



PENSACOLA STATE COLLEGE

American National Government - Section Syllabus

POS2041 D9208

Summer 2025 A-Session

Instructor: Robert Thead

Office: Room 1408, Building 14 (1st floor), Pensacola Campus

Phone: 850/484-1313

Email: rthead@pensacolastate.edu

Office Hours: TBA

Department Head: Scott Schackmann

Department Head Phone: 850-484-1425

Department Head Email: sschackmann@pensacolastate.edu

Final Exam Date: TBD

Last Date of Drop/Add: May 15, 2025

Last Date for Student to Withdraw: July 14, 2025

Course Description: A study of the American federal system of government with emphasis on the constitutional distribution of powers among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches and the states. An analysis of policy formation as related to democratic theory and the role of government in the society.

Class Meeting Time: Online

Class Location: Online

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: : ENC 1101C with a grade of C or better.

Offered: FA, SP, SU.

Distribution: Meets AA General Education Core, Social Sciences requirement. A writing emphasis course. Satisfies the State of Florida civic literacy requirement.

Required Textbooks and Instructional Materials: Course Hero eBook

Methods of Evaluation:

At minimum, the instructor will cover content which aligns with statewide and institutional learning outcomes for the course. The instructor will measure student performance using the following:

| | |
|----|---------------|
| A | 90-100% |
| B+ | 87-89% |
| B | 80-86% |
| C+ | 77-79% |
| C | 70-76% |
| D | 60-69% |
| F | 59% and below |

F1: Assigned to a student who has attended throughout the entire semester and failed the course.

F2: Assigned to a student who has ceased attending, missed assignment deadlines, or who has been absent beyond the allowable limit (i.e., Not logging on twice a week- remember - just logging on and immediately logging out is not considered "coming to class.")

F3: Assigned to a student who has cheated on an assignment or submitted a plagiarized document.

Evaluations of student progress towards achieving the stated learning outcomes and performance objectives is the responsibility of the instructor, within the policies of the College and the department. Detailed explanations are included in the course supplementals developed by the instructor for each section being taught.

Final Grade Calculation

Your final grade in this course will be calculated as follows:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| 1 test @ 10 percent | 10 percent |
| 1 midterm @ 15 percent | 15 percent |
| 1 final @ 20 percent | 20 percent |
| 3 formal writing assignments @ 10 percent each | 30 percent |
| Quizzes | 10 percent |
| Discussion Posts | 15 percent |
| <hr/> | |
| TOTAL | 100 percent |

Instructor Requirements

- **Module Readings** – For each Module there is a corresponding reading assignment that you are suggested to have completed before watching that module's narrated lecture.
- **Module Quizzes** – Each week (except for exam weeks) you will have a quiz composed of 10 multiple choice and true/false questions that highlight the major ideas and concepts from that week's module. Each quiz is worth 10 points. The quizzes are worth 10% of your total grade.
- **Weekly Discussions** – The discussion component of this course is worth 15% of your total grade. You are expected to regularly contribute and participate in these discussions. There is a total of 5 points available for each module's discussions. Consult the Discussion Grading Rubric located in the Canvas Course Information Module for criteria regarding successfully completing the discussion portion of this course.
- **Exams** – There will be 3 exams. The exam breakdown is as follows:
 - First Exam (worth 10% of your grade) – Modules 02 – 05
 - Midterm (worth 15% of your grade) – Modules 08 – 09
 - Final Exam (worth 20% of your grade) – Modules 10 – 15The exams will be 100 points: 40 points are composed of multiple choice & true false questions worth 2 points apiece. The other 60 points are composed of 12 short written answers worth 5 points each that can be answered in 2 – 3 sentences. The exams are timed but are open book open note. You will need to prepare for each test to complete the test in time. We will not be using Proctorio or lockdown browsers.
- **Writing Assignments** – There are three "formal" writing assignments/essays, that combined are worth 30% of your total grade, where you will be using citation (we will be using the APA citation scheme). You will be given assigned topics and suggested sources for each assignment. Each of the three writing assignments are worth 10% of your total grade apiece.

Student Expectations: Students enrolled in this course can expect the following:

1. clearly identified course objectives;

2. productive class meetings;
3. a positive learning environment;
4. opportunities for appropriate student participation;
5. effective instruction;
6. positive and appropriate interactions;
7. assistance with meeting course objectives during and beyond class hours;
8. evaluation of student performance and appropriate and timely feedback; and
9. clear and well-organized instruction.

General Education Student Learning Outcomes:

Critical Thinking: The student analyzes, evaluates, and, if necessary, challenges the validity of ideas, principles, or data in order to develop informed opinions, probable predictions, or defensible conclusions.

Communication: The student effectively communicates knowledge and ideas.

Cultural Literacy: The student demonstrates an understanding of human culture and its diversity

Program Student Learning Outcomes: (if applicable)

Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Identify the parts of the Constitution relating to political institutions and the rights of individuals.
2. Explore the structure and function of each branch of government.
3. Identify the key players and their roles in the political process of policy formulation within the scope of American political culture.
4. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government.
5. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the United States Constitution and its application.
6. Develop and demonstrated knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance.
7. Develop and demonstrate an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

Academic Dishonesty Statement:

Pensacola State College is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic conduct. All forms of academic dishonesty, to include plagiarism and cheating, are prohibited. Penalties for academic dishonesty include but are not limited to one or more of the following: the awarding of no credit on the assignment, a reduction in the course grade, or the assignment of a final course grade of F and removal from the course. See the College Catalog for more details: <https://pensacolastate.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2023-2024/Catalog/Student-Handbook/Student-Responsibilities/Plagiarism-and-Academic-Cheating>

Student Email Accounts:

Pensacola State College provides an institutional email account to all students enrolled in courses for credit. PirateMail is the official method of communication, and students must use PirateMail when communicating with the College. In cases where companion software is used for a particular class, email may be exchanged between instructor and student using the companion software.

Flexibility:

It is the intention of the instructor to accomplish the objectives specified in the course syllabus. However, circumstances may arise which prohibit the fulfilling of this endeavor. Therefore, this syllabus is subject to change. When possible, students will be notified of any change in advance of its occurrence.

ADA Statement:

Students with a disability that falls under the Americans with Disability Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, it is the responsibility of the student to notify Student Resource Center for ADA Services to discuss any special needs or equipment necessary to accomplish the requirements for this course. Upon completion of registration with the Student Resource Center for ADA Services office, specific arrangements can be discussed with the instructor. Contact the Student Resource Center for ADA Services at 850-484-1637 for more information.

Equity Statement:

Pensacola State College does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, ethnicity, religion, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or genetic information in its programs, activities, and employment. For inquiries regarding the College's nondiscrimination policies, contact the Executive Director of Institutional Equity and Student Conduct, 1000 College Blvd., Building 5, Pensacola, Florida 32504, (850) 484-1759.

Security Statement:

Pensacola State College is committed to encouraging all members of the College community to be proactive in personal safety measures. In case of emergency, students should ensure that they are aware of the building exit closest to each of their classrooms, as well as all alternative building exits in case circumstances require using a different route.

Emergency Statement:

In the case of severe weather or other emergency, the College administration maintains communication with appropriate state and local agencies and makes a determination regarding the cancellation of classes. Notices of cancellation will be made through the College's PSC Alert system and on the College's website.

Tentative Course Schedule

Module 01 – Topic: Introduction

- Read: eBook Chapter 01: American Government and Civic Engagement
- Syllabus Quiz
- Discussion

Module 02 – Topic: The Founding and the Constitution

- Read: eBook Chapter 02: The Constitution and its Origins
- Module 02 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 03 – Topic: Proportional Representation & The Electoral College

- Read: eBook Chapter 03: American Federalism; and Chapter 12 (only the portion titled “The Presidential Election Process”)
- Module 03 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 04 – Topic: Civil Liberties

- Read: eBook Chapter 04: Civil Liberties
- Module 04 Quiz
- First Writing Assignment Due
- Discussion

Module 05 – Topic: Civil Rights

- Read: eBook Chapter 05: Civil Rights
- Discussion
- First Exam, Modules 02 – 05

Module 06 – Topic: Public Opinion

- Read: eBook Chapter 06: The Politics of Public Opinion
- Module 06 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 07 – Topic: Political Campaigns & Elections

- Read: eBook Chapter 07: Voting and Elections
- Module 07 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 08 – Topic: The Media & Social Media

- Read: eBook Chapter 08: The Media
- Module 08 Quiz
- Second Writing Assignment Due
- Discussion

Module 09 – Topic: Political Parties

- Read: eBook Chapter 09: Political Parties

- Discussion
- Midterm, Modules 06 – 09

Module 10 – Topic: Congress

- Read: eBook Chapter 11: Congress
- Module 10 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 11 – Topic: Interest Groups & Lobbying

- Read: eBook Chapter 10: Interest Groups & Lobbying
- Module 11 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 12 – Topic: The Presidency

- Read: eBook Chapter 12: The Presidency
- Module 12 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 13 – Topic: The Judicial System

- Read: eBook Chapter 13: The Courts
- Module 13 Quiz
- Third Writing Assignment Due
- Discussion

Module 14 – Topic: State & Local Government

- Read: eBook Chapter 14: State and Local Government
- Module 14 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 15 – Topic: The Bureaucracy & Policymaking

- Read: eBook Chapter 15: The Bureaucracy and Chapter 16: Domestic Policy
- Module 15 Quiz
- Discussion

Module 16 – Final Exam, Modules 10 – 15

Due by Thursday, December 14th 11:59pm

This course is not a "work at your own pace" course. There are regularly scheduled deadlines for all assignments and weekly participation is required. You will have weekly discussions and assignments to complete. Some weeks will include more activities than other weeks. Time management skills will be essential to maintain progress in the course.

Email Response

To contact me via email, from within the course click the People link, then click my name, and then click the Send Message button. Emails from all courses can be accessed from the Inbox link. I will contact you via the same e-mail tool as well.

Typically you can expect an email response from me within 24 hours. Weekends and holidays are the exceptions, where a response may take a little longer.

Posting of Grades

Your instructor will strive to have assignments graded within one week of their submission. However, there will be occasional assignments that may take longer grade. Your overall course grade in Canvas will update as assignments are graded.

Course Participation/Attendance

You must log in regularly, participate, and complete your assignments on time if you wish to be successful in this course. Class participation is an important part of the learning process and is therefore expected of each student. The tracking tool within the course management system will be used to make sure students are accomplishing these tasks. Students who do not regularly log in and complete assignments are not likely to pass the course.

You will be counted absent if you do not log in at least once a week, and if you do not complete all of that week's assignments. Each student is permitted two absences per term. Additional absences will result in a 5% reduction of your total grade at the end of the term.