

American Government

Online Syllabus

Shorter University

Instructor Information

Please see the course Canvas page for instructor information.

Course Information

- Course: American Government
- Course Number: POS 2110
- Credit Hours: 3
- Prerequisites: None

Course Description

A study of the development, structure, and operation of our national government as established by the Constitution of the United States. We will focus our analysis on three major areas: the Constitution and the debates of the founding era, the institutions of modern American government, and the political behavior of the American mass public.

Student Learning Expectations and Outcomes for This Course

Assessment of Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course, the successful student will be able to:

1. construct a meaningful and applicable understanding of the American (U.S.) system of government (in particular) and political science terms, concepts, and theories, as assessed by class discussions, quizzes, and exams (Department Learning Outcomes 1, 5);
2. recognize and integrate multiple perspectives and opinions regarding the key events and issues that have affected (and currently affect) the dynamics of U.S. governmental and political systems, as assessed by class discussions, quizzes, and exams; (Department Learning Outcomes 4, 5);
3. think critically and creatively in order to solve problems and make decisions related to past and current governmental, political, and policy issues, as assessed by class discussions, quizzes, and exams (Department Learning Outcomes 1, 5);
4. articulate and communicate ideas clearly and creatively, as assessed by class discussions and exams (Department Learning Outcome 2); and
5. demonstrate the ability to write clearly and concisely, as assessed by class discussions and exams (Department Learning Outcome 2)

Course Structure and Approach

A variety of instructional methods may be used depending on content area. These include, but are not limited to, lecture, face-to-face, multimedia, cooperative and collaborative learning, labs and demonstrations, projects and presentations, speeches, debates, panels, performances and learning experiences outside the classroom, guest speakers, group projects, and videos. Methodology will be selected to best meet student needs. **THIS COURSE WILL BE TAUGHT TOTALLY ONLINE.**

Textbook and Required Materials

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline J. Tolbert, and Andrea L. Campbell. 2019. *We the People* (12th Core ed.). New York, NY: Norton. ISBN 978-0-393-67963-2 (also available as an ebook)

Grading Scale

The course grade is based on total points. Each assignment will receive points as indicated below. The grading scale (based on a percentage of available points) is:

90–100 = A 80–89 = B 70–79 = C 60–69 = D Below 59 = F

Total Points for the Course

There are 1000 total points for this course.

Course Requirements and Assessments

Discussion Forums: 8 forums at 50 points each

For discussion forums, each student must post an initial response to the question posed by the instructor by Friday (11:55 pm) of each week and at least one response to a classmate by Sunday (11:55 pm) of each week. (For week 8 you will be uploading letters to your congressional representatives by Friday. No responses to classmates are required.)

NOTE: These are the minimum requirements for participating in the weekly forums; students should not expect to receive the maximum points for merely completing the minimum requirements. Some pointers for achieving higher scores on the forums include:

- Timing matters! The goal of the forums is for students to contribute to a vibrant discussion throughout the course week. Since posts made at the end of the forum cannot accomplish this, they receive fewer points. Similar posts made earlier in the course week will receive higher points.
- Similarly, making all posts for the week at essentially the same time (as in all on the same day) will result in fewer points.
- Cursory posts (“I agree” and the like) do not count.

- Sharing personal experiences can be meaningful and useful to the class, but don't get too personal!
- Your posts should reveal that you actually thought about the topic before posting. Don't just sit down and type something!

Netiquette: *Netiquette is a set of rules for how to communicate effectively and politely online.* Effective written communication is an important part of online learning. In a face-to-face class, body language along with verbal responses and questions help you and your classmates communicate with each other. In an online environment, however, misunderstandings can easily occur when basic rules of Netiquette (online etiquette) are not followed, such as using texting abbreviations or USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS IN WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS. Therefore, please use the following guidelines when communicating in this course:

- Using ALL capital letters in online communication indicates you are yelling. Limited use of capitalized words is acceptable when emphasis is needed.
- Use a descriptive subject line in emails and forum postings.
- Include your name in all emails; we can't always tell who you are based on your email address.
- No derogatory comments, ranting or vulgar language is acceptable in any form of communication in the course.
- Please keep in mind that something considered offensive may be unintentional. If you are concerned about something that appears to be unacceptable, please inform the instructor via email.

Reading Assignments

You are responsible for all the readings assigned. This includes chapters in the textbook and may include videos or other materials assigned by the instructor in addition to the readings listed here.

Week 1	Chapters 1 and 2, along with related documents in the Appendix
Week 2	Chapters 3 and 12
Week 3	Chapters 13 and 14
Week 4	Chapters 15 and 5
Week 5	Chapter 4
Week 6	Chapters 6 and 7
Week 7	Chapters 9 and 11
Week 8	Chapters 8 and 10

Quizzes and Final Exam

Each week there will be a quiz based on that week's assignments to complete in Canvas. Each quiz will be worth 50 points and must be completed (not just opened) by 11:55 pm on Sunday evening. You will have one attempt for each quiz. No makeups or additional attempts will be allowed unless there is a verified problem with Canvas that prevents you from completing the quiz. There will also be a strictly enforced time limit of thirty minutes for each quiz. The time begins running when the quiz is opened and does not stop unless the quiz is submitted within the time limit, so do not open the quiz until you are sure you have a reliable internet connection and will be able to complete the quiz. It is strongly recommended that you take the quizzes on a computer instead of a mobile device in order to help avoid any potential problems.

During the last week of the course there will be a comprehensive final exam worth 200 points. The exam must be completed (not just opened) by 11:55 pm on Friday evening of the last week, which is when the course closes. There will be a strictly enforced time limit of ninety minutes for completing the exam, and only one attempt will be allowed. The other conditions regarding quizzes also apply to the exam.

Class Attendance

Online courses are typically delivered asynchronously, meaning that there are no fixed times when students need to be online. While there is no standard attendance policy for online classes, students are expected to log in to class several times each week to check for updates and to communicate with the professor and/or with other students. There will also typically be deadlines for the completion of assignments, and there may be requirements that the student participate each week in online chats or forum discussions. In some cases, there may be a requirement for the student to log in at a particular time during the week to participate in a group chat or discussion. As with any traditional course, a student cannot skip several weeks of online classes and expect to succeed! Students should consult each class syllabus for specific requirements.

No Show Policy

Students who fail to complete the mandatory introduction forum within the first nine class days from the start of the session will be automatically dropped from the class. PLEASE NOTE: Students must log in as well as complete mandatory introduction forum within this nine-day period. Simply logging in to a course will still constitute as a NO SHOW for the course if the mandatory introduction forum within the actual online course platform is not completed within the first nine class days from the start of the session.

Students who do login and complete the mandatory introduction forum within the first nine days from the start of the session, but who then stop participating in their online class will NOT be automatically withdrawn from the class. To withdraw from the class, the student must send an e-mail to their advisor and his or her instructor from his or her Shorter e-mail account requesting to withdraw. The withdrawal will be effective from the date of the e-mail request. An automatic F will be given if a student is not properly withdrawn.

Academic Integrity Policy

A Community of Honor

As a liberal arts university committed to the Christian faith, Shorter University seeks to develop ethical men and women of disciplined, creative minds and lives that focus on leadership, service and learning. The honor system of Shorter University is designed to provide an academic community of trust in which students can enjoy the opportunity to grow both intellectually and personally. For these purposes, the following rules and guidelines will be applied.

Academic Dishonesty

"Academic dishonesty" is the transfer, receipt, or use of academic information, or the attempted transfer, receipt, or use of academic information in a manner not authorized by the instructor or by university rules. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism as well as aiding or encouraging another to commit academic dishonesty.

"Cheating" is defined as wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material borrowed from another source—including the Internet by a student with the intent of aiding himself or another on academic work. This includes, but is not limited to a test, examination, presentation, experiment or any written assignment, which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade.

"Plagiarism" is the taking or attempted taking of an idea, a writing, a graphic, musical composition, art or datum of another without giving proper credit and presenting or attempting to present it as one's own. It is also taking written materials of one's own that have been used for a previous course assignment and using it without reference to it in its original form.

Students are encouraged to ask their instructor(s) for clarification regarding their academic dishonesty standards. Instructors are encouraged to include academic dishonesty/integrity standards on their course syllabi.

Procedure

- A. It is the responsibility of an instructor to certify that academic assignments are independently mastered sufficiently to merit course credit. The responsibility of the student is to master academic assignments independently, refrain from acts of academic dishonesty, and refuse to aid or tolerate the academic dishonesty of others.
- B. If an instructor determines that the student is guilty of academic dishonesty, the instructor must discuss the matter with the student. In the event the instructor cannot reach the student in a timely manner, such as when the student has gone home at the end of a semester, the instructor may assign a grade of I (incomplete) until the student can be contacted and the matter of academic dishonesty discussed. The instructor then completes the academic violation form (see "Appendix A"), which should include evidence and other necessary documentation. The instructor will determine the appropriate remedy: either to assign a grade of zero on that assignment in question or a grade of F in the course. The student will designate whether he/she accepts the remedy for the violation of the dishonesty policy or wishes to appeal the instructor's

decision. If a student elects to appeal, the "appeal due date" line must be completed on the academic violation form. (See the "Appeals" section below for more information regarding the appeals process)

- C. Upon completion, the instructor forwards the academic violation form to the registrar's for the placement in the student's permanent record. The registrar will forward copies of the academic violation form to the student, the faculty member, department chair, academic dean, dean of students, provost, and president. Not appealing when the form is first completed or by the appeal due date will be taken as an admission of guilt, except under compelling circumstances to be determined at the sole discretion of the provost.
- D. If upon receipt of the academic violation form the registrar determines that the student is guilty of a second offense, then a grade of FD (failure due to academic dishonesty) will be assigned by the registrar for the course regardless of the remedy specified on the academic violation form. Assigning the FD is to be done by the registrar when the second academic violation form is placed in the student's record, and the registrar will notify all parties in writing. The student is then permanently disbarred from membership in any honorary society and is permanently ineligible for any SU honor list. The student may petition the academic integrity appeals committee to have the dishonesty notation removed from the transcript after one year or upon graduating from the university if no additional dishonesty offenses occur and the student satisfactorily completes the academic integrity program. The grade of F remains on the transcript. Upon receipt by the registrar of a third offense, the registrar will assign the grade of FD and then notify all parties. After all appeals are exhausted, if the third offense still stands, then the student will be permanently expelled from the university. The notice of expulsion will be forwarded to the student, department chair, appropriate academic dean, dean of students, provost, and president. A copy of the final report with the three offenses will become a part of the student's permanent record. The university reserves the right to expel the student after a first or second offense, depending on the circumstances and at the sole discretion of the provost.

Appeals

- A. The student who wishes to appeal an academic violation charge should submit his/her appeal in writing to the chair of the appropriate department by the appeal due date indicated on the academic violation form, which is normally within ten regularly scheduled class days after the completion date of the academic violation form. This statement should contain the reasons for which the student is appealing the instructor's decision. The burden of proof lies with the student in such a case to show that an error or malfeasance has occurred. Within 10 regularly scheduled class days of receiving the written appeal, the department chair will notify in writing both the instructor and the student of the chair's decision. If the department chair is also the instructor who files the academic violation form, then the student must appeal to the appropriate academic dean.
- B. When, in the opinion of the department chair, the student fails to show reasonable cause for further investigation, the chair may deny the appeal without taking further action. When, in the opinion of the department chair, a student's appeal raises reasonable doubt as to whether a mistake or malfeasance has occurred, the chair will meet with the faculty member and with the student and render a decision within ten regularly

scheduled class days of the receipt of the appeal. If the decision favors granting the student's appeal, the department chair may request that the registrar remove the academic violation form from the student's record. The chair will notify both the student and the instructor of this action.

- C. If the student files the initial appeal or elects to appeal the chair's decision during Maymester, Summer I, Summer II or during final exam week of the fall or spring semesters and if the instructor or department chair is not available during that time, all of the foregoing time requirements begin to run with the first day of class in the next major term. In extreme or unusual circumstances regarding the timeliness of the appeals process, the provost will make the final determination.
- D. Any student who has exhausted the remedies open under the procedures outlined above may appeal the entire matter to the academic integrity appeals committee in writing within ten regularly scheduled class days of receiving the response from the department chair. Upon receipt of the appeal, the academic integrity appeals committee will review the matter and issue a decision within 15 regularly scheduled class days. The academic integrity appeals committee has the authority to deny the appeal, reduce the penalties in the event of extenuating circumstances, or direct the registrar to remove the record of the academic violation form from the student's permanent record. The results of the academic integrity appeals committee are final.
- E. All results from the proceedings of the academic dishonesty appeals committee should be reported to the appropriate academic dean, dean of students, provost, and president as information.

NOTE: During the appeals process, the student may continue to attend the class in which the violation occurred.

Students Needing Accommodations

Shorter University provides accommodations for students who have a disability. The student must contact the director of educational support in FSU 219 (706-233-7323) as soon as possible to discuss your needs. Shorter University is committed to providing access to programs and services to all qualified students with disabilities. Student support services is located in the Fitton Student Union, Room 219 (706-233-7323). Academic support is available to all students through the Center for Learning and Academic Success at Shorter (CLASS). The center offers peer tutoring and coordinates study groups for students seeking assistance. Also, students can receive help with writing through individual tutoring in the writing center. CLASS is located on the second floor of the Sheffield-Thompson building in the Bailor Suite.

Note: **THE PROFESSOR HAS THE RIGHT TO CHANGE THIS SYLLBUS AT ANYTIME DURING THE SEMESTER.**