

Course Syllabus

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POLITICAL SCIENCE 202—AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Fall 2017

Hours and Location:

Monday and Wednesday, 3:00 p.m. – 5:10 p.m.

L221

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 3:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.; Thursdays, 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.; and by appointment.

Professor:

Maria Leininger, Esq. (I prefer Professor Leininger)

J.D., Seattle University School of Law

B.A., University of Washington, Seattle

Member, Washington State Bar Association*

Email: Maria.Leininger@bellevuecollege.edu (<mailto:Maria.Leininger@bellevuecollege.edu>)

Office: A200F

Course Materials*:

The primary texts for the course is *Gateways to Democracy: The Essentials* by John Geer, 3rd edition. Supplemental texts will be made available on our course website. To access the supplemental materials click on the “Modules” button and you will find them uploaded in the order in which they have been assigned. **Please note that you are responsible for downloading (and reading and/or watching) all supplemental materials as they are assigned.**

For those of you who do not have a printer at home you can print in the student computer lab in the N-Building or if you prefer you can just read the materials on-line. **Please also note that all assigned materials should be completed before the class session for which they are scheduled, so that you can participate in discussions and other activities that I have planned.**

Any material covered by an assigned reading/video may be included in examination questions, regardless of whether it is specifically discussed in lecture. If adjustments are made to the reading/viewing schedule, you will be informed via the announcement board on our class website. The assigned reading/viewing is the core of this class—if you don't keep up you are going to find it hard to succeed. Please review the modules section carefully and let me know if you have any questions or concerns so that we can address potential issues before they become problems.

Course Description:

This is an introductory course that is designed for students new to the study of American politics. By the end of the quarter, I hope you will have a basic understanding of the structure of American government and have an increased ability to critically reflect on American politics. Specific topics of study include: the Revolution, the Constitution, Congress, the Presidency, the Supreme Court, civil rights, civil disobedience, patriotism, the role of money in politics, informed and active citizenship, and much more.

Course Objectives:

- 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

Course Policies:

This is a college-level course, which means **you are responsible for your own learning**. I will do my best to facilitate our interactions and to assess your learning fairly. I expect you to do your best to complete assignments in a timely and appropriate fashion and to attend class each day. If you do not understand something you need to take the initiative to find out the answer. I cannot read minds, so it is up to you to try to seek clarity when it is lacking.

Technology Policy:

I do not allow laptops, cell phones, or any other technology in my classroom without prior approval or an accommodation request from the DRC. If a student is using technology during class without my prior approval, in my discretion, I may ask the student to leave for the day and the student will not be allowed to make up any participation points for that class period.

Electronics use during quizzes or other graded assignments without my express prior approval will be considered prima facie evidence that you are cheating, and I will, in my discretion, report this activity to the school.

Course Absences:

Because this course will be an opportunity for us to explore the materials together as a group, attending class is essential for both your ability to learn the material and your grade.

I do not allow quiz or assignment make-ups for unexcused absences. Absences will be excused for issues that include, but are not limited to: illness, death in the family, and school obligations. All excused absences will need to be requested, verified, and approved PRIOR to the date of the absence. If you have an excused absence, you will still be responsible for staying current with the reading schedule.

Rules of Engagement for Class Discussions:

This course involves the discussion of controversial issues. Remember that reasonable people often disagree. Your challenge and responsibility is to maintain civil discourse. We will achieve this by being respectful of each other and avoiding inflammatory, derogatory and insulting words, phrases and labels. Please use your common sense to avoid any other conduct that might distract or offend me or your classmates.

If you do not adhere to these rules of engagement for our discussions, I will, in my discretion, ask you to leave the class and I will not grade any in-class quizzes or assignments that were given for that class period.

A Note About Ideology:

I have no intention of trying to convert you to my belief system. The issues we will be exploring are often contentious and sometimes there will be no right or wrong answers. That said, there are good and bad arguments. Good arguments will be entertained (i.e., those that are logically sound and supported by the available evidence); bad arguments will be discouraged. Racist, derogatory, sexist, offensive inflammatory, and/or insulting arguments will not be tolerated.

E-Mail Etiquette:

Please only message me on Canvas—I set aside time specifically to respond to Canvas messages. I will **only** respond to messages on Tuesdays and Thursdays. **Importantly, I will not answer any substantive questions about an assignment 48 hours before the due date.**

You should strive to use professional-grade, typo-free writing when drafting electronic messages. Your attention to detail reflects your professionalism; I don't take typos personally, I just want to prepare you for the real world.

Please include in Canvas message subject lines: 1) an identification of both the class; and 2) the matter (example: "POLS 202—Week 3 Quiz; NOT "question"). Most professionals receive dozens—if *not hundreds*—of e-mails every day. The subject line

provides an opportunity to summarize your request and allows the reader to appropriately triage your question.

If I do not respond, please feel free to send me another message to ensure that I've received your message. **You are responsible for confirming receipt of any message.** Consequences for any glitches resulting from not following these or any other instructions are your responsibility—you are training for a college-educated career and should act as if every responsibility is your own.

Grades will be awarded as follows:

GRADE	POINTS	PERCENTAGE
A	4.0	97-100
A-	3.7	93-96
B+	3.3	89-92
B	3.0	85-88
B-	2.7	81-84
C+	2.3	77-80
C	2.0	73-76
C-	1.7	69-72
D+	1.3	65-68
D	1.0	61-64
F	0.0	BELOW 60

Assignments:

All assignment due dates are posted under the "Modules" section on Canvas. All assignment descriptions are posted under the "Assignment" section on Canvas, and in the "Modules" section. Assignments will be unlocked during the few weeks before their due dates.

All due dates are posted in the "Modules" section of the course. Assignment descriptions are posted under the "Assignments" tab and are unlocked during the few weeks prior to the assignment due date. We'll also be discussing assignment details during class—it is therefore your responsibility to attend class and/or seek clarification from me about the assignments.

Importantly, it is your responsibility to ensure that you are turning in the correct assignment that you wish to be graded. I will grade only the latest, on-time submission uploaded to the appropriate space in Canvas without exception. This policy is to help prepare you for other college courses and the workplace, where attention to detail, learning how to use the required technology correctly, and turning in the correct assignment is incredibly important.

Writing conventions

With the exception of daily quizzes, I expect all writing assignments turned in to follow these conventions. We will discuss the writing conventions in detail during the course. It is your responsibility to ensure that your submissions follow the required writing conventions. **NOTE: If you do not follow these conventions you will receive an additional 25% off of any submission without exception.** This is a deduction on top of the grade you receive:

- Times New Roman font
- 12-point size
- Double-spaced throughout (2.0 spacing)
- Normal margins (1" on all sides)
- Indentation no more than 0.5" for the beginning of paragraphs
- Page numbers are optional, but if you use them, please put them in the footer on the right side (Times New Roman font, 10-point size)
- Cover pages, tables of contents, works cited pages, or any other additional non-assignment pages do not count toward your total number of pages; however, you are welcome to use them to provide additional clarity

Reading responses--35% of your overall course grade

You'll submit a two-to-four (2-4) page, double-spaced response to your choice of topics from a list of topics I will provide the class with. You'll submit a total of two (2) reading responses throughout the quarter. Your first reading response will be worth 15% of your overall course grade, and your second reading response will be worth 20% of your overall course grade; I weight the later assignment more heavily so you have a chance to "warm up" to my expectations and the course. More details about the assignment will be unlocked on Canvas during the second week of class under the "Assignments" section.

Reading Response 1 and Reading Response 2 must follow all of the writing conventions (above). I will only grade the latest, on-time submission in the appropriate space on Canvas—so please ensure that you are turning in the assignment you would like me to grade.

Reading Response 1 and Reading Response 2 cannot be turned in late without an excused absence and prior authorization.

Political Action Paper and Proof of Political Action--25% of your overall course grade

For this assignment, you will choose one of two possible options.

Option 1: You'll draft a four-to-six (4-6) page double-spaced paper that identifies a political issue that you'd like lawmakers to handle differently. After describing the background of the issue, you'll summarize the different mechanisms available for political action (examples include: writing a letter to a lawmaker, attending a protest, or even creating a grassroots organization). For each of these potential political actions, you will then describe the pros and cons of each. Finally, you'll choose one of the potential political actions you listed and actually take it; examples might include writing a letter to a lawmaker, attending a protest, or even creating a grassroots organization. **To fully complete this assignment, you will be required to write the above paper and provide proof that you completed the political action you chose within your paper.**

Option 2: You'll draft a two-to-four (2-4) page double-spaced paper that presents the qualitative and quantitative data regarding why youth voter turnout is lower than other groups', the reasons behind low youth voter turnout from a scientific perspective, the reasons behind low youth voter turnout from an anecdotal perspective (e.g., conversations with young voters), specific ways to increase youth voter turnout, and your reflections from completing two (2) on-campus Voter Registration or Get Out The Vote canvassing shifts. **To fully complete this assignment, you will be required to write the above paper and provide proof that you completed two (2) two-hour Voter Registration canvassing shifts, or two (2) two-hour Get Out The Vote canvassing shifts, or one (1) two-hour Voter Registration canvassing shift and one (1) two-hour Get Out The Vote canvassing shift.**

The Political Action Paper must follow all of the writing conventions (above). I will only grade the latest, on-time submission in the appropriate space on Canvas—so please ensure that you are turning in the assignment you would like me to grade. Importantly, this assignment includes two separate submissions on Canvas for full credit.

The Political Action Paper and Proof of Political Action cannot be turned in late without an excused absence and prior authorization.

Class participation and quizzes--20% of your overall course grade

Daily throughout the quarter, I'll conduct a brief quiz to test your understanding of the assigned class materials for that day. Additionally, periodically, in-class activities will be graded.

In-class activities and quizzes do not have to follow the writing conventions unless otherwise required. **In-class participation quizzes and activities cannot be made up without an excused absence.**

Final examination--20% of your overall course grade

The final examination will be a take-home essay examination and there will be no need to come to school to get the questions, complete the final examination, or turn in the final examination. You will be given the questions approximately two weeks in advance. We will discuss the examination in detail in-class week eight of the quarter.

The Final Examination must follow all of the writing conventions (above). I will only grade the latest, on-time submission in the appropriate space on Canvas—so please ensure that you are turning in the assignment you would like me to grade.

The Final Examination cannot be turned in late without an excused absence and prior authorization.

Academic Integrity:

If you choose to cheat, steal, or plagiarize, then you will receive a zero (0) for the assignment. You might also receive a failing grade for the course. Additionally, the professor may, in her discretion, report your cheating to Bellevue College.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying answers on exams, glancing at nearby exams, turning in assignments or papers that have been used in other classes, and giving or receiving help during an exam. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, purchasing or selling notes, assignments, or examination materials.

Stealing includes, but is not limited to, using the text, notes, exams, library books or other personal property of others without their permission.

Plagiarism is presenting the words, ideas, and/or work of others as your own. It includes, but is not limited to, using other's papers as one's own and including parts of published works without giving credit where credit is due.

Late Policy:

All graded assignments are due on the dates specified unless you are notified otherwise in class or via Canvas. **Late assignments receive zero (0) points without at least 24-hours' pre-approval.**

If you are experiencing difficulties comprehending or completing the material, are experiencing personal hardship, or otherwise need to make any other arrangements, please contact me as soon as possible. **In order for me to grant an exception to the standard grading policies, you must e-mail me on Canvas 24 hours BEFORE the due date of the particular assignment with documentation of an excuse (e.g., a doctor's note, etc.).**

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 BC, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

Code of Honor:

By being a student in this course you acknowledge that you are a part of a learning community at Bellevue College that is committed to the highest academic standards. As a part of this community, you pledge to uphold the fundamental standards of honesty, respect, and integrity, and accept the responsibility to encourage others to adhere to these standards.

Accommodations:

The Disability Resource Center serves students with a wide array of learning challenges and disabilities. If you are a student who has a disability or learning challenge for which you have documentation or have seen someone for treatment, and if you feel you may need accommodations in order to be successful in college, please contact DRC as soon as possible.

If you are a person who requires assistance in case of an emergency situation, such as a fire, earthquake, etc., please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan within the first week of the quarter.

The DRC office is located in B 132 or you can call at 425-564-2498. Deaf students can reach us by video phone at 425-440-2025 or by TTY at 425-564-4110. Application information and other helpful links are available at www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc.

Public Safety:

The Bellevue College Public Safety services provide personal safety, security, crime prevention, preliminary investigations, and other services to the campus community, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Their phone number is 425-564-2400. Public Safety is located in K100 and on the web at <http://bellevuecollege.edu/publicsafety/> for campus emergency preparedness information, campus closure announcements, and critical information in the event of an emergency.

Bellevue College Counseling Center

The Bellevue College Counseling Center assists students with a wide variety of personal life challenges. They assist with concerns that may be impacting academic performance, assist students with exploring college majors and career choices, among other things.




Their phone number is 425-564-5747, you can email them at askacounselor@bellevuecollege.edu (<mailto:askacounselor@bellevuecollege.edu>), or you can visit their office, which is located on the 2nd floor of the Student Affairs building (B-Building).





















*The instructor is a lawyer licensed to practice in Washington State, but neither the course, nor lectures, nor anything else related to the course constitutes legal advice.



















Syllabus subject to change. Syllabus updated 8/29/2017.



* The syllabus and classroom policies are borrowed in part from Dr. Michael S. Brown and Dr. Timothy Jones.

Course Summary:

Date	Details
	 Overview Course Policies and Syllabus https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679072 due by 3pm
Mon Sep 18, 2017	 Read: The New York Times Morning Briefing each day this week https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679073 due by 3pm
	 The Scientific Method https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679430 due by 3pm

Date	Details
Wed Sep 20, 2017	 Discuss Reading Response 1 (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679309) due by 3pm
	 Harvard Implicit Bias Test (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679065) due by 3pm
	 How to Spot Fake News - FactCheck.pdf (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679066) due by 3pm
	 News and the Media (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679464) due by 3pm
	 News Bias Chart (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679071) due by 3pm
	 Psychological Phenomena (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679456) due by 3pm
	 Washington Post-- The fact checker's guide for detecting fake news (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679103) due by 3pm
	 Read: Confirmation Bias (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679091) due by 11:59pm
	 Read: Self-Delusion (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679097) due by 11:59pm
Mon Sep 25, 2017	 Read: Third-Person Effect (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679098) due by 11:59pm
	 Discuss Political Action Paper and Proof of Political Action (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679311) due by 3pm
	 Read: Chapter 1: Gateways to American Democracy (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679078) due by 3pm
Wed Sep 27, 2017	 Writing Workshop (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679104) due by 3pm
	 Read: Chapter 9: Campaigns, Elections, and Voting (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679079) due by 3pm
Mon Oct 2, 2017	 Discuss Reading Response 2 (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679310) due by 3pm
Wed Oct 4, 2017	 Read: Chapter 2: The Constitution (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679088) due by 3pm
	 Reading response 1 DUE October 4 at 11:59 p.m. (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679092) due by 11:59pm
Mon Oct 9, 2017	 Read: Chapter 3: Federalism (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679083) due by 3pm
Wed Oct 11, 2017	 Read: Chapter 10: Congress (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679082) due by 3pm
Wed Oct 18, 2017	 Read: Chapter 11: The Presidency (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679090) due by 3pm

Date	Details	
Wed Oct 25, 2017	 Read: Chapter 13: The Judiciary (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679089)	due by 3pm
	 Reading response 2 DUE October 25 at 11:59 p.m. (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679094)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 1, 2017	 Read: Chapter 12: The Bureaucracy (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679087)	due by 3pm
Mon Nov 6, 2017	 Political Action Readings (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679427)	due by 3pm
Wed Nov 8, 2017	 Political Action Readings (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679075)	due by 3pm
	 Read Korematsu v. United States (1944) (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679095)	due by 3pm
	 Read: Chapter 4: Civil Liberties (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679080)	due by 3pm
Mon Nov 13, 2017	 Read: Chapter 5: Civil Rights (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679081)	due by 3pm
	 Political Action Paper DUE November 13 at 11:59 p.m. (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679074)	due by 11:59pm
	 Proof of Political Action DUE November 13 at 11:59 p.m. (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679077)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 15, 2017	 Read: Lessig Materials (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679096)	due by 11:59pm
Mon Nov 20, 2017	 Discuss Final Examination and Final Examination Study Guide (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679308)	due by 3pm
	 Read: Chapter 6: Public Opinion and the Media (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679086)	due by 3pm
	 Movie Review: The House I Live In DUE November 20 at 11:59 p.m. (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679533)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 22, 2017	 Read: Chapter 7: Interest Groups (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679084)	due by 3pm
Mon Nov 27, 2017	 Read: Chapter 8: Political Parties (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679085)	due by 3pm
Wed Nov 29, 2017	 Course Review and Final Examination Review (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679068)	due by 3pm
	 Money in Politics (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679459)	due by 3pm

Date	Details
Tue Dec 5, 2017	 Final Exam DUE December 5 at 9:59 p.m. (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679061) due by 9:59pm
	 9/18/17 quiz (https://bc.instructure.com/courses/1464699/assignments/10679330)