

# American Government

## Political Science 2051

Dr. Hogan  
POLI 2051, Section 2  
Spring 2018

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### Course Description

This course is designed to introduce students to the fundamentals of American government and politics. The first part of the course examines the ideological, historical, socioeconomic, and constitutional contexts of politics in the United States. The second part explores components of the political process including interest groups, political parties, and elections. The third part focuses on the institutions of government (executive, legislative, and judicial branches) that create and implement public policies. The vast majority of our focus will be on national level politics, although at points we will cover some aspects of state and local governments as well.

As a General Education Course, POLI 2051 is designed to address the following General Education outcomes: *“LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.”*

### Course Requirements

The course requirements include reading the text book, watching video presentations, taking practice quizzes, writing four brief essays, and taking three multiple-choice exams (the final is not cumulative). The course schedule for completing practice quizzes, writing assignments and exams is listed below as well as on the course Moodle page. This is an on-line course that moves very quickly with assignments due throughout the semester, so it is very important that you pay close attention to the course schedule and check the Moodle web site regularly. At the beginning of each week I will post a brief video summarizing what you should be focusing on for that week. Any changes to the schedule, updates, etc. will be announced near the top of the Moodle page under “Announcements”.

### Required Reading Materials

*Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy* -- **Revel Access**, 17<sup>th</sup> Edition, 2018 (by George C. Edwards, Martin P. Wattenberg, and William G. Howell), Pearson: ISBN: 9780134628936). This is an electronic book that is available for purchase through the LSU bookstore. Once you have purchased it, follow the instructions listed below for gaining access. NOTE: We will only be using the text for reading. In other words, Pearson’s REVEL product contains various assignments and tests but we are not using these. You are only using this as a text book. All of the assignments, quizzes, and exams you are responsible for are available through LSU’s course Moodle page.

### How to Access the On-Line Text You Purchased

This course uses a Pearson digital product used throughout the semester. The required link below is unique to this course. Here is how to register:

1. Go to: <https://console.pearson.com/enrollment/qn0oez>
2. Sign in to your Pearson Account or create one. You can either: sign in with an existing Pearson username and password OR create a new Pearson account if this is your first Pearson digital product.
3. Redeem your access code or purchase instant access online. (Temporary access option for financial aid is also available.)

What you should know: Bookmark <https://console.pearson.com> to easily access your materials. Pearson recommends using the latest version of Chrome, Firefox, or Safari with this digital product. A brief video from Pearson explains the registration process: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pavN9npktBI>. Also, note that a printed copy of the text is also available. You have the option to upgrade to an unbound version of the text once you have purchased REVEL access direct from Pearson or via an access code card at the bookstore. The cost of the upgrade is \$19.95 and the text is shipped directly to you.

### How to Contact Me

The best way to contact me is by e-mail. I will make every effort to answer your questions in a timely manner (usually within 24 hours during the normal work week). I will also hold office hours on Mondays from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. when you may telephone me (578-3217) or stop by (Stubbs 205). If you would like to set up a specific time to talk, e-mail me and we can schedule a time that is mutually convenient.

## Student Evaluations and Policies

### Grading

The final grade for this course will be determined by a student's performance in the following areas:

Practice Quizzes (16 @ 0.5% each)	8%
Presidential Documentary Report	8%
Brief Report: "Interpreting the Louisiana Survey"	3%
Brief Report: "Representation in the U.S. House"	3%
Brief Report: Reaction Paper on "The Draft"	3%
Exam #1	20%
Exam #2	25%
Final Exam	30%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100%</b>

Letter grades are assigned as follows based on a student's final numerical average:

<b>A+</b> 97 ≥	<b>B+</b> 87-89	<b>C+</b> 77-79	<b>D+</b> 67-69	<b>F</b> <60
<b>A</b> 93-96	<b>B</b> 83-86	<b>C</b> 73-76	<b>D</b> 63-66	
<b>A-</b> 90-92	<b>B-</b> 80-82	<b>C-</b> 70-72	<b>D-</b> 60-62	

### Video Presentations

For each chapter of the text, I provide a series of video slide presentations (usually 4-7 videos for each chapter with a combined run time of anywhere from 30-45 minutes). The videos for each week along with the slides are provided on the course Moodle page. These presentations are intended to highlight aspects of the reading that will assist you in grasping the central concepts. My goal is to provide illustrative examples where needed while demonstrating how the various concepts are interrelated and significant. Please recognize that the video presentations should not be viewed as a substitute for carefully reading and taking thorough notes on the text. I cover many of the main points in each chapter, but I do not cover every definition and concept. Note that I have adopted a minimalist approach with the slide presentation videos. In other words, I do not include extraneous photos or graphs other than what I believe to be necessary for conveying the central ideas and concepts. By avoiding a "dazzling" power point presentation I hope to focus your attention squarely on the material you need to know while allowing you to preserve your printer's ink supply (I highly recommend printing the slides so that you may take notes on them as you listen). I strongly suggest reading and taking notes on the chapter prior to watching the video presentations. Once you are familiar with the concepts covered in the book, you will find the presentations more useful.

### Practice Quizzes

A practice quiz on Moodle has been design to accompany each chapter of the text. Each quiz contains 12 multiple choice questions on concepts covered in the text. While these quizzes are not comprehensive in their coverage, they should help you assess your grasp of some key concepts and hopefully help you learn more of the material in preparation for the exams. NOTE: You may take each quiz as many times as you want to improve your score up until the time when the quiz is closed (note the times listed on the syllabus). Each quiz is worth 0.5 percent of your course grade (for a total of 8 percent of your course grade). Note that the practice quizzes are usually due on Fridays at 6:00 p.m. on the dates listed on the syllabus (note that all times are calibrated to the Central Time Zone). Because you may encounter technical difficulties, I urge you to begin these quizzes well in advance of the closing time. Again, you may take these as many times as you like to improve your grade up to the closing time listed on the syllabus. Note for all quizzes there is a 5-day grace period. This means that if you do not complete the quiz by the 6:00 p.m. Friday deadline, you have 5 additional days to complete it without penalty. Please note, I will not accept quizzes past the grace period unless a documented excuse is provided demonstrating why you were prevented from finishing the quiz prior to the original Friday, 6:00 p.m. deadline. What this means is that you should make your best effort to complete the quizzes prior to the deadlines and rely on the grace period only when an unexpected problem arises.

### Exams

There are three exams (two in term and a final). Note the final exam is not cumulative. You have a 48-hour window in which to take each exam (see schedule below). This means you may select any 30-minute window within this period to take you exam. Note that you will only have one attempt and only 30 minutes to take the exam. It is therefore imperative that you have a reliable internet connection. Should you lose internet access while taking your exam, you will not be allowed to repeat it. These are multiple choice exams (50 questions) and you are free to use your text book and your notes. However, recognize that you will only have 30 minutes to take the exam, so it is imperative that you study in advance in order to do well. Given the time constraint (50 questions in 30 minutes), it will not be possible to look up answers to each question. While you may use your book and notes, you may not rely on the assistance of others. Makeup exams will not be given unless the instructor is notified in advance and agrees that the absence is a university excused absence (Note PS-22). Makeups are all essay exams.

### Writing Assignments

There are three brief reports that each count for 3% of the course grade. In addition, there is a more extensive report on a presidential documentary that counts for 8% of the course grade. The due dates for uploading these reports through the Moodle site are listed on the syllabus. Remember that these are individual assignments that you must complete without the assistance of others. In an effort to provide a level playing field, I take deadlines very seriously and hold everyone to an identical standard. The deadlines for the assignments vary throughout the semester. It is your responsibility to keep track of these and complete the assignments on time (there are no grace periods for these assignment). However, I recognize there are legitimate reasons for missing a deadline. A penalty for submitting an assignment late is assessed based upon the circumstances, but will generally involve a substantial loss of points. Recognize that for reasons of fairness to other students in the class, credit cannot be given at the end of the semester for papers not handed in. In other words, when you experience a significant problem that prevents you from meeting a deadline, it is your responsibility to let me know about it in a timely manner.

### **General Policies**

#### Academic Honesty

Students are required to abide by the academic conduct policies outlined in the LSU Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs>). Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: cheating on exams, plagiarizing, buying or selling assignments, altering grades, intentional deception, and collaborating with others without permission. Be very careful with the writing assignment. The writing assignments for this course are based on your opinions so I want to see only your writing. Use of another's words without proper citation or copying from another person's work is considered plagiarism. I reserve the right to investigate when I suspect a violation of any of these policies. All violations of the university's academic conduct policies are turned over to the Dean of Students.

#### Special Needs

For students who have special needs or who require accommodations through Disability Services, please advise me of your situation so arrangements can be made.

## Course Schedule

Please pay careful attention to the due dates for the various practice quizzes, assignments, and exams. Note that the schedule is subject to minor changes and any changes will be noted at the top of the course Moodle page.

### Week #1: January 10-13

#### Introduction to U.S. Government and Politics

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 1.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 1.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 1 to be completed by [Friday, January 12 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

### Week #2: January 14-20

#### U.S. Constitution

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 2 and Appendix (Declaration of Independence, Federalist No. 10 & No. 51, and U.S. Constitution with Amendments).
- Video Presentations: Chapter 2.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 2 to be completed by [Friday, January 19 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

### Week #3: January 21-27

#### Federalism

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 3.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 3.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 3 to be completed by [Friday, January 26 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

### Week #4: January 28 - February 3

#### Civil Liberties

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 4.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 4.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 4 to be completed by [Friday, February 2 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

### Week #5: February 4-10

#### Civil Rights

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 5.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 5.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 5 to be completed by [Friday, February 9 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

**EXAM #1 May be taken anytime from 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 14 through 6:00 p.m. on Friday, February 16.**

### Week #6: February 11-17

#### Public Opinion

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 6.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 6.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 6 to be completed by [Monday, February 19 at 6:00 p.m.](#)
- Work on Report on 2017 Louisiana Survey due on Monday, February 26 at 6:00 p.m.

### Week #7: February 18-24

#### Mass Media and Interest Groups

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapters 7 and 10.
- Video Presentations: Chapters 7 and 10.
- Practice Quizzes: Chapters 7 and 10 to be completed by [Friday, February 23 at 6:00 p.m.](#)
- Work on Report on “Interpreting the 2017 Louisiana Survey” due by [Monday, February 26 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

### Week #8: February 25- March 3

#### Congress

- Report on “Interpreting the 2017 Louisiana Survey” due by [Monday, February 26 at 6:00 p.m.](#)
- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 11.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 11.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 11 to be completed by [Friday, March 2 at 6:00 p.m.](#)
- Report on “Representation in the U.S. House of Representatives” due by [Monday, March 5 at 6:00 p.m.](#)

**Week #9: March 4-10**

**Political Parties and Elections**

- Report on “Representation in the U.S. House of Representatives” due by **Monday, March 5 at 6:00 p.m.**
- Read: *Government in America*, Chapters 8 and 9.
- Video Presentations: Chapters 8 and 9.
- Practice Quizzes for Chapters 8 and 9 to be completed by **Friday, March 9 at 6:00 p.m.**

**EXAM #2: May be taken anytime from 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, March 11 through 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, March 13.**

**Week #10: March 11-17**

**Presidency**

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 12.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 12.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 12 to be completed by **Friday, March 16 at 6:00 p.m.**
- Begin watching presidential documentary for writing assignment (report due on Monday, April 9).

**Week #11: March 18-24**

**Bureaucracy**

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 14.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 14.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 14 to be completed by **Friday, March 23 at 6:00 p.m.**
- Continue watching presidential documentary for writing assignment (report due on Monday, April 9).

**Week #12: March 25-31**

**\*\*\*\*\* SPRING BREAK \*\*\*\*\***

**Week #13: April 1-7**

**Judicial Branch**

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 15
- Video Presentations: Chapter 15.
- Practice Quiz: Chapter 15 to be completed by **Friday, April 6 at 6:00 p.m.**
- Presidential video documentary report due by **Monday, April 9 at 6:00 p.m.**

**Week #14: April 8-14**

**Budget Policies**

- Presidential video documentary report due by **Monday, April 9 at 6:00 p.m.**
- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 13.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 13.
- Practice Quiz for Chapters 13 to be completed by **Friday, April 13 at 6:00 p.m.**

**Week #15: April 15-21**

**Economic and Social Welfare Policies**

- Read: *Government in America*, Chapter 16.
- Video Presentations: Chapter 16.
- Practice Quiz for Chapter 16 to be completed by **Friday, April 20 at 6:00 p.m.**

**Week #16: April 22-28**

**National Security Policymaking**

- Watch “The Draft” (report due by Friday, April 27).
- Report on “The Draft” due by **Friday, April 27 at 6:00 p.m.**

**FINAL EXAM: May be taken anytime from 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 2 through 6:00 p.m. Friday, May 4.**