

**PSCI 110-01: Introduction to U.S. National Politics
Spring 2022**

Location: Kauke 039

Time: T*Th 8-9:20am

Professor: Dr. Avi Muñoz

Office: Kauke 101

Email: amunoz@wooster.edu

Office Hours: W 8-11am, or by appointment

Course Overview

This course is designed to introduce students to the various aspects of American government and politics, including ideals—such as equality, liberty, and democracy—that serve as the foundation for American politics and society. This course also introduces students to social scientific inquiry, pushing them to critically assess the extent to which American politics has, or has not, lived up to the ideals espoused by the nation’s founders. In this sense, the course is meant to help students understand what liberal education is, and prepare them to continue to grapple with core political issues such as inequality and power throughout the rest of their academic careers and their own lives.

We will explore topics including the founding of the nation and the political ideals held close by the founders, ultimately codified in the Constitution. We will also discuss the nature of core American political institutions, as well as aspects of mass politics and political behavior. Throughout all these discussions, particular attention will be given to the role of marginalized groups and their experiences within the American political system, all the while considering what these groups’ experiences say about the nature of American democracy.

By the end of the semester, students should have a basic understanding of the structure and function of American government and the nature of politics within institutions and the mass public. Students will also be able to critically reflect on how well American politics as a whole lives up to the ideals espoused in the Constitution and provides for all citizens regardless of racial, sexual, gender, or class differences.

Assignments & Grading

Your grade in the course comes from several sources. There are three critical response papers, two exams, a group podcast project, and participation. Your grade will be determined by how many points you earn out of the total number of points possible for the class. There are 200 total possible points, broken down as follows:

- Participation – 15pts
- Critical Response Papers – 35pts
 - o Paper #1 – 10pts
 - o Paper #2 – 10pts
 - o Paper #3 – 15pts
- Group Podcast Project – 50pts

- Midterm Exam – 50pts
- Final Exam – 50pts

Critical Response Papers: You are responsible for writing three short essays (3-5 pages, double-spaced, 12pt font) that critically engage with one or more of the assigned readings. Your papers should take one of two forms:

1. Identify shortcomings of theory or research design and make some practical suggestion(s) for how it could be improved.
2. Develop a counter-argument to a non-trivial theoretical claim made by one or more authors in that week's readings.

The goal of these papers is not to summarize the readings. You will be graded on how well you articulate a thesis that makes a defensible claim regarding the reading(s) with which you choose to engage, and synthesize across readings in order to defend your argument and explore its implications. More information on each paper will be provided in class.

Group Podcast Project: In a small group, you will be responsible for developing and recording a 10-15 minute podcast about a topic in US national politics of your choice. A podcast is an episodic audio program like a radio show in digital form. In this case, your group will only record one episode, though you might imagine that it is one in a series of episodes exploring themes in US national politics. You will receive a handout with more information on this project, including deadlines and expectations, in the second week of the semester.

Expectations

Attendance will be taken for each class session, and you are expected to attend every class. Regular attendance will help ensure that you do not fall behind and will provide you with a regular time and place to discuss any questions you may have about the course readings and lecture material. While attendance itself is not a part of your grade, participation does count and is hard to achieve if you are not in class. That being said, I understand the attendance pressures created by the pandemic; if you need to miss class, *please communicate this to me as soon as possible* so I can make sure that your participation grade is not negatively affected.

While in class, you are expected to be an active participant. This means you are expected to have completed the assigned readings by the start of class, and that you are ready to engage in discussion about those readings or any other topics that arise during class.

As with any political science course, we will likely have discussions that touch on your personal political beliefs in a variety of ways. While there is room for disagreement in our discussions of American politics, there is no room for hostility or disrespect. In our discussions, I expect everyone to respect that not everyone thinks or feels the same about politics, and to engage in good-faith discussion and debate when appropriate. Failure to do so—e.g. engaging in racist, sexist, or otherwise discriminatory speech, insulting each other, demeaning each other or one's beliefs, etc.—will not be tolerated, and may lead to dismissal from the class.

Grading Scale

100-93 A	76-73 C
92-90 A-	72-70 C-
89-87 B+	69-67 D+
86-83 B	66-63 D-
82-80 B-	62-60 D-
79-77 C+	Below 60 F

Course Schedule

Week 1: Introduction & Defining Democracy

- Tuesday 1/18
 - o Syllabus
 - o Introductions
- Thursday 1/20
 - o Dahl, Robert A. 2000. *On Democracy*. Yale University Press. Chapter 4 & Chapter 5

Week 2: (Liberal) Democracy at the Founding

- Tuesday 1/25
 - o James Otis. "The Rights of the British Colonies Asserted and Proved."
<https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/rights-of-the-british-colonies-asserted-and-proved/>
 - o Declaration of Independence
 - o John Adams. "Thoughts on Government."
<http://www.masshist.org/publications/adams-papers/index.php/view/PJA04dg2>
- Thursday 1/27
 - o In-class Debate: was the US a liberal democracy?
 - o de Tocqueville, Alexis. *Democracy in America* – Volume 1, Part 2, Chapter 10 (Pp. 370-376, 398-426)

Week 3: Federalism

- Tuesday 2/1
 - o Federalist Paper #45
 - o Bednar, Jenna. 2020. "Of course Trump's authority isn't 'total.' Here are 3 myths about how federalism works." *The Washington Post*. April 17. <
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/04/17/course-trumps-authority-isnt-total-here-are-3-myths-about-how-federalism-works/>>
 - o Grigsby, Sheila et al. 2020. "Resistance to Racial Equity in U.S. Federalism and Its Impact on Fragmented Regions." *American Review of Public Administration* 50(6-7): 658-667.
- Thursday 2/3
 - o ***Critical Response Paper #1 ASSIGNED***
 - o In-class Debate: cooperative vs. dual federalism
 - o Bullock III, Charles, Charles Lamb, and Eric Wilk. 2018. "Cooperative Federalism and Fair Housing Enforcement." *Social Science Quarterly* 99(2): 728-743.

Week 4: Representation

- Tuesday 2/8
 - o Federalist Paper #10

- Mansbridge, Jane. 1999. “Should Blacks Represent Blacks and Women Represent Women? A Contingent ‘Yes.’” *The Journal of Politics* 61(3) – pp. 628-641
- Thursday 2/10
 - Mansbridge (1999) – pp. 641-654

Week 5: Congress

- Tuesday 2/15
 - ***Critical Response Paper #1 DUE***
 - Federalist Paper #51
 - Curry, James M., and Frances E. Lee. 2020. “A Senate Majority is Overrated. (We Checked.)” *The New York Times*. November 18. <
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/11/18/opinion/joe-biden-mitch-mcconnell-congress.html>>
 - Fenno, Jr., Richard F. 1977. “U.S. House Members in Their Constituencies: An Exploration.” *American Political Science Review* 71(3): 883-917.
- Thursday 2/17
 - Congress Simulation

Week 6: The Executive

- Tuesday 2/22
 - Constitution, Article II
 - Bailey, Jeremy D. 2019. *The Idea of Presidential Representation: An Intellectual and Political History*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas. Introduction
- Thursday 2/24
 - In-Class Debate: how powerful should the president be?
 - Neustadt, Richard E. 1991. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. New York: The Free Press. Chapter 3

Week 7: The Judiciary

- Tuesday 3/1
 - Constitution, Article III
 - Maltzman, Forrest, James F. Spriggs II, and Paul J. Wahlbeck. 2000. *Crafting Law on the Supreme Court: The Collegial Game*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1
- Thursday 3/3
 - In-Class Debate: reforming the Supreme Court
 - Bowie, Nikolas. 2021. “How the Supreme Court dominates our democracy.” *The Washington Post*. July 16. <
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2021/07/16/supreme-court-anti-democracy/>>

Week 8: MIDTERM EXAM

- Tuesday 3/8 – review
- Thursday 3/10 – midterm exam (in-class)

SPRING BREAK: March 14-27

Week 9: Political Parties

- Tuesday 3/29

- ***Critical Response Paper #2 ASSIGNED***
- Downs, Anthony. 1957. *An Economic Theory of Democracy*. Harper & Row. Chapter 2
- Aldrich, John H. 2011. *Why Parties? A Second Look*. University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1
- Thursday 3/31
 - Mason, Lilliana. 2018. *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 1.
 - Abramowitz, Alan, and Steven Webster. 2017. “‘Negative Partisanship’ Explains Everything.” *Politico*. September/October. <
<https://www.politico.com/magazine/story/2017/09/05/negative-partisanship-explains-everything-215534/>>

Week 10: Public Opinion

- Tuesday 4/5
 - ***Critical Response Paper #2 DUE***
 - Rader, Paul. “The Funnel of Causality: Why We Vote the Way We Vote.” *Medium*. <
https://medium.com/@paulrader_42650/the-funnel-of-causality-why-we-vote-the-way-we-vote-e94ad70ab3ca>
 - Key, Jr., V.O. 1966. *The Responsible Electorate* – Chapter 1
- Thursday 4/7
 - Delli Carpini, Michael X., and Scott Keeter. 1996. *What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters*. New Haven: Yale University Press. Chapter 2.
 - Cohen, Cathy J., and Matthew D. Luttig. 2020. “Reconceptualizing Political Knowledge: Race, Ethnicity, and Carceral Violence.” *Perspectives on Politics* 18(3): 805-818.

Week 11: Participation & Campaigns

- Tuesday 4/12
 - ***Critical Response Paper #3 ASSIGNED***
 - Brady, Henry E., Sidney Verba, & Kay Lehman Schlozman. 1995. “Beyond SES: A Resource Model of Political Participation.” *American Political Science Review* 89(2): 271-294.
 - Blazina, Carrie. 2022. “Americans at the ends of the ideological spectrum are the most active in national politics.” Pew Research Center. January 5. <
<https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/01/05/americans-at-the-ends-of-the-ideological-spectrum-are-the-most-active-in-national-politics/>>
- Thursday 4/14
 - Mendelberg, Tali. 2001. *The Race Card: Campaign Strategy, Implicit Messages, and the Norm of Equality*. Princeton University Press. Chapter 1
 - Sides, John, Michael Tesler, & Lynn Vavreck. 2018. *Identity Crisis: The 2016 Presidential Campaign and the Battle for the Meaning of America*. Princeton University Press. Pp. 165-179

Week 12: Civil Rights & Civil Liberties

- Tuesday 4/19
 - ***Critical Response Paper #3 DUE***
 - In-Class Debate: Supreme Court decisions on voting rights

- Carney, Jordain. 2021. “Senate GOP blocks John Lewis voting rights bill.” The Hill. November 3. < <https://thehill.com/homenews/senate/579890-senate-gop-blocks-john-lewis-voting-rights-bill> >
- *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013)
- *Brnovich v. Democratic National Committee* (2021)
- Thursday 4/21
 - *Town of Greece v. Galloway* (2014)
 - *Snyder v. Phelps* (2011)
 - *Morse v. Frederick* (2007)
 - *Mahanoy Area School District v. B.L.* (2020)

Week 13: Interest Groups & Social Movements

- Tuesday 4/25
 - ***Group Podcast Project DUE***
 - Massoglia, Anna, and Karl Evers-Hillstrom. 2021. “‘Dark money’ topped \$1 billion in 2020, largely boosting Democrats.” OpenSecrets. March 17. < <https://www.opensecrets.org/news/2021/03/one-billion-dark-money-2020-electioncycle/> >
 - Minta, Michael D. 2021. *No Longer Outsiders: Black and Latino Interest Group Advocacy on Capitol Hill*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Chapter 4.
- Thursday 4/27
 - In-Class Debate: are social movements effective?
 - David S. Meyer. 2019. “One year after the Parkland shooting, is the #NeverAgain movement on track to succeed?” The Washington Post, February 14. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2019/02/14/one-year-after-the-parkland-shooting-is-the-neveragain-movement-on-track-to-succeed/>
 - Sean Illing. 2020. “How Black Lives Matter fits into the long history of American radicalism.” Vox, July 2. <https://www.vox.com/policy-and-politics/21306771/black-lives-matter-george-floyd-protest-michael-kazin>
 - Gause, LaGina. 2022. “Revealing Issue Salience via Costly Protest: How Legislative Behavior Following Protest Advantages Low-Resource Groups.” *British Journal of Political Science* 52(1): 259-279.

Week 14: Podcast Discussions

- Tuesday 5/3
- Thursday 5/5

FINAL EXAM: Tuesday, May 10, 8-10:30am

Academic Honesty & Code of Academic Integrity

The academic program at the College seeks to promote the intellectual development of each student and the realization of that individual’s potential for creative thinking, learning, and understanding. In achieving this, each student must learn to act rigorously, independently, and imaginatively.

The College’s understanding and expectations in regard to issues of academic honesty are fully articulated in the Code of Academic Integrity as published in The Scot’s Key and form an essential part of the implicit contract between the student and the College. The Code provides framework at

Wooster to help students develop and exhibit honesty in their academic work. You are expected to know and abide by these rules.

Dishonesty in any of your academic work is a serious breach of the Code of Academic Integrity and is ground for serious penalties. Such violations include turning in another person's work as your own, copying from any source without proper citation, violating expectations for a group project, submitting an assignment produced for a course to a second course without the authorization of all the instructors, and dishonesty in connection with your academic work. You will be held responsible for your actions. Particular attention should be directed to the appropriate use of materials available online. Whether intentional or not, improper use of materials is a violation of academic honesty. If you are unsure as to what is permissible, please contact your course instructor.

The Academic Resource Center

Academic Support, Disabilities, and English Language Learning
Contact: Amber Larson, alarson@wooster.edu, (330)263-2595, [ARC Website](#)

The Academic Resource Center, which is in APEX (Gault library) offers a variety of academic support services, programs and 1:1 meetings available to all students. Popular areas of support include time management techniques, class preparation tips and test taking strategies. In addition, the Academic Resource Center coordinates peer-tutoring for several academic departments. Students are encouraged to schedule an appointment.

The Academic Resource Center also coordinates accommodations for students with diagnosed disabilities. At the beginning of the semester, students should contact the Academic Resource Center to make arrangements for securing appropriate accommodations. Although the Academic Resource Center will notify professors of students with documented disabilities and the approved accommodations, students are encouraged to speak with professors during the first week of each semester. If a student does not request accommodations or does not provide documentation to the Academic Resource Center, faculty are under no obligation to provide accommodations.

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please visit the Academic Resource Center's webpage: <https://inside.wooster.edu/arc/>

Inclusive Learning Statement

Your success in this course is important to me. If there are circumstances that may affect your academic performance or impact your learning in particular portions of the class, please let me know as soon as possible. You do not need to share specifics, but together we can develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I encourage you to visit the Academic Resource Center to determine how you could improve your learning as well. If you need official accommodations, the ARC can work with you to make sure your needs are met. There are also a range of resources on campus, including the Writing Center, Math Center, STEM Success Initiative, and APEX.

It is also important that we all be respectful of everyone's privacy around health concerns, vaccination status, and any accommodations that are necessary in the classroom. It is not appropriate to question why someone requests physical distancing, chooses to wear a mask, or requires any other accommodations. As part of our participation together in this class, we commit to showing respect to each other as individuals, to working together to create a learning environment

that fosters a sense of belonging and inclusion to all members, and to understanding that our differences are also strengths. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated, and please contact me—via email, office hours, or after class—if you have any concerns or questions.

Names, Pronouns, and Pronunciations

All people have the right to be addressed and referred to as they prefer. I will do my best to address and refer to all students by the names and pronouns that they share in class, regardless of what is listed on the roster, and I support classmates in doing so as well. Please share the name you prefer to be called and pronouns you wish to use in this class with me via classroom introductions or privately.

If you are interested in changing your chosen name and/or including your pronoun(s) in The College of Wooster system, [you can find additional information here](#). What appears in The College of Wooster system is what will display in all platforms across Microsoft Teams. At present, there is no alternative way to change your name or to add pronouns in Teams, but you can add a background that includes these for any video platform (see [instructions for Microsoft Teams here](#)).

I encourage everyone in this classroom to create a space of mutual respect and support by also giving each other some grace around pronouns, pronunciation of names, etc., if or when we make mistakes. This is not at all to absolve anyone of responsibility for using correct pronouns, names, and pronunciations. But I find it useful to acknowledge that even with the best of intentions, sometimes we can all still make mistakes.

Title IX Reporting Policy Regarding Sexual Misconduct, Harassment, Relationship Violence, and Stalking

Contact: Lori Makin-Byrd, lmakin-byrd@wooster.edu, (330) 263-2017, [Title IX website](#)

The College of Wooster is committed to fostering a campus community based on respect and nonviolence. To this end, we recognize that all Wooster community members are responsible for ensuring that our community is free from discrimination, gender bias, sexual harassment, and sexual assault. In accordance with Title IX, Wooster is legally obligated to provide supportive options for all reports of sexual harassment and sexual assault that occur on our campus. Faculty who become aware of an incident of sexual violence, including harassment, rape, sexual assault, relationship violence, or stalking, are mandated reporters at the College and are required to notify Wooster's Title IX Coordinator. The purpose of this disclosure is to ensure that students are made aware of their reporting options and resources for support. For more information about your rights and reporting options at Wooster, including confidential and anonymous reporting options, please visit <https://inside.wooster.edu/title-ix/>

Discriminatory or Bias-Related Harassment Reporting Policy

Contact: Kayla Campbell, kcampbell@wooster.edu; or visit the [Bias Reporting website](#)

The College of Wooster is committed to promoting its mission of inclusivity and equity in all aspects of the educational enterprise. This commitment extends to all rights, privileges, programs and activities, including housing, employment, admissions, financial assistance, and educational and athletic programs at the College. The College's Bias Incident Reporting Process is designed to effectively respond to bias concerns raised by faculty, students, staff, alumni and visitors to the College. If you or someone you know are the victims of bias, you can:

- [File a report online](#) (where you may choose to identify yourself or not)
- Contact Campus Safety: 2590 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2590
- Call the Anonymous Tip Line: 2337 (from campus phone) or 330-263-2337
- Contact the Dean of Students Office: 2545 (from a campus phone) or 330-263-2545
- Contact the Chief Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Officer representative for students: Kayla Campbell, kcampbell@wooster.edu, 330-263-2607

Well-Being at Wooster

Contact (24/7): (330) 263-2319, or visit the [Wellness Center website](#)

The College of Wooster is committed to supporting the wellbeing of our students. During the course of their academic careers, students experience challenges that may interfere with their learning & health (both physical and mental), including but not limited to: strained relationships, adjusting to a new environment, chronic worrying, persistent sadness or loss of interest in enjoyable activities, family conflict, grief and loss, domestic violence, unwanted sexual experiences, difficulty concentrating, drug/alcohol problems, significant changes in eating and sleeping patterns, microaggressions, challenges with organization, procrastination and/or lack of motivation. Counseling Services at the Longbrake Student Wellness Center is a free and confidential resource providing short-term counseling and connections to community agencies for students needing longer term or specialized resources. You can make an appointment by calling 330.263.2319 between 8:30am-4:30pm during weekdays or by emailing Lori Stine (lstine@wooster.edu). You can also find helpful resources on the Counseling Services website at <https://inside.wooster.edu/health/counseling/>.

Students also have free access to TimelyCare, a telehealth service providing scheduled medical and counseling appointments as well as 24/7 crisis consultation with licensed professionals. Students use their Wooster email to establish an account at [TimelyCare: Telehealth for Scots](#). TimelyCare also provides students access to nutritionists and health coaches about issues of sleep and exercise, and psychiatry (with a referral from doctor or counselor).

If you or a friend is in crisis, please call Campus Safety at 330-287-3333 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-TALK) or connect with the Crisis Text Line by Texting “4HOPE” to 741-741.

For financial concerns: Dean of Students Office, dos@wooster.edu, (330) 263-2545, [DoS website](#)

For safety concerns: Campus Safety 330-263-2590 or cw-security@wooster.edu, [Campus Safety website](#). In the care of an emergency, call: 330-287-3333