



Shih Chien University

STP Program (July 01-Aug 02)

PLSC 100 Foundations of American Political Systems

Course Outline

Course Code: PLSC 100

Instructor: TBA

Home Institution: TBA

Office Hours: TBA

Email: TBA

Credits: 4

Class Hours:

This course will have 144 class hours, including 50 lecture hours, professor 30 office hours, 20-hour TA discussion sessions, 10-hour review sessions, 34-hour extra classes.

Prerequisites: N/A

Course Description:

This course is designed to be an introduction to American government and politics. We will cover the historical foundations, institutions, and political processes of the United States. The purpose of this class is to teach you about the institutions, practices, and history of politics and government in the United States. This course will cover the Constitution, the three branches of the federal government, interest groups, public opinion, campaigns, elections, and political parties. For each subject, we will examine some of the leading perspectives, and we will incorporate current events and our personal

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experiences.

Course Objectives:

- Understand the basic concepts of democratic thought
- Analyze the formation, concepts, and components of the United States Constitution
- Investigate the idea of federalism and explain the role of states and the national government in America's political environment
- Explore America's political culture and examine the traits and beliefs of the American voter
- Identify America's major political parties, the core beliefs, and the impact special interest groups can have on their actions
- Understand the electoral process in the United States
- Examine the components and functions of state government
- Analyze the organization and purpose of the Legislative, Executive, and Judicial branches of government
- Understand the role and structure of the federal bureaucracy
- Investigate the modern media and its impact on public opinion
- Examine the concepts of civil rights and civil liberties and their impact on American society

Required Course Materials:

American Government 2 Edition, OpenStax, Senior Contributing Author:

Glen Krutz, University of Oklahoma

<https://assets.openstax.org/oscms-prodcms/media/documents/american-gove>

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Grading & Evaluation:

Discussion Posts: Weekly Discussion posts, these are worth 25% of your final grade. One Discussion post per week (5% each).

Quizzes: There will be 3 quizzes based on readings and discussions. Quizzes will be administered at the end of weeks 1, 2 and 4. Quizzes are worth 25% of the total grade (8.33% each).

Midterm: A multiple-choice, T/F and short answer examination will be given approximately halfway through the course. The test will cover all readings, lectures, and discussion up to the date of the test. It is worth 25% of the total grade.

Final examination: The final examination may include multiple choice, T/F, and short essay questions. The test will cover all readings, lectures, and discussion up to the date of the test, that is, it is cumulative, but will focus on the assigned word since the mid-term. It will be administered the last day of class and is worth 25% of the final grade.

Course Policies:

Students are required to participate in a consistent manner, being respectful of classmate's opinions and contributions. Check email frequently; additional readings and perhaps announcements will be distributed through email. Please use email to tell me of an illness or to set up a time to meet.

Grading System (1 ~ 100):

Quality Points	Grade	Percentage %
4	A	80-100
3	B	70-79
2	C	60-69
1	D	50-59
0	E	0-49

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Course Schedule

Week 1: Read Chapters 1-2, Chapter 1 American Government and Civic Engagement, and Chapter 2 The Constitution and Its Origins, Chapter 3 American Federalism. Watch Zoom Lectures for Chapters 1 and 2.

Quiz 1

Week 2: Read Chapters 3, 4 and 5; Chapter 3 American Federalism, Chapter 4 Civil Liberties, Chapter 5 Civil Rights. Watch Zoom Lectures for Chapters 3-5.

Quiz 2

Week 3: Read Chapters 6, 7 and 8; Chapter 6 The Politics of Public Opinion, Chapter 7 Voting and Elections, and Chapter 8 The Media. Watch Zoom Lectures for Chapters 6-8.

Mid-Term Exam

The Mid-Term exam covers Chapters 1-8.

Week 4: Read Chapters 9, 10 and 11, Chapter 9 Political Parties, Chapter 10 Interest Groups and Lobbying, and Chapter 11 Congress. Watch Zoom Lectures for Chapters 8-11.

Quiz 3

Week 5: Read Chapters 12, 13 and 14; Chapter 12 The Presidency, Chapter 13 The Courts, and Chapter 14 State and Local Government. Watch Zoom Lectures for Chapters 12-14.

Final Exam

The Final Exam is cumulative. But the focus is on Chapters 9-14.

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