 3: **EXAM 2**

Week 12: Congress

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 12

- M Apr 6: Discuss Congress, **Quiz 10**
- W Apr 8: Discuss Congress
- F Apr 10: No Class: EASTER BREAK*

Week 13: Presidency

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 13

- M Apr 13: No Class: EASTER BREAK*
- W Apr 15: Discuss the Presidency
- F Apr 17: Discuss the Presidency, **Quiz 11**

Week 14 Courts

Reading Assignment: WTP Chapter 15

- M Apr 20: Discuss the Courts
Writing Assignment 2 Due
- W Apr 22: Discuss the Courts, **Quiz 12**
- F Apr 24: Discuss the Courts

Week 15: Semester Wrap Up

Reading Assignment: To Be Announced

- M Apr 27: Discuss reading assignment
- W Apr 29: Review for Final Exam
- F May 1: Course conclusion

FINAL EXAM

Monday, May 4

8:00 – 10:00 AM

Wehr Physics 153

SPRING BREAK: March 9 - 13