American Government: Practices and Values  
POL 1101 – Fall 2018  
Syllabus

Mondays and Wednesdays, 9:05-10:20AM  
Room 11-160, Vertical Building, Baruch College, CUNY

Instructor: Elizabeth Stone  
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Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Description and Learning Objectives
This is an introductory course to the institutions, processes, and history of American government. We will review the foundational concepts and landmark debates in the development of the American political system and relate these concepts and debates to current political issues. On completion of the course students should have:

- Knowledge about the foundations of the U.S. political system.
- Knowledge of all major American political institutions and processes.
- Critical thinking skills including the capacity to assess the kind and quality of evidence writers use to support claims, the ability to reconcile conflicting evidence that seems to support different claims, and the ability to ask probing questions about complex political issues.
- Analytical writing skills including the ability to summarize the main points of an argument succinctly, use language precisely, and demonstrate command of some political science terminology.
- Oral communication skills developed through class discussions and presentations.

Texts
You do not need to buy a textbook for this class. All of the readings are available on Blackboard. It is required that you bring a copy of the readings to class with you. It is preferred that you print out hard copies of the readings, but you may also bring a tablet or laptop to class for accessing them. If it becomes clear that you are using your tablet or laptop for something other than accessing the readings or taking notes, I reserve the right to change this policy. NO CELLPHONES in the classroom.

Lecture PowerPoint Slides
The PowerPoint presentations for each class will be posted on Blackboard on the “Syllabus & Lectures” page. These slides do not include everything covered in class and should not be your only resource when studying for the exams. You will need to take additional notes during class to supplement these slides.

Current Events
You are expected to stay up-to-date on current issues in U.S. politics while taking this course. If you do not have regular access to the news, Baruch offers all of its students a free one-year subscription to The New York Times online. All you need to sign up is your CUNY email address: http://guides.newman.baruch.cuny.edu/newyorktimes
Blackboard
This course requires that you log into Blackboard regularly to access class readings, submit assignments, and check for announcements. Please ensure that you have access to Blackboard the first week of class. The syllabus and all of the required readings are uploaded to Blackboard under “Syllabus” and “Content,” respectively.

Grading & Class Requirements
Your grade is based on the five requirements for this course:

1. Class Participation (15% of class grade)
   - Participation in class discussion is a critical part of the learning process. You are expected to come to every class having read all of the readings, prepared to contribute to class discussion and participate in class activities.
   - If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes and any assignments from a classmate.
   - You are required to bring a printed or electronic copy of all the readings and your reading response paper to each class. Failure to do so will negatively affect your grade.

2. Weekly Reading Responses (15% of class grade)
   - To foster your thinking outside of class and to facilitate discussion in class you are required to submit weekly reading responses. Response papers should be between 400 – 500 words in length and must include four parts. See the handout (available on Blackboard) for details.
   - Unless otherwise noted, reading responses are due via Blackboard at 6:00PM on Tuesdays.

3. Profile Your Politician Presentation (20% of class grade)
   - For this assignment you will conduct research, write notes, and present to the class a profile of a politician of your choice who represents the area where you live. See the handout (available on Blackboard) for details.
   - Confirm your politician and presentation date by Wednesday, February 14.

4. Midterm Exam (20% of class grade)
   - The midterm exam will be held on Wednesday, March 28.

5. Final Exam (30% of class grade)
   - The final exam will be held on Wednesday, May 23, 10:30am-12:30pm.

For both exams:
   - You will receive a study guide one week prior to the exam. We will not review for the exam during class time.
   - The exam will include content from the assigned readings and class lectures. Reading the assigned readings, taking notes during lectures, and fully participating in class is the best way to prepare for the exam.
   - If you have to miss an exam you must inform me by email before the exam is held. Otherwise, you will not be permitted to take a make-up.

Classroom Philosophy and Conduct
Discussing political topics can challenge deeply held or unexamined beliefs. Expect to be challenged in this classroom to think critically about the ideas presented in the readings and common assumptions made about American government. Given the difficult, sensitive, and political nature of the material to be discussed in this course, students will be expected to conduct themselves in a mature and respectful manner. This requires both thoughtfully voicing your own opinion and respectfully listening and responding to the opinions of others. The ultimate goal of this course is to provide you with the knowledge and critical thinking skills to construct informed opinions on complex political issues.

**Email policy**
Email is the best method for getting in touch with me. My policy is to respond to email within 48 hours. In order for me to respond to your email, you must include “POL 1101” in the subject line of the email. If your email address is not a variation of your name, please indicate in the body of the email who you are.

**Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**
Baruch is committed to making individuals with disabilities full participants in its programs, services and activities through compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the American with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA) of 2008. It is the policy of Baruch College that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability shall be denied access to or participation in any program, service or activity offered by the universities. Individuals with disabilities have a right to request accommodations. If you have a physical, psychological or learning disability, Baruch College provides services through the Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (OSSD), a division of the Office of the Provost and Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs.
http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/studentaffairs/ossd/disabilityServices.htm

**Academic Integrity**
The Department of Political Science supports the Baruch College policy on academic honesty: Academic dishonesty is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Cheating, forgery, plagiarism and collusion in dishonest acts undermine the college's educational mission and the students' personal and intellectual growth. Baruch students are expected to bear individual responsibility for their work, to learn the rules and definitions that underlie the practice of academic integrity, and to uphold its ideals. Ignorance of the rules is not an acceptable excuse for disobeying them. Any student who attempts to compromise or devalue the academic process will be sanctioned.” For more information on the college’s policy, please visit the college’s webpage on academic honesty at: http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html. Reports of suspected academic dishonesty will be sent to the Office of the Dean of Students. Penalties for academic dishonesty include: loss of points, disciplinary probation, suspension, expulsion, and complaint to Civil Authorities.

**Weekly Course Schedule**
All dates, readings, and assignments are subject to change.
** Indicates a response paper is due this day
Part I: Founding Principles

Introduction, Foundations of American Government
Mon Jan 29:
- Welcome and Introduction
- The Media Bias Chart (in-class viewing).

Weds Jan 31: **

The Constitution and the Ratification Debates
Mon Feb 5:
- Second Continental Congress. 1781. “Articles of Confederation.”

Weds Feb 7: **

Mon Feb 12: NO CLASS: LINCOLN’S BIRTHDAY

Weds Feb 14: **
- Federalist No. 10, 39, and 51
- Brutus No. 2 and 5
- **Last day to sign up for Profile your Politician Assignment**

Mon Feb 19: NO CLASS: PRESIDENT’S DAY

Federalism
Tues Feb 20: CLASSES FOLLOW A MONDAY SCHEDULE

American Political Culture
Weds Feb 21: **
- Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  - Student(s), Politician(s)

Capitalism and American Democracy
Mon Feb 26:
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

Part II: Government Institutions and Processes

Congress
Weds Feb 28: **
• Mary Hawkesworth. 2006. Case study on Congress from “Chapter 8: Intersectionality” in Feminist Inquiry.
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

Mon Mar 5:
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

The Presidency
Weds Mar 7: **
• George Washington. 1796. “Farewell Address.”
• Abraham Lincoln. 1865. “Second Inaugural Address”
• Franklin D. Roosevelt. 1933. “First Inaugural Address.”
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

Mon Mar 12:
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

The Supreme Court and Civil Liberties
Weds Mar 14: **
• Federalist No. 78
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

Mon Mar 19:
• The Bill of Rights.
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

Weds Mar 21: ** NO CLASS – BARUCH COLLEGE CLOSED FOR SNOW

Mon Mar 26:
• Profile Your Politician Presentations:
  o Student(s), Politician(s)

Weds Mar 28:
• ** MIDTERM EXAM

Mon Apr 2 – Weds Apr 4: NO CLASS: SPRING RECESS

** Part III: Inclusion, Exclusion, and Contestation **

Political Participation and Public Opinion
Mon Apr 9:

Weds Apr 11: NO CLASS – CLASSES FOLLOW A FRIDAY SCHEDULE

Mon Apr 16:
• ACLU. 2017. “Know Your Rights: Demonstrations and Protests.”
• Echo Through the Fog. 2016. “How to Call Your Reps When You Have Social Anxiety.”

Linkage Institutions: Parties, Interest Groups, & the Media
Weds Apr 18: **

Mon Apr 23:

Weds Apr 25: **
• Juan Gonzalez and Joseph Torres. 2011. *News for All the People* (excerpts).
• FAIR. “How to Detect Bias in News Media.”

**Social Movements**
Mon Apr 30:

**Civil Rights and Racial Justice**
Weds May 2: **
• Frederick Douglass. 1852. “What To The Slave Is The Fourth of July?”
• Martin Luther King Jr. 1963. “Letter From A Birmingham Jail.”
• Malcolm X. 1964. “The Ballot or the Bullet.”

Mon May 7:
• Alicia Garza. 2015. RadTalk #LawforBlackLives Conference (in-class viewing).

**Feminist and Queer Movements**
Weds May 9: **
• Seneca Falls Convention. 1848. “Seneca Falls Declaration.”
• Sojourner Truth. 1851. “Ain’t I A Woman?”
• Anonymous Queers. 1990. “Queers Read This.”

**Immigrant and Undocumented Youth Movements**
Mon May 14:
• ACLU, “Know Your Rights: What to do if immigration agents (ICE) are at your door.”

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Weds May 16:
  •  Final class discussion and wrap-up

Wednesday, May 23, 10:30am-12:30pm:
  •  FINAL EXAM