



POL 1120: Introduction to the U.S. Political System

2023 Summer Session	
Total Class Sessions: 25 Class Sessions Per Week: 5 Total Weeks: 5 Class Session Length (Minutes): 145 Credit Hours: 4	Instructor: Staff Classroom: TBA Office Hours: TBA Language: English

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the US governmental institutions and their practices and how the political forces are combined to shape them and the approach we can take to understand the system. We will introduce the US Congress, political parties, pressure groups, growth of the Presidency, the Supreme Court, judicial review, federalism, separation of powers, and the Bill of Rights; the executive, administrative agencies, the judiciary; constitutional development and law; relations between formal institutions, parties, and interest groups.

Course Materials:

The Logic of American Politics,
Kernell, Jacobson and Kousser, 10th edition

Course Assignments:

Essays:

Students will write three papers, each two pages in length, in which they will advocate a position on one of topics we will be discussing in class. Each paper is worth 10% of total grade. Written instructions for each paper will be handed out in class. These instructions will identify the paper topic and provide additional information about the assignment. A rubric later handed out will provides specific criteria about how the papers will be graded.

Exams:

2 Mid-Term Exam will be given in class. Both Mid-term exams will be closed book and closed note, and will contain both short answer and essays questions. The Mid-Term will be non-cumulative and the Final will be cumulative.

Attendance:

Attendance is MANDATORY!!! Due to the fact that this is a public speaking course students are required to attend ALL sessions. The only excused absences will be for illness documented by a doctor's note. If you know ahead of time that you will be absent, kindly e-mail the instructor immediately. Unexcused absences will result in an automatic drop in grade. With each unexcused absence your final letter grade will be dropped ½ a grade – NO EXCEPTIONS (e.g.:



A to A-).

Course Assessment:

Essay 1	10%
Essay 2	10%
Essay 3	10%
Midterm Exam 1	20%
Midterm Exam 2	20%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

Grading Scale (percentage):

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	F
98-	93-	90-	88-	83-	80-	78-	73-	70-	68-	63-	60-	<60
100	97	92	89	87	82	79	77	72	69	67	62	

Academic Integrity:

Students are encouraged to study together, and to discuss lecture topics with one another, but all other work should be completed independently.

Students are expected to adhere to the standards of academic honesty and integrity that are described in the Chengdu University of Technology's *Academic Conduct Code*. Any work suspected of violating the standards of the *Academic Conduct Code* will be reported to the Dean's Office. Penalties for violating the *Academic Conduct Code* may include dismissal from the program. All students have an individual responsibility to know and understand the provisions of the *Academic Conduct Code*.

Special Needs or Assistance:

Please contact the Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material. Our goal is to help you learn, not to penalize you for issues which mask your learning.

Course Schedule:

Class 1:

Course Introduction

Read the syllabus

THE LOGIC OF AMERICAN POLITICS



Class 2:

The Constitution and the Nationalization of American Politics

Problems of Collective Action

Reading: Logic (for The Logic of American Politics), Chapter 1

Class 3:

The Constitution and the Nationalization of American Politics:

The Articles of Confederation

The Constitution in Context

Reading: Logic, Chapter 2,

Class 4:

The Constitution and the Nationalization of American Politics - Continued

Federalism

Class 5:

Anti-Federalist

Reading: Logic, Chapter 3

Constitutional Issues:

Civil Rights - Past Issues

Class 6:

Constitutional Issues:

Civil Rights - Current Issues

Reading: Logic, Chapter 4

Class 7:

Constitutional Issues:

Civil Liberties

Reading: Logic, Chapter 5

Class 8:

Essay 1 Due

The U.S. Congress:

Political Parties as an American Institution

Reading: Logic, Chapter 6

Class 9:

Midterm Exam 1

Class 10:

The U.S. Congress:

Electoral Representation

Reading: Logic, Chapter 12

The U.S. Congress:



Organization and Lawmaking

Class 11:

The U.S. Congress:

Legislative Deal-making and Gridlock

Reading: Logic, Chapter 6

Reading: Jay Cost, "The Pivotal Politics of Health Care Reform Part II." 2009

Class 12:

The Presidency: Presidential Power

Reading: Logic, Chapter 7

Class 13:

The Presidency:

Presidential Leadership

Reading: Neustadt, Richard. 1990. Presidential Power: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan.

Reading: Klein, Ezra. 2012. The Unpersuaded: Who Listens to a President?

Class 14:

The Judiciary:

The Federal Judiciary

Appellate Court Structure

Class 15:

Inter-branch Relations

Reading: Logic, Chapter 9

In-Class Video - Obama's Deal

Class 16:

Judicial Review

The Supreme Court

Reading: Logic, Chapter 9

Class 17:

Essay 2 Due

Bureaucracy and The Budget

Electoral Institutions

Class 18:

The Electoral College, Gerrymandering, and Primaries

Reading: Logic, Chapter 8

Reading: Logic, Chapter 11

Class 19:



Midterm Exam 2

Class 20:

Campaigns and Elections:

Turnout and Decision

Reading: Logic, Chapter 11

Reading: Francia et al., the Financiers of Congressional Elections: Investors, Intimates, and Ideologues. Chapters 1, 3

Class 21:

Political and Social Identities:

Polarization

The Polarized Public?

Class 22:

Political and Social Identities:

Race and Ethnicity

Interest Groups and Public Opinion:

Interest Groups

Reading: Logic, Chapter 13

Class 23:

Interest Groups and Public Opinion:

Public Opinion

Reading: Logic, Chapter 10

Class 24:

Public Partisanship

Reading: Logic, Chapter 14

Class 25:

Essay 3 Due

THE NEWS MEDIA;

THE PROSPECTS FOR INSTITUTIONAL REFORM

Wrap up

Review for final

Final Exam (Cumulative): TBA