

# PS 101: AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT SYLLABUS ANDERSON UNIVERSITY – SOUTH CAROLINA

## **I. Course Information:**

Credit hours: 3

Prerequisites: N/A

Target student audience: Any AU student with undergraduate status. Most students who take this course are in their first- or second-years, but many upper-class students also find it useful.

Class meeting times and place(s): Online

Online time expectations:

In college classes, there is a general expectation that learners will need to spend two hours out of class for every hour in the classroom. Therefore, in an online 15-week class, you should expect to work on your course for a minimum of 9 hours each week. For an online 7-week class, you should expect to work on your course for a minimum of 18 hours each week.

This is a fully online course. The due dates for assignments, papers, and discussions will be posted on Canvas, so make sure to check in and participate in our course site regularly. “Regularly” means that you have assignments due each week, such as two discussions (to be explained below) and an exam. You must take part in the discussions each week and you must take the exam each week. Not doing so will result in a grade of 0 being entered for any assignment not completed. If for any reason you’re not able to complete an assignment on time, you should contact the instructor (via Canvas email) immediately, as soon as you know of the problem.

Learner Expectations:

In your online and blended courses, you are expected to be an active participant in the course. Even though you may not see your classmates and instructor, AU online and blended courses are designed to include discussion and other forms of collaboration and communication. You should be willing and ready to regularly communicate with classmates and instructors online. You will participate in weekly activities in your courses. You will need to log into your course and check your official Anderson University email account daily. Doing so will allow you to view announcements, participate in class activities, assignments, online discussions, and complete assessments. You are expected to complete all assignments, quizzes, tests, and any other activities by the due date.

Do not hesitate to ask questions. You are strongly encouraged to contact your instructor if you have course related questions regarding course concepts, assignments, and feedback provided to you. It is recommended that you contact your instructor using the LMS well in advance of the due date. Also, your instructors have set aside specific times to be available for phone conferences or chat sessions if you need additional course-related support. When you email questions to one of your instructors, refer to the course syllabus to view their policy on response time.

Getting started:

Click on the Canvas “Getting Started” link in your course. The “Home” section in Canvas for this course contains a welcoming statement from the instructor, a brief biographical sketch of the instructor, and contains your first graded assignment, which is to provide a brief biographical sketch for yourself. The Home section also contains information about the textbook and the browser you will need in order to take exams (i.e., Google Chrome). Following the “Home” section is the section entitled “Syllabus” which will contain this syllabus and other required information as well. The instructor will from time to time be sending out notices and announcements, so be sure you also check the “Announcement” section of Canvas for this course.

## **II. Course Purpose, Student Learning Outcomes, and Course Learning Goals**

Course Purpose: PS 101 American National Government. Study of the constitutional basis of the federal government, including its organization, functions, and services. (AU Catalog)

Student Learning Outcomes:

HB: Knowledge of human behaviors and structures: To provide a foundational knowledge of psychological and sociological make up and behaviors of individuals and groups.

CE: Local, national and global citizenship and civic engagement: To enable students to understand the mechanisms of the public bodies that govern their communities, as well their own rights and duties as citizens. To enable students to evaluate diverse points of view related to contested public issues, develop and justify a position on such issues, and collaborate with others in the development and implementation of solutions to problematic civic issues.

Course Learning Goals:

Students will be able to identify and analyze the role of key actors and institutions in the contemporary US political process. [HB]

Students will be able to identify and assess the various opportunities for participation in the US political system. [CE]

Students will be able to identify and evaluate the major problems, the leading policies, and the ethical concerns confronting contemporary US society. [CE]

IDEA Course Evaluation Objectives:

Essential:

1. Gaining a basic understanding of the subject (e.g., factual knowledge, methods, principles, generalizations, theories)
2. Learning to apply course material (to improve thinking, problem solving, and decisions)

Important:

8. Developing skill in expressing myself orally or in writing

### **III. Method(s) Of Instruction / General Operating Procedures**

The course is divided into seven modules, each one week long and each covering two chapters in your primary textbook. Most modules will also include some supplemental reading material. Each week you should read the two chapters assigned, along with the supplemental material, and take part in the interactive discussions for that module. The module contains an overview and chapter outlines that will give you an idea of what that section of the course is all about. The instructor will post within the module questions for the interactive discussions. There will be an exam at the end of each week.

For each course module, there will be two issues for interactive discussion posted in Canvas by your professor. Through the entire term, each student will respond to a minimum of ten of the fourteen discussion issues and at least to one in each module. (Doing more than ten can earn extra credit for the student). The student's posting will be an original response in answer to the discussion issues raised by the professor. The student will also respond to the posts made by at least two other students. The original post should be at least two good paragraphs in length, and each response at least one paragraph in length. Posts will be graded on the grounds of how well they answer the questions raised by the professor and how well the responses deal with the comments made by classmates. Substantive quality is the primary concern in grading. All posts are to be supported by fact, reason, and reasoned opinion. Responses must be courteous and respectful, even in disagreement; failure to follow this mandate will result in grading penalties for this segment of the course. Please read the additional note in Canvas posted after this syllabus about the interactive discussions for more details.

All exams will be primarily objective (i.e., multiple choice) in nature, but the professor reserves the right to include one or more discussion questions. The first six exams will each cover one module, meaning two chapters of the text. The last exam will focus on the last module (and its two chapters) but will also contain some questions that relate to the whole course, thus its higher percentage of the total course grade. The professor will post information about the material that will be covered on that exam. Please note that Anderson University now uses a program called Proctorio for exams in on-line courses. This is a monitoring system to maintain the academic integrity of on-line exams. Proctorio requires that when taking the exam, the student must be using the Google Chrome browser. If you don't have Google Chrome, you can download it free of charge. Please note that the exams are not open book or open notes.

An optional extra-credit research paper of approximately 5 pages of content in length can be submitted. It should be on a topic related to the subject matter contained in the course. You must clear your topic with the instructor prior to submitting it. The paper is to be double-spaced, and prepared in accordance with the APA format. Proper citations are mandatory. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in the failure of the project, as well as applicable disciplinary actions (see the academic catalog and the student handbook).

#### IV. **Assignments; Method(s) Of Assessing Achievement of Student Learning Outcomes; Student Feedback and Grading Policies and Procedures**

Final course grades will be based on:

- six exams at 10% each (60% total)
- final exam at 20% of total grade
- interactive discussions at 20% of total grade
- optional extra credit research paper (could add between 1 and 10 points to final average)
- Grade scale: A (90-100); B (80-89); C (70-79); D (60-69); F (below 60)

Students can expect the instructor to respond to emails with 24 hours. Students can expect the instructor to grade an assignment, provide feedback comments, and update the Canvas gradebook within 7-10 days after the due date (depends upon scope and nature of the assignment as well as length of course). Students can access grades by logging into Canvas.

Discussion Forum Rubric Sample:

Points	10	7	3	0
Quality of Post	Appropriate responses: Thoughtful, reflective, and respectful of others' postings.	Appropriate responses and responds respectfully to others' postings	Responds, but with minimum effort (e.g., begins with "I think ...", has little substance or posts comments such as "I agree with Mary").	No posting.

Relevance of Post	Posts topics/responses related to discussion topic/prompts; promotes further thought and discussion of topic.	Posts topics/responses that are related to the discussion/prompts.	Posts topics/responses that related to the discussion/prompts; makes irrelevant remarks	No posting.
Contribution to the Learning Community	Aware of needs of community; attempts to enrich the group discussion; presents creative approaches to topic	Attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely.	Does not make effort to participate in learning community as it develops	<b>Error!Error! Filename not specified.</b> No feedback provided to fellow Learners

## V. Supplementary Readings

As noted above, each module will have supplemental material posted within Canvas. Students are also expected to read on a regular basis a good news media source with national coverage. I recommend [politico.com](http://politico.com) and [realclearpolitics.com](http://realclearpolitics.com), both of which provide their content free of charge. The best newspaper for governmental coverage is The Washington Post, but after one reads a limited number of free articles the rest of its content is behind a paywall. Another option is USA Today, which provides its content on-line without charge but has notably less depth than the WaPo.

## VI. Computer and Information Technology Use

Technology Expectation:

Students should have a reliable computer and Internet in order to access course materials and complete assignments. Since this course is web-based, there are some expectations as to technical skills, which include uploading, downloading, and general computer skills. Instructors may require additional software or hardware.

### University Email:

All students are assigned and expected to maintain an e-mail address on the Anderson University e-mail system. Learners are expected to check their e-mail several times each week in an online course. Students are responsible for all material, assignments, and announcements sent by e-mail. Ignorance of course requirements, instructor statements and directions, and University announcements or policy statements sent through University e-mail is not an acceptable excuse.

### Technical Support:

If you encounter technical support issues (e.g., LMS is unavailable, username and password are not working), you should immediately contact the IT Help Desk. In your communication with the IT Department, be sure to describe the nature of your problem with as much detail as possible so they can provide the best possible assistance. You are encouraged to first contact the IT Help Desk using the web-based support system listed below. If you are unable to login to the system, you can reach them via phone.

Help Desk Website: <https://helpdesk.andersonuniversity.edu> Help Desk Phone: (864) 231-2859

### Course Related Support:

If you encounter problems in your online or blended course are beyond technical problems, contact the Center for Innovation and Digital Learning (CIDL). The CIDL manages online and blended learning at AU. The following issues are valid reasons to immediately contact the CIDL:

- An online exam or assignment is supposed to be open or made available and it is not (contact the instructor first)
- Instructor fails to respond to student questions more than 4 days.
- Instructor has not provided any grades or feedback 2+ weeks past the submission deadline.
- The instructor is not participating in the course at all.

CIDL Website: <http://www.aucidl.com> CIDL Phone: (864) 231-2199

## VII. **Course Policies**

### Disabilities and Academic Adjustments Policy:

If you have a disability that may interfere with your learning, testing, or assignment completion in this course, you may be eligible to receive an academic adjustment to help provide you with an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from this course. Please contact the Coordinator of Accessibility Services in the Center for Student Success, who will advise you on appropriate documentation, determine reasonable adjustments, and notify me of any adjustments for which you are eligible. Once you have been approved for an academic adjustment through the Center for

Student Success, please discuss with me its appropriate implementation in this course. Documentation must meet the guidelines specified by university policy, and no one else can be notified of your disability or adjustment without your written consent. This process must be repeated for every semester you are enrolled at Anderson University and wish to receive an adjustment. Academic adjustments are intended to “level the playing field” so that students with disabilities can demonstrate their true abilities in their courses. Changes cannot be made to grades earned before a student has requested an adjustment, so please attend to this early in the semester.

#### Academic Honesty:

Students at Anderson University are expected to conduct themselves with integrity and to be honest and forthright in their academic endeavors. The University faculty's expectations define the following areas that would violate Academic Honesty: plagiarism, fabrication, cheating, and

academic misconduct. The policy, process, and penalties for academic dishonesty are described in the Student Handbook. (Excerpt from AU Catalog)

Permission for or Prohibition of Recording Lecture/Class Meetings: N/A

Participation Policy: Each week, you must take part in the interactive discussions and take the exam. Both are explained above in the “Method(s) Of Instruction / General Operating Procedures” section.

Late Work Policy: The late penalty for interactive discussions will normally be 2 points per day; for an exam, it will be 20 points per day. If for any reason you're not able to complete an assignment on time, you should contact the instructor (via Canvas email) immediately, as soon as you know of the problem. The instructor is neither an ogre nor a softie, but he has been a college professor for more than forty years--which means he has seen it all. If you have what the instructor considers to be a good, valid reason (defined as serious illness or personal emergency), the instructor may grant a short extension without grading penalty, at his discretion. A 7-week course by necessity moves very quickly. Do not get behind. You should not expect an infinite degree of leniency on the part of the instructor.

#### **VIII. Other Learning Facilities and Resources Pertinent to Course**

##### Thrift Library

Hours are posted at <https://www.andersonuniversity.edu/library> (Closed on all university holidays.)

##### Bunton Lab

Located in Thrift Library, 2nd floor.

##### The Writing and Multi-Media Center

Located in Thrift Library, 2nd floor. For drop-in hours and appointment-based tutoring for all your writing needs, see <https://www.andersonuniversity.edu/writing-center>.

Schedule an appointment by visiting <https://anderson.mywconline.com>. If you are an

Online or University Center student, or unable to make it to the physical writing center, please feel free to make an online appointment by selecting the option that reads "online appointment". Instructions for setting up an account are provided on the page.

#### The Center for Student Success

Located in in Thrift Library, 2nd floor. The Center provides support for academic assistance, tutoring services, as well as study skills seminars. Call 864-328-1420 to contact the Center or visit their website at <http://www.andersonuniversity.edu/student-success>.