

# POLS& 202 American Government Syllabus

**(Item #5360, Fall 2017, Daily 9:30-10:20am)**

*Syllabus subject to change.*

Instructor: Andrew C. Fletcher

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Office location: A200F

Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30, and by appointment

Classroom: R201

## Course Information

The course analyzes constitutional government in America in terms of the theory and practices of democracy. Students investigate issues of individual rights, popular representation, and responsible leadership.

## Course Outcomes

- Evaluate the basic nature of Constitutional government in America.
- Understand concepts such as separation of power and checks and balances as outlined in the constitution.
- Recall and define problems of individual rights, popular representation and responsible leadership.
- Identify roles of the Executive department, the Congress, and the Judicial branch.
- Have an understanding of the public policy making process in the U.S.
- Have the skills and knowledge necessary for analyzing American politics according to the ideals of American democracy.

## Grading

Attendance/participation: 15%

Quizzes: 20%

|             |     |
|-------------|-----|
| Exam I:     | 20% |
| Exam II:    | 20% |
| Final Exam: | 25% |

Exams are non-cumulative and will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions.

A number of unannounced quizzes will be given over the course of the semester. Quizzes will pertain to material covered in lecture and in the textbook. Students should **read each chapter prior to the class in which it will be discussed** and be prepared to participate in discussion and ask questions in order to do well on these quizzes. Your 2 lowest quiz grades will be dropped. As such, there will be **no makeup quizzes**.

Attendance policy: Attendance for this course is mandatory and will be taken during each class session. Students are **allowed four (4) absences** over the course of the semester without any loss of attendance points. **Beginning with the fifth (5th) absence**, however, points will be deducted from your attendance grade. **Fifteen (15) points** will be deducted from your attendance grade for every absence over your four allowed absences. Example: 5 absences will yield a score of 85 out of 100 for attendance/participation.

The College Grading Policy is explained in the current Course Catalog and can also be found at this link: [Grading Policy](#)

## Books and Materials Required

COLEMAN / UNDERSTANDING AMERICAN POLITICS & GOVERNMENT 2012 EDITION  
(Required)

## Help with Canvas

Students can find help with Canvas by following the link here: [Student Canvas Help](#)

## Classroom Learning Atmosphere

### Instructor's Expectations and Classroom Decorum

Please, no laptops, tablets, or cell phones during class discussion. Class is more interesting and fruitful when students come to class prepared to discuss course topics and when there are as

few distractions as possible. Of course, exceptions can and will be made on a case-by-case basis.

Disruptive behaviors, including excessive talking, arriving late to class, sleeping, reading newspapers, using unauthorized electronic devices during class are not permitted. Repetitive and/or seriously disruptive behavior, e.g., fighting, using degrading language, personal or physical threats or insults, damaging property, may result in **docking points from the attendance/participation grade and/or your removal from class** in accordance with policies and procedures outlined in Bellevue College's Code of Student Conduct and in consultation with the Political Science department chair, The Office of Student Conduct, the Dean of Students, and the Office of Student Affairs.

**Be respectful and attentive, and it will be a great class!**

## **Policy on Missed Exams and Coursework**

You may schedule a make-up exam with me provided that I have been notified **prior to the exam** that you are unable to attend due to illness, family emergency, or an approved University trip. You must also present proper documentation to confirm the circumstances under which you have missed the exam.

These are the only conditions under which a make-up exam will be given. If you do not notify me **prior to the exam** that you cannot attend for one of the reasons listed above, you will *not* be able to make up the exam. All make-up exams must be taken within **ONE WEEK** of the scheduled exam time.

## **Accessibility**

The online elements of this course are designed to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to, or usable by students who take this course in the future.

## **Affirmation of Inclusion**

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination.

We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

[Affirmation of Inclusion](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/) (https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/inclusion/)

## Religious Holidays

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or any other assignments because of their religious observance should be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent, preferably at the beginning of the term. Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments should be offered an opportunity to make up the work without penalty (if they have previously arranged to be absent), unless it can be demonstrated that a makeup opportunity would constitute an unreasonable burden on a member of the faculty. Should disagreement arise over what constitutes an unreasonable burden or any element of this policy, parties involved should consult the department chair, or Dean.

[Policy 2950 Accommodations for Reasons of Faith or Conscience](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-2950p-2/)

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## College Anti-Discrimination Statement

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; creed; color; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates. Bellevue College is prohibited from discriminating in such a manner by college policy and by state and federal law. All college personnel and persons, vendors, and organizations with whom the college does business are required to comply with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations designed to promote affirmative action and equal opportunity.

[Equal Opportunity](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/) (http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/)

*Spanish and Chinese versions of the anti-discrimination statement are available at [Important Links](#).*

## Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share

with the Title IX Coordinator any and all information regarding sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct (e.g. dating violence, domestic violence, stalking) that may have occurred on campus or that impacts someone on campus. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the BC Counseling Center at (425) 564-2212. The Title IX Office can be contacted at 425-564-2641 and more information can be found at [Title IX](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/>).

If you have any concerns, you may report to: [Report Concerns](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/reportconcerns/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/reportconcerns/>).

## Student Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity

Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source), and fabrication and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Code of Conduct at Bellevue College. Examples of unacceptable behavior include, but are not limited to, talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones/pagers to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Code of Conduct to the Dean of Student Success for investigation. Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Code of Conduct at: [Student Code](#)

**I take academic honesty and originality of intellectual work very seriously. In the case of written assignments and essays, we will be utilizing the [VeriCite](#) plagiarism checking and academic integrity service. Penalties for plagiarism and/or academic dishonesty range from receiving a zero for the assignment to more formal and severe penalties through the Office of Student Affairs and the Dean of Students.**

See this [link](#) for helpful hints on what plagiarism is and how to avoid it.

## Important Links

[See "Important Links" page online](#) for more information about BC E-mail, access to MyBC, the Disability Resource Center (DRC), Public Safety, the Academic Calendar, the Academic Success Center, and more.

Quiz grades and test grades will be posted on your Canvas course page. Links to the course syllabus, periodic additional course materials (readings, links, videos, etc.), and course announcements can also be found on the Canvas course page.

## Final Exam Schedule

The final exam for this class will be taken **Tuesday 12/5 from 9:30-11:20am** in our usual classroom.

[Final Exam Schedule](#)

## Course Calendar

### Week 1:

|      |  |
|------|--|
| 9/18 | Syllabus and Course Introduction       |
| 9/19 | Ch. 1 Thinking About American Politics |
| 9/20 | (continued)                            |
| 9/21 | Ch. 2 Political Culture                |
| 9/22 | (continued)                            |

### Week 2:

|      |                    |
|------|--------------------|
| 9/25 | Ch. 3 Constitution |
| 9/26 | (continued)        |
| 9/27 | (continued)        |
| 9/28 | Ch. 4 Federalism   |
| 9/29 | (continued)        |

### Week 3:

|      |                       |
|------|-----------------------|
| 10/2 | (continued)           |
| 10/3 | Ch. 5 Civil Liberties |
| 10/4 | (continued)           |
| 10/5 | (continued)           |
| 10/6 | Exam Review           |

### Week 4:

|       |                              |
|-------|------------------------------|
| 10/9  | <b>EXAM I (Chapters 1-5)</b> |
| 10/10 | Ch. 6 Civil Rights           |
| 10/11 | (continued)                  |
| 10/12 | (continued)                  |

10/13 (continued)

Week 5:

10/16 **NO CLASS MEETING**

10/17 Ch. 7 Public Opinion

10/18 (continued)

10/19 (continued)

10/20 Ch. 8 Political Participation and Voting

Week 6:

10/23 (continued)

10/24 (continued)

10/25 Ch 9 Elections and Campaigns

10/26 (continued)

10/27 (continued)

Week 7:

10/30 Ch. 10 Media and Politics

10/31 (continued)

11/1 (continued)

11/2 Exam Review

11/3 **EXAM II (Ch. 6-10)**

Week 8:

11/6 Ch.11 Political Parties

11/7 (continued)

11/8 (continued)

11/9 Ch. 12 Interest Groups

11/10 **HOLIDAY—NO CLASS MEETING**

Week 9:

11/13 (continued)

11/14 (continued)

11/15 Ch. 13 Congress

11/16 (continued)

11/17 (continued)

Week 10:

11/20 Ch. 14 The Presidency

11/21 (continued)

11/22 (continued)

11/23 **HOLIDAY—NO CLASS MEETING**

11/24 **HOLIDAY—NO CLASS MEETING**

Week 11:

11/27 Ch. 15 The Federal Court System

11/28 (continued)

11/29 Ch. 16 The Bureaucracy

11/30 (continued)

12/1 FINAL EXAM REVIEW

**FINAL EXAM (Ch. 11-16) Tuesday 12/5 from 9:30-11:20am in our regular classroom**