



PIEDMONT COLLEGE

Course Name: American Government
Course Prefix and Number: POSC 1101
Section: ONL02
Term: Summer 2020
Class Time & Place: Online Only (Canvas)
Campus: Online

Course Prerequisite(s)/Corequisite(s): None

Course Description: This course is a study of the origins, principles, processes, and structures of U.S. government. Over the course of the semester, we will examine the institutional rules and elements of human behavior that shape our government—electoral rules, political parties, interest groups, public opinion, Congress, the presidency, the courts, the constitution, and the bureaucracy. We'll have a particular focus on current events and how they relate to the overarching topics of the class.

Course Credit Hours: 3

Instructor Name: K. Anne Watson (Annie)
Instructor Email Address: kwatson@piedmont.edu
Office: NA
Office Phone: NA
Office Hours: By appointment

Textbook & Class Materials: All materials will be provided on Canvas.

Student Learning Outcomes: By the end of this course, students will be able to...

Foundations of Government

- Trace the development of the US Constitution from the Articles of Confederation through the Constitutional Convention (and its ramifications).
- Contrast the original constitutional dispersion of power with the modern dispersion that has evolved through custom and interpretation.
- Analyze the amendment process and its political implications.
- Explain Federalism and how it differs from other forms of government.
- Describe how Federalism has evolved to reach its present form in the US.

- Explore the growth of the national government through an examination of the factors contributing to its expansion.
- Examine the major safeguards of freedom contained in the First Amendment.
- Explain and evaluate the major clauses in the Fourteenth Amendment to include the effectiveness throughout the United States.
- Explain and evaluate the effectiveness of the Fifteenth, Nineteenth, and Twenty-sixth Amendments in overcoming barriers to voting in the United States.
- Describe how the Constitution protects citizenship.
- Describe the fundamentals of the Fourth, Fifth, and Eighth Amendments.
- Discuss the nationalization of the Bill of Rights.

Political Behavior

- Develop an understanding of democracy.
- Investigate the effects of public opinion on the U.S. democratic form of government.
- Assess the effects of the media on politics.
- Analyze interest groups in terms of: a. structure; b. power and influence; and c. operating techniques.
- Explain the different political philosophies and political parties operating in the U.S.
- Describe the function and impact of the Electoral College.
- Discuss the process running for public office with detailed interest given from the nomination to the election of a president.

Governing Institutions

- Analyze Congress focusing on its structure, functions, and membership (and criticisms of each).
- Trace the evolution of the modern presidency to include public expectations from constitutional foundations to the current form.
- Describe the differing forms of law on which the American legal system is based.
- Explain the structure and function of the national courts system including the operation of the U.S. Supreme Court.
- Describe the process of judicial review.
- Evaluate the public policy-making process with regard to policy formation and the impact of ideological difference among policy makers.
- Examine the institutions and processes of Georgia state government.

Minimum Technology Requirements for Online or Hybrid Courses:

Minimum technology requirements for online and hybrid courses may be found by clicking “Technology Requirements” on the Distance Learning page of the Piedmont College website available at the following URL:

<https://www.piedmont.edu/distance-learning>

Grading Scale: Grades will be calculated on the classic scale, from 0 to 100 points, with letter grades ranging from A to F.

Letter Grade	Points
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Grading System:

Points Summary

- Quizzes (5 points each for 45 points)
- Discussion posts (5 points each for 45 points)
- Final exam (10 points)

Quizzes (5 points each for 45 points)

There will be a quiz for each module of the class, as well as a syllabus quiz. Each quiz will cover the material of the module for which it was assigned; this includes any videos, readings, and other content included in the module. Quizzes will primarily be 10 to 20 multiple choice questions, graded automatically by Canvas. Occasionally, I will include open-ended questions (which are not graded automatically); I will, in most cases, have grades for these returned to you before the next module closes.

These are timed quizzes, with a 30-minute time limit for 10-question quizzes, a 40-minute time limit for 15-question quizzes, and a 50-minute time limit for 20-question quizzes. They must be completed by the closing date of the module for which they are assigned.

The syllabus and Module 1 quizzes are due by May 29th by 11:59pm.

Discussion Posts (5 points each for 45 points)

Each module also requires the completion of a discussion post after taking the module quiz. You should type these assignments directly into the dialogue box provided for the discussion board, **not** upload it as a Word document or other type of file. Most of these assignments require you to refer to course materials, but some will refer you to other materials, and most will also require you to gather sources of your own. While you may write using the first person, these are to be treated as formal academic writing assignments. Refer to the rubrics on the associated discussion boards for the grading criteria. **You are required to include proper citations—in-text AND in a works cited list in these posts for credit.** (If you are not familiar with source citations, some helpful resources have been provided to you on Canvas under the Course Documentation module.)

Your original post must be completed by the closing date of the module for which they are assigned and will count for 3 points of your discussion board grade for the week. Additionally, you must respond (constructively, respectfully, and thoughtfully) to at least one of your classmates' posts. Responses must be posted by 11:59 pm on the Monday following the closing

of the module for which they have been assigned and account for the remaining 2 points of your discussion board grade for the week. These are not graded automatically by Canvas; I will, in most cases, post your grades for these before the next module closes.

Your introductory post and Module 1 post are due by May 29th at 11:59pm.

Exam (10 points)

The exam will draw upon from all of the course content (videos, module notes, readings, etc.) and will be primarily multiple choice (graded automatically by Canvas). Some questions are likely to look very familiar to you after taking the module quizzes.

The final exam will be opened on July 13th and is due by 11:59pm on July 20th.

Attendance Policy: This is an asynchronous online course, which means there are no set times when you have to be available to “join” the class. You schedule your own hours to complete the course requirements by the dates given. The course consists of eight modules. All assignments for a module are due by the time they close. You may work as far in advance of the due dates as you would like.

Make-up Policy: Allowances for make-up work will be determined on a case-by-case basis. The further in advance that you communicate any struggles or concerns with me, the easier it is for me to work with you.

Class Policies:

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is a core value of institutions of higher learning. It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism, cheating, and dishonesty. To qualify the application of the academic honesty in this course: quizzes should be entirely your own work with no assistance from anyone else; discussion posts should also be your own work (though you may ask others for suggestions). Any material drawn from other sources should be properly cited. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

Class Discussion and Debate

Political debates and discussions can become quite heated. This passion is part of what makes the study of politics fun. However, the fun ends where personal attacks and disrespect begin. All students are expected to be courteous and considerate of their classmates. Disrespectful language and personal attacks will not be tolerated.

Communicating with the Instructor

My primary method of communicating with you will be through e-mail. You have each been assigned an email address by the college and will be held responsible for regularly checking this account. Assignment changes, important dates, and other valuable information may be sent to this account over the course of the term. Please check it daily. I do my best to answer e-mails sent to me within 24 hours (but rarely answer e-mails at night or on weekends). If you would like to meet in person to discuss the class, I am happy to make an appointment with you.

Changes to the Syllabus

The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations by the instructor may be necessary. As such, I reiterate the absolute necessity that you regularly check your e-mail.

Course Outline:

The course consists of 8 modules. All assignments for a module are due by the time that module closes (every Friday night at 11:59pm). As you begin to explore the course, remember that each module represents two weeks of work in an in-person course. Imagine a Monday, Wednesday, Friday class. That's three hours of lecture/class time, with one or two associated hours of homework for each day of class, as well as time spent working on an ongoing term project and/or studying for multiple exams. Now multiply that by two, and you will have the approximate amount of work required for each module. You certainly *can* start a module at 11:00pm the night it's due. It is unlikely, however, that you will be able to successfully complete it at that point. **Be sure to allocate yourself sufficient time to complete all of the module activities.**

Within each module there are 4 key parts:

1. **Module Introductory Notes and Task List**—Each module begins with a brief set of introductory notes (the “lecture” of the class, so to speak). Included in this file are the required pieces of content for the module (more on this below), a task list for the module that includes the discussion post and research check-in assignments (more below), and some optional (but extremely helpful) questions to guide you as you explore the module content.
2. **Required Content**—These are the readings, websites, videos, podcasts, and other sources of material that are meant to illustrate key aspects of the lesson. I am committed to making my classes as affordable as possible, so all of these materials are open access. Where possible, I have provided PDFs of readings in addition to the hyperlinks. Feel free to use whichever is most convenient for you. At some points in the module notes, I also provide optional content, in case you find yourself particularly interested in a topic. These resources will be clearly marked as **optional**.

I strongly recommend taking notes on this content (and the “lecture” notes) as you explore them. You may have it in front of you doing the quizzes, but the time limits will

make it extremely difficult to try look at all of them for the first time as you take the quizzes.

3. **Quiz**—Each module has a quiz based on the required content. The questions provided to guide your reading will be very helpful to you when preparing for these quizzes. As mentioned above, these are timed quizzes, with a 30-minute time limit for 10-question quizzes, a 40-minute time limit for 15-question quizzes, and a 50-minute time limit for 20-question quizzes.
4. **Discussion Post**—After each quiz, you will write a post on a discussion board on Canvas. These assignments vary, but they will require 300-400 words on a topic related to the module (often crafting and supporting an argument of some kind), as well as a response to a classmate's post. Specifics are included in the Module Task List. The rubrics I will be using to grade these will be provided on their respective discussion boards. As mentioned above, your original post must be completed by 11:59 pm on the Friday that the module is due. However, your response to a classmate's post may be completed by 11:59 pm the following Monday.

Course Schedule:

Date	Topic	Module Assignments	Module Closes
May 26-29	Module 1: Introduction to the Course and to Studying Politics	Syllabus Quiz	May 29 th at 11:59pm
		Introductory Post	
		Module 1 Content	
		Module 1 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	
		Response Post	June 1 st at 11:59pm
June 1-5	Module 2: Constructing a Government	Module 2 Content	June 5 th at 11:59pm
		Module 2 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	
		Response Post	June 8 th at 11:59pm
June 8-12	Module 3: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	Module 3 Content	June 12 th at 11:59pm
		Module 3 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	
		Response Post	June 15 th at 11:59pm
June 15-19	Module 4: Congress	Module 4 Content	June 19 th at 11:59pm
		Module 4 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	

		Response Post	June 22 nd at 11:59pm
June 22-26	Module 5: The Presidency and The Executive Branch	Module 5 Content	June 26 th at 11:59pm
		Module 5 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	
		Response Post	June 29 th at 11:59pm
June 29-July 3	Module 6: The Judiciary and Public Opinion	Module 6 Content	July 3 rd at 11:59pm
		Module 6 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	
		Response Post	July 6 th at 11:59pm
July 6-10	Module 7: Elections and Political Parties	Module 7 Content	July 10 th at 11:59pm
		Module 7 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	
		Response Post	July 13 th at 11:59pm
July 13-17	Module 8: The Media and Interest Groups	Module 8 Content	July 17 th at 11:59pm
		Module 8 Quiz	
		Discussion Post	
		Response Post	July 20 th at 11:59pm
July 20	Final exam due to Canvas by 11:59pm		

Piedmont Policies:

The Learning Center exists to help our students reach their various academic goals. The Learning Center offers academic support in all areas, including accounting, foreign languages, math, science, and writing. Our tutors are selected by department chairs, trained in the art of tutoring, and monitored to provide the individualized attention our students need to achieve their personal best. We offer by-appointment or walk-in hours during both working and after-business hours. For more information, please visit: <https://www.piedmont.edu/learning-center> or call 706-778-8500, ext. 1503 (Demorest) or 706-543-6973 (Athens).

Accessibility and Accommodations: It is the College's goal that learning experiences be as accessible as possible. Should you choose to disclose a disability, contact your professor and Disability Support so that possible accommodations can be discussed. Accommodations are designed to minimize the impact of a disability and ensure access to programs for all students with disabilities. Piedmont College, professors and staff make every effort to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations. The Disabilities Support Staff can be reached at disabilityservices@piedmont.edu or 706-778-8500, ext. 1504.

Statement on Academic Integrity: Students must be familiar with the College Academic Integrity Policy. Plagiarism, the intentional or unintentional use of another's words or ideas as one's own, will not be tolerated. Instructors must send any Academic Integrity concerns directly to the dean who is responsible for the discipline in which the course is taught. See Catalog at <https://www.piedmont.edu/catalog> for complete policy.

Student Email Policy: All Piedmont College students are required to use their Piedmont Lions email account (see Catalog at <https://www.piedmont.edu/catalog> for complete policy). Since the Lions account is the official communications channel of the College, students are responsible for all information distributed to them through their account. Students are expected to check it daily.

Withdrawal Policy: Within the first several days of a term, students may add and drop courses with the permission of their advisor. The ranges for drop/add vary depending on the term (Fall, Spring, or Summer) and duration of the class (8 week or 16 week). Students should check the academic calendar for specific information. After this time, students may withdraw from a class. Please refer to the College Catalog at <https://www.piedmont.edu/catalog> for the particulars regarding the withdrawal policy.

Starfish®: We Care About Your Success! We have partnered with Starfish Retention Solution, creating a platform for communication and resources focused on supporting your efforts throughout your educational journey. During the semester you may receive emails or texts from Starfish® regarding your course grades or academic performance. Please pay attention to these communications and consider taking the recommended actions. They are sent to help you be successful! In addition, your instructor may: (1) request that you schedule an appointment by going to Starfish, or (2) recommend that you contact a specific campus resource, such as tutoring or counseling. You may also be

contacted directly by one of these services. You can quickly connect to many resources using Starfish. We hope you will choose to use the tool to support your success, we will be!

Piedmont College Library is dedicated to student success both on- and off-campus. The Library's website (library.piedmont.edu) offers the fastest, simplest solution to finding the authoritative sources you need. In addition to our online catalog, you will find valuable resources for every subject and discipline: journal citations and full-text articles, books and ebooks, study guides, encyclopedias, streaming video, and more. Overwhelmed? Need help navigating? No problem: reference assistance is available via chat or email.