



Introduction to Political Science-POLS 101 Fall 2022

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Course Description

In what ways is the next midterm election important to my life? How do people decide who to vote for? How is the UK government different from the government in the US? Why aren't governments able to stop drug trafficking, arms smuggling, and other ills of modern society? Politics affects almost every aspect of our lives. However, politics can seem like a complicated world for those not familiar with it. A main purpose of this course is to make students informed citizens who can responsibly participate in the political process. This course can also serve as the foundation for those planning to take additional political science classes. More specifically, this course will introduce students to the central ideas, institutions, and practices which structure government in the United States and other countries. The first part of this class focuses on understanding basic concepts, the relationships/tensions between society and government, and institutions of government. The second part of this course analyzes the nation-state in the context of globalization.

Our course goals are for each student to:

1. Understand the meaning of politics and its implications for students' lives.
2. Realize the different ways in which society and government interact with each other.
3. Comprehend the roles and functions of different institutions of government in the US and other countries.
4. Know how globalization affects different countries and poses new challenges to them.

Required Readings

- a. *Political Science: A Comparative Introduction, 8th edition or earlier*, by Rod Hague and Martin Harrop (Palgrave). This is the primary textbook for this class and should be available at the bookstore. This book is identified in the **Course Schedule and Outline** as (Textbook).
- b. Other required readings are indicated in the **Course Schedule and Outline** as (WesternOnline). To access the readings, you need to go to the **Online Units** from the course homepage.
- c. Films are part of the required readings and questions on them will appear on exams.
 - a. *Wetback*: Can be purchased at Amazon or borrowed from Netflix.
 - b. *Lord of War*: can also be rented at regular video stores or online at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mkzgo1mj4Pg&has_verified=1.

Examinations & Course Requirements

a. Unit Assignments

Students are expected to complete assigned readings for each unit of class, and to read and analyze additional materials posted on the class website. Based on readings and additional class materials, students will complete 5 unit assignments consisting of a set of questions or short analytical-essay. These weekly assignments will be worth 8.75 points each.



NOTE: For a complete schedule, please see table below.

b. Quizzes

There will be 5 written unit quizzes (worth up to 11.25 points each), accounting for 56.5%. These quizzes will be composed of multiple choice questions. The objective of the quizzes is to test your knowledge of core concepts and information covered in assigned readings.



NOTE: For a complete schedule, please see table below.

c. Report

Students will write a research report (15 points) on a major challenge facing the Biden administration (economic crisis, wars, immigration reform, or another topic in agreement with the instructor). This report should be 4 pages in length and summarize the issue chosen, possible solutions and their potential impact, and a policy recommendation.



NOTE: About the Report's style/format, the 4-page report must have a title of your choosing, be typed using Times New Roman 12, double-spaced, with margins of 1 inch on each side and a list of at least 6 sources.

d. Report Proposal

The report proposal (5 points) will consist of a short explanation of the issue chosen for the final report and a list of 4 sources with a short summary of the content of the sources and the way in which these sources will be used in the final report. The final report proposal should be posted into Assessments/Assignments no later November 16th. Students will receive feedback on their proposal within a few two days.

Schedule of Assignments

Assignments	Due Date
Personal Profile (1)	8/26
Unit Assignments (4)	Sept. 10, Oct. 1/8, Oct 22, Nov 12/19.
Quizzes (4)	Sept 17, Oct 8, Oct 29, Nov 19
Report Proposal	Dec 3
Final Report	Dec 10

Grades

Grade Breakdown

The following table summarizes the breakdown of the final grade for the course:

Item	Percentage (%)
Weekly Assignments (8.75 points each)	35
Quizzes (11.25 points each)	45
Report Proposal	5
Report	15.0
Total	100.0

Grading Scale

Number of Points	Letter Grade
92-100	A
90-91	A-
88-89	B+
82-87	B
80-81	B-
78-79	C+
72-77	C
70-71	C-
68-69	D+
62-67	D
60-61	D-

Other Course Policies

Academic Honesty

I expect all students to adhere to the university's standards of academic honesty in their class work. Please see the WIU Student Handbook or [go to http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php for a complete statement of this policy.](http://www.wiu.edu/policies/acintegrity.php)

Late Assignments

Students will be allowed to be late turning in 2 assignments during the semester up to a maximum of a week without being penalized. For this, you need to let me know you are taking advantage of it. Beyond this, students will lose one letter grade per day of lateness.

Students with Disabilities

In accordance with University policy and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), academic accommodations may be made for any student who notifies the instructor of the need for accommodation. You just need to let me know in the beginning of the semester. If you have questions, you can also contact Disability Support Services at 298-2512 or [visit the web page at http://www.wiu.edu/student_services/disability_resource_center/](http://www.wiu.edu/student_services/disability_resource_center/)