**Course Syllabus for POL 110: American Government**

Spring 2017. Section 1

Professor Josiah Marineau

Office Hours: MWF 2-4pm, TTh 2-3:15pm

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Course Meeting Time: MWF, 9am-9:50am

Course Meeting Location: Administrative Building 24

**Catalog Description**: This course studies the development and interrelation of American national, state, and local government; and public opinion, political parties, civil rights, duties of citizenship, and present governmental trends.

**Course Objectives**: The primary objectives of this course are to a) assist the student in understanding their political environment and the key problems that challenge the U.S. today, and b) to assist students in developing their own perspectives on how to confront these challenges. The primary focus of this course will be to provide the student a sense of American values and beliefs, and to understand how those values are translated into government action. Of particular interest will be:

* Understanding the fundamentals of democratic theory, and what characteristics of the U.S. make it democratic (or undemocratic);
* Developing a knowledge of constitutional theory, the components of the U.S. Constitutions, and the events that shaped its development;
* Learning the importance of civil rights, civil liberties, and **human diversity** to a democracy, and how they are guaranteed in the U.S.;
* Learning about the U.S. Budget and budgeting process, as well as how to **communicate** individual and collective perspectives on how to address the budget in a persuasive manner;
* Understanding the concept of **human diversity** by examining the interactions between citizens and society
* **Critically analyzing** the challenges facing the United States today and in the future, while developing logical solutions to address the problems;
* Understanding how, as **socially responsible** citizens, they can make contributions to their disciplines and their society.

**Required Text**: Soomo Publishing. 2015. *Central Ideas in American Government.* [www.soomopublishing.com](http://www.soomopublishing.com/). Asheville, NC: Soomo Publishing. (*Note: This is a web-based text. A print-version may be purchased for an additional fee, but it will not contain all assignments/information)*

**Assessment**

Grades for this course will be based upon attendance and participation, an assignment covering the presidential elections, textbook-based assignments, a mid-term exam, and final exam.

*Assigned Reading*: Getting satisfactory results in the course simply cannot be accomplished without reading the text. Students are highly encouraged to keep up with the reading each week, rather than waiting until either the quizzes or exams and then attempting to cram the material the night before. The lectures and reading material build on each other, and so simply attending lectures (while also highly encouraged) is insufficient to acquire the material needed for a successful performance in the course.

The syllabus also includes a set of recommended readings for each week. These readings are for students who want to investigate that week’s topic in more detail. To facilitate that investigation, the readings are selected to highlight areas of debate, which for some weeks will correspond to debates between conservatives and liberals. The recommended readings certainly do not exhaust the areas of further investigation for each week, but are selected to reflect topics that the instructor finds pertinent and interesting. These readings will not be included in exam or quiz material, but they may come up during the course lectures and discussions.

*Attendance and Participation* (10%): Coming to class is an essential component to a satisfactory performance in the class, and so is participation. This means speaking up when you have a question, active involvement in group work, and responding to questions from the instructor. To not disrupt the participation of others, arriving in class on-time is crucial. Be on-time. **Note that attendance will be taken each class session.**

*In-Class Assignments* (15%): Periodically throughout the semester, I will assign in-class quizzes, short writing assignments, and in-class group projects.

*Textbook Assignments* (15%): The textbook for the course includes a number of multiple choice questions in each chapter. These must be completed by Friday, May 5th.

*Midterm Exam* (25%): We will hold a midterm exam on Friday, March 10th. The midterm will include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions.

*Final Exam* (35%): The final will be cumulative, and will similarly include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. The final will be held at 8am, Wednesday, May 10th.

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| **Aligned with****Assessment (point values)** | **Kentucky Teacher Standards (KTS or IECE)** | **KTS Diversity Indicators** | **InTASC** | **ILA Standards** | **Technology (Yes or No)** | **[Include full name of SPA/s]** | **CAEP** |
| Participation 10% | 1.11.2 | 1.2 | 4 |  | N | NCSS1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 1.9, 1.10, 2.3 | 1.33.5 |
| In class Assignments15% | 1.11.2 | 1.2 | 4 |  | Y | NCSS1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 1.9, 1.10, 2.3 | 1.33.5 |
| TextbookAssignments15% | 1.11.2 | 1.2 | 4 |  | N | NCSS1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 1.9, 1.10, 2.3 | 1.33.5 |
| Exams60% | 1.11.2 | 1.2 | 4 |  | N | NCSS1.1, 1.2, 1.6, 1.9, 1.10, 2.3 | 1.33.5 |

*Extra Credit Assignments*

*KHIPP Events*: During the semester, presentations by guest speakers may be available. Students who attend these and provide a written summary will receive extra credit. The instructor will make available the dates and list of speakers.

**Course Policies**

**Academic Integrity:**The purpose of a college education is to expand knowledge, to be exposed to different ideas, and to develop a greater understanding of the world in which you choose to live. It is expected that each student will wish to be evaluated on their own performance and not on the performance of others. If, however, a student is found to be cheating in any way, or willingly and knowingly plagiarizes the written works of others, severe consequences will follow. These will include failure of the assignment, and may include failure of the course and/or suspension from the school. To avoid this, the instructor reserves the right to move any student, or request that any student retake an exam or redo an assignment.

**Disability Statement:** Campbellsville University is committed to reasonable accommodations for students who have documented learning and physical disabilities, as well as medical and emotional conditions. If you have a documented disability or condition of this nature, you may be eligible for disability services. Documentation must be from a licensed professional and current in terms of assessment. Please contact the Director of Disability Services at (270) 789-5450 to inquire about services.

**Campus Security:** Cell Phone: (270) 403-3611; Office: (270) 789-5556

**Title IX Statement:** Campbellsville University and its faculty are committed to assuring a safe and productive educational environment for all students. In order to meet this commitment and to comply with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and guidance from the Office for Civil Rights, the University requires all responsible employees, which includes faculty members, to report incidents of sexual misconduct shared by students to the University's Title IX Coordinator.

Title IX Coordinator:

Terry VanMeter

1 University Drive

UPO Box 944

Administration Office 8A

Phone – 270-789-5016

Email – twvanmeter@campbellsville.edu

Information regarding the reporting of sexual violence and the resources that are

available to victims of sexual violence is set forth at: [www.campbellsville.edu/titleIX](http://www.campbellsville.edu/titleIX)

**Course Copyright and License**: Material presented by the instructor during the course is licensed for academic purposes only, and any original content produced by the instructor should be deemed under copyright. Students may use any handouts, notes, recorded lectures, or other materials to assist them in their own learning. Students may also share course materials with students enrolled in their section to assist them in the class. Any use of the handouts, notes, recordings of any type, or any other materials developed by the instructor is a violation of this license and is subject to civil action.

Questions concerning this policy should be directed to the instructor or his designated representative.

**Course Outline**

Week 0. *Introduction*

* No class on Friday, January 20th

Week 1. *The Founding and Constitution*

* Textbook, Chapter 1

 *Recommended*

* Harry V. Jaffa, “[The American Regime as the Best Regime.](http://www.claremont.org/basicPageArticles/the-american-founding-as-the-best-regime/.)” *Claremont Institute.*
* David Forte, “[The Originalist Perspective.](http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2009/09/the-originalist-perspective)” *Heritage Institute*, September 19, 2009.
* Justice William Brennan, [*The Constitution of the United States: Contemporary Ratification.*](http://3197d6d14b5f19f2f440-5e13d29c4c016cf96cbbfd197c579b45.r81.cf1.rackcdn.com/collection/papers/1980/1985_1012_ConstitutionBrennan.pdf) Georgetown University, October 12, 1985.

Week 2. *Federalism*

* Textbook, Chapter 2

 *Recommended*

* Adam Freedman, “[The Truth About States’ Rights.](http://www.city-journal.org/html/truth-about-states%E2%80%99-rights-13685.html)” *City Journal,* Autumn 2014.
* Pietro S. Nivola, “[Why Federalism Matters.](https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/pb146.pdf)” *Brookings Institute Policy Brief #146*, October 2005.

Week 3. *Congress*

* Textbook, Chapter 3

 *Recommended*

* Senator Jim Webb, “[Congressional Abdication.](http://nationalinterest.org/article/congressional-abdication-8138)” *National Interest*, March-April 2013.
* Russell Berman. “[Congress’s Surprisingly Productive Year.](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/12/congresss-surprisingly-productive-year/421314/)” *The Atlantic*, December 23, 2015.

Week 4. *Presidency*

* No class on Friday, 17 February
* Textbook, Chapter 4

 *Recommended*

* William P. Marshall. “[Eleven Reasons Why Presidential Power Necessarily Expands and Why It Matters.](http://www.bu.edu/law/journals-archive/bulr/documents/marshall.pdf)” *Boston University Law Review* Vol. 88: 505-522.
* Binyam Appelbaum and Michael D. Shear. “[Once Skeptical of Executive Power, Obama Has Come To Embrace It](http://www.nytimes.com/2016/08/14/us/politics/obama-era-legacy-regulation.html?_r=0).” *New York Times,* August 14, 2016.

Week 5. *Bureaucracy*

* Textbook, Chapter 5

 *Recommended Reading*

* David Farenthold. “[Breaking Points](http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-srv/special/national/breaking-points/).” *Washington Post*, December 14th, 2014.
* Workman, Samuel. *The Dynamics of Bureaucracy in the US Government: How Congress and Federal Agencies Process Information and Solve Problems*. Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Week 6. *Judiciary*

* Textbook, Chapter 6

 *Recommended Reading*

* Tim Meko, Dan Keating, Kevin Uhrmacher and Stephanie Stamm. “[Everything You Need To Know About Appointing a Supreme Court Justice.](https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/scotus-nominees/)” *Washington Post,* March 7th, 2016.
* Linda Camp Keith. “[The United States Supreme Court and Judicial Review of Congress, 1803-2001.](http://www.utdallas.edu/~lck016000/JudicatureUSSCT.pdf)” *Judicature* Vol. 90, No. 4, Jan-Feb 2007.

Week 7. *Mid-Term Review and Exam*

* **Mid-Term Exam** (Friday, March 10th)

Week 8. Spring Break.

Week 9. *The Media*

* Textbook, Chapter 7

 *Recommended Reading*

* Groseclose, Tim, and Jeffrey Milyo. "[A Measure of Media Bias](http://www.jstor.org/stable/25098770?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* (2005): 1191-1237.
* Nyhan, Brendan. ["Does the US Media Have a Liberal Bias?](http://www.jstor.org/stable/23260193?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)" *Perspectives on Politics* 10.03 (2012): 767-771.

Week 10. *Voting and Political Participation*

* Textbook, Chapter 8

*Recommended Reading*

* Pew Research Center. [*Who Votes, Who Doesn’t, and Why.*](http://www.people-press.org/files/legacy-pdf/292.pdf) Report, October 18, 2006.

Week 11. *Elections and Campaigns*

* Textbook, Chapter 9

 *Recommended Reading*

* Paul Farhi. “[Do Campaigns Really Change Voters’ Minds?](https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/do-campaigns-really-change-voters-minds/2012/07/06/gJQAEljyRW_story.html?utm_term=.94c8f72b40ad)” *Washington Post*, July 6th, 2012.
* Alan I. Abramowitz. “[Forecasting the 2016 Presidential Election: Will Time For Change Mean Time For Trump?](http://www.centerforpolitics.org/crystalball/articles/forecasting-the-2016-presidential-election-will-time-for-change-mean-time-for-trump/)” *Sabato’s Crystal Ball*, August 16, 2016.

Week 12. *Political Parties*

* No class on Friday, April 14th
* Textbook, Chapter 10

 *Recommended Readings*

* Gerber, Alan S., Gregory A. Huber, and Ebonya Washington. "[Party affiliation, partisanship, and political beliefs: A field experiment.](http://www.jstor.org/stable/40982894?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)" *American Political Science Review* 104.04 (2010): 720-744.

Week 13. *Public Opinion*

* No class on Monday, April 17th
* Textbook, Chapter 11

*Recommended Readings*

* Burstein, Paul. "[The impact of public opinion on public policy: A review and an agenda.](http://www.jstor.org/stable/3219881?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents)" *Political Research Quarterly* 56.1 (2003): 29-40.

Week 14. *Civil Liberties and Civil Rights*

* Textbook, Chapter 12-13

*Recommended Readings*

* Rehnquist, William H. *All the laws but one: Civil liberties in wartime*. Vintage, 2007.
* Klarman, Michael J. *From Jim Crow to Civil Rights:* *The Supreme Court and the Struggle for Racial Equality*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Week 15. *Review*

* Textbook assignments due Friday, May 5th.

Week 16 (Week of December 12th). *Final Exam*

* 8am, Wednesday (May 10th)