

Syllabus for UWXP104 Introduction to American Government and Politics

NOTE: This syllabus document contains the basic information of this course. The most current syllabus is available in the full course.

Course Description

This course examines how the American political system works, with emphasis on the U.S. Constitution, civil and political rights, the media and public opinion, elections, and the structure, powers, and processes of Congress, the presidency, and the courts. This is a three-credit course that satisfies the SS general education requirement.

Prerequisite(s)

None

Course Outcomes

Upon completing this course, you will be able to do the following:

- Demonstrate an understanding of foundational concepts of American government, such as federalism, separation of powers, checks and balances, political culture, civil liberties and civil rights
- Explain the workings and organization of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of American government
- Describe the role that the media, public opinion, and campaigns and elections play in shaping the American political landscape
- Discuss contemporary political issues in an informed, reasonable, civil, and logical manner
- Explain how American government and politics impacts the everyday lives of citizens and ways citizens can impact government and politics

Course Requirements/Components

Lecture Quizzes

Each week you will watch a video lecture and take a timed five-question multiple-choice quiz. You have ten minutes to complete the quiz. These are low-stake quizzes designed to encourage you to watch the video lectures.

Reading Quizzes

Each week you will take a timed ten-question multiple-choice quiz. You have twenty minutes to take the quiz. These quizzes are designed to measure your understanding of the topic materials for that week. The questions are derived from assigned readings, including assigned textbook chapters and articles, as well as written weekly commentary and video lectures.

Discussions

You will engage in seven online discussions this semester. Online discussions are a great way to engage with others on a variety of fascinating topics. One of the advantages of online discussions over face-to-face discussions is every student gets an equal opportunity to participate in the discussion. (We've all been in F2F classrooms where a few people can dominate the discussion!) Online discussions also give you an opportunity to really develop the comments you want to make, using the readings to support your perspective.

Writing Assignments

One of the learning outcomes for this course is to "Explain how American government and politics impacts the everyday lives of citizens and ways citizens can impact governments and politics." These writing assignments are designed to give you the opportunity to put your citizenship in action.

You will complete four writing assignments this semester. Complete instructions for these assignments are found in Assignments.

Exams

There are two exams, a midterm and a final exam. The exams are essay format. You will have 72 hours to complete the exam once you start it. More information about the exams are in Assignments.

Grading

The following grading scale for each assignment is as follows

Percent	Letter Grade
93-100%	A
90-92%	A-

87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
77-79%	C+
73-76%	C
70-72%	C-
67-69%	D+
63-66%	D
60-62%	D-
59 and under	F

The following grading scale will be used to determine your final grade:

Points	Letter Grade
930-1000	A
900-929	A-
870-899	B+
830-869	B
800-829	B-
770-799	C+
730-769	C
700-729	C-
670-699	D+
630-669	D
600-629	D-
599 and under	F