American Government in a Multicultural World

POLI 1090, Spring 2015, Haley 2182, 2:00-3:15 TTh
Mark Burns, Instructor

Course Introduction

This material is designed to give you a basic introduction POLI 1090, American Government in a Multicultural World.

If you're in the class on the first day, you'll receive a paper copy.

In the introduction, you'll find:

1. Course Objectives
2. Methods and Grading
3. Textbooks
4. Initial Readings
5. Additional Syllabus Components

- COURSE OBJECTIVES -

This course will review American political institutions, processes and behavior in comparative context, with special attention to the ways in which cultural and social diversity in the U.S. has impacted its politics.

Upon successfully completing this course, the student will be able to:

- Identify terms and concepts associated with the workings of American government and politics.
- Identify terms and concepts associated with cultural and social diversity in American politics.
- More effectively describe the historical origins of American political institutions.
- Critically assess varying policy positions in American politics.

- METHODS AND GRADING -

POLI 1090 is structured in a “blended” format, so many of the "meetings" of the class will not take place in the physical classroom. These lectures will be on Canvas and can be accessed from any location with any Internet connection at any time of day throughout the course. Questions related to them can be posted on the "Lecture" discussion group of the class Canvas site.
Course Requirements

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brief Quiz</td>
<td>Feb. TBA</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test 1</td>
<td>Feb. TBA</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Test 2</td>
<td>Mar. TBA</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>Apr. TBA</td>
<td>30%</td>
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- The *Brief Quiz*, on Feb. TBA, will cover lectures and readings up to that point in the class, including materials posted on Canvas, and will be for the purpose of generating your Early Grade Alert (see below). The quiz will consist of a small number of multiple-choice questions and must be taken using clickers. Failure to use your clicker on the test will result in a 10-point reduction on your quiz grade.

- *Tests/Final Exam*. There will be a total of three multiple choice tests/exams covering the required readings and material discussed in lecture.

  The two tests will not be cumulative. This does not mean, however, that material from one test will never overlap with material from another. Nearly all of the different aspects of government and politics we cover in this course are inherently interrelated in some way—that point should become more apparent as we progress through the semester.

  The Final Exam *will* be cumulative.

  In both the tests and final exam, the primary emphasis will be on lecture material, both in-class and on Canvas.

- *Discussion/Class Participation*. There will be no explicit grade for class participation or discussion, but these matters will be taken into account in deciding cases of “borderline” final grades. For this reason, students should bring their clickers to every class session. Discussion may also take the form of questions posed in class and posts to the discussion groups on Canvas.

  Other than the areas discussed in the above paragraph, there will be no “extra credit” assignments in the course.

Communication Matters

The primary source of electronic communication (“Messaging”) with the instructor should be through our class Canvas Site. (see below)

The class Canvas Site is a center for course announcements and communications which allows students to pose discussion issues, post comments, share news materials, and raise questions outside the physical classroom. Students should check this site at least one day prior to each scheduled class meeting for announcements and
relevant class readings; failure to do so is the sole responsibility of the student. This site is restricted to class members; access requires your standard Auburn IT user name and password. Informational materials posted to Canvas site are just as much “fair game” for tests as standard lecture/reading/class discussion materials.

**Early Grading Policy**

Since POLI 1090 is a social science core course, you will receive an Early Alert Grade one week prior to mid semester (31st class day). The Early Alert Grade represents your current performance on class work graded at that point in the semester. The sole purpose of the Brief Quiz, to be taken with clickers, is to generate this grade, along with consideration of your class participation/discussion to that date.

If your Early Alert Grade is a "D", "F", or "FA" you will receive an email from the Retention Coordinator.

Early Alert Grades can be viewed by logging into AU Access and opening the tiger i tab. Select "Student Records" and open the "Midterm Grades" window from the drop down box. If the grade seems inaccurate, please contact me.

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**TEXTBOOKS AND MATERIALS**

The textbooks and materials for the course will be available at J & M Bookstore and J & M II.


- iClicker 2

You are required to purchase an i>clicker2 remote for in-class participation, roll, and the Brief Quiz unless you already own the previous i>clicker model.

i>clicker2 is a response system that allows you to participate in the quizzes for this class and any other clicker-related exercises in class. Instructions for us for using the i>clicker are on its back.

In order to fully participate in class, you will need to register your i>clicker2 remote online within the first three weeks of class. You must have come to class at least once and voted on at least one question in order to complete this registration properly. I will pose the first sample question during the second week of class.

Once you have voted on a question in my class, go to [http://www.iclicker.com/registration](http://www.iclicker.com/registration) to complete your registration.

Complete the fields with your first name, last name, student ID, and remote ID. Your student ID is your Auburn GID -- your Auburn email address without the @auburn.edu, i.e. xxx0001.
The remote ID is the series of numbers and sometimes letters found on the bottom of the back of your i>clicker2 remote and appears on the screen each time you turn on your i>clicker2. i>clicker2 will be used on the days of class designated for quizzes and on other days by previous class announcement.

If you registered your i>clicker for an earlier semester you will need to register again.

Other Readings

Supplemental readings may also be assigned throughout the semester to complement the topics being discussed. I will make students aware of any additional reading material prior to the class they are assigned for. You should routinely check the class Canvas page and your university e-mail accounts for course-related announcements. Students should also follow the news daily. It is important to think about how current events are related to the material being discussed throughout the course. This will help you better understand and evaluate course concepts, as well as keep class discussions interesting.

- INITIAL CLASS MEETINGS -

This is the schedule for the first class meetings of the course. The complete schedule will appear in a separate Web document.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>READING</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week of Jan. 15</td>
<td>Course Organization, General Overview</td>
<td>MK, Chs. 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week of Jan. 20</td>
<td>The Constitution</td>
<td>MK, Ch. 3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tuesday &amp; Thursday</td>
<td></td>
<td>CCM, Readings 7-9</td>
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or files on your computer or USB drive.

**Are you reading a paper handout?** Then you can access this introduction--and its links to the other course components--through the Worldwide Web address "http://www.auburn.edu/~burnsma/POLI 1090/intro.pdf".

1. **Course Schedule (not yet on Web).** Complete list of all the activities, required readings, etc., for each day of the semester. Consult this list before every class day. There is a lot of material to cover in this class, and it's much easier to keep up than to try to catch up later!
2. **About the Instructor.** Information about Mark Burns and his expectations for the class.
3. **My Office Hours**, contact information, etc.
4. **Additional Course Information** you need to be aware of.

Components of the syllabus, as well as other useful links to course materials, will be quickly accessed through the **Course Hub**, not yet posted to the Web.

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**Two Views on Policy Making**

"Politics is the authoritative allocation of values."
--David Easton, political scientist

"The Constitution? What's the Constitution among friends?"
--George Washington Plunkitt, New York politician

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Have ideas for other information that should be included here? [Send your suggestions!](mailto:mb@auburn.edu)

[Return to MB Home Page](http://www.auburn.edu/~burnsma/) or return to the [Course Information Page](http://www.auburn.edu/~burnsma/POLI 1090/index.html).

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