



*Political Science 102.05
Online Syllabus
Last updated May 1, 2021*

Important Note: Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule, but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. It is your responsibility to check Blackboard for corrections or updates to the syllabus. Any changes will be clearly noted in course announcements or through Stony Brook email.

Part 1: Course Information

Course title: Introduction to American Government

Course catalog # and section: POL 102.05

Credit hours: 3

Instructor name: Hillary Style

Instructor's Stony Brook email: Hillary.style@stonybrook.edu

Zoom office hours: Thursdays 11am-1pm or by appointment

Course Description: What the informed citizen and specialist should know about the organization of American government, including the Constitution and what it means today, the Congress, political parties, pressure groups, growth of the Presidency, the Supreme Court, judicial review, federalism, separation of powers, and the Bill of Rights. May not be taken for credit in addition to POL 105.

Course Learning Outcomes:

- Students will be able to identify the main elements of the Constitution and explain how they form the basis of Federal law.
- Students will understand how individuals form their political attitudes and how the media, politicians, and interest groups influence those attitudes.
- Students will identify the major institutions of the American government and they key figures in each of those institutions.
- Students will understand how institutions, political figures, and citizens interact.

Required Course Textbook and Materials:

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline J. Tolbert, and Robert J. Spitzer. 2019. *We The People: An Introduction to American Politics, Twelfth Essentials Edition*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company. ISBN: 978-0393679670

You can use any edition, but the exact page numbers may differ. You can use the Inquiz tools to study, but they are not required for the course.



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How We Will Communicate:

The best way to contact me is to email me directly. If you use Blackboard's **email tool** from the course site, it will automatically include your full name, course name and section when you send me an email. **Please allow between 24-48 hours for an email reply.** Your Stony Brook University email must be used for all University-related communications. You must have an active Stony Brook University email account and access to the Internet. All instructor correspondence will be sent to your SBU email account. **Plan on checking your SBU email account regularly for course-related messages.** To log in to Stony Brook Google Mail, go to <http://www.stonybrook.edu/mycloud> and sign in with your NetID and password.

Regular announcements will be sent from Blackboard. These will be posted in the course site and may or may not be sent by email.

Technical Requirements:

This course uses Blackboard for the facilitation of communications between faculty and students, submission of assignments, and posting of grades and feedback. The Blackboard course site can be accessed at <https://blackboard.stonybrook.edu>

If you are unsure of your NetID, visit <https://it.stonybrook.edu/help/kb/finding-your-netid-and-password> for more information. You are responsible for having a reliable computer and Internet connection throughout the term. **Caution! You will be at a disadvantage if you attempt to complete all coursework on a smart phone or tablet. It may not be possible to submit the files required for your homework assignments.**

Students should be able to use email, a word processor, spreadsheet program, and presentation software to complete this course successfully.

The following list details a minimum recommended computer set-up and the software packages you will need to have access to, and be able to use:

- PC with Windows 10 or higher (we recommend a 3-year Warranty)
- Macintosh with OS 10.11 or higher (we recommend a 3-year Warranty)
- Intel Core i5 or higher
- 250 GB Hard Drive
- 8 GB RAM
- Latest version of Chrome or Firefox; Mac users may use Chrome or Firefox. (A complete list of supported browsers and operating systems can be found on the My Institution page when you log in to Blackboard.)
- High speed internet connection
- Word processing software (Microsoft Word, Google Docs, etc.)
- Headphones/earbuds and a microphone
- Webcam (recommended)
- Printer (optional)
- Ability to download and install free software applications and plug-ins (note: you must have administrator access to install applications and plug-ins).

Technical Assistance:

If you need technical assistance at any time during the course or to report a problem with Blackboard you can:

- Phone: 631-632-9800 (client support, Wi-Fi, software and hardware)
- Submit a help request ticket: <https://it.stonybrook.edu/services/itsm>
- If you are on campus, visit the Walk-Up Tech Support Station in the Educational Communications Center (ECC) building.

Part 2: Grading, Attendance, and Late Work Policies

Assessment and Grading: The course is divided into three units. Each unit has a writing assignment and a quiz. There will also be a final exam.

Unit Writing Assignments (9%):

The first unit writing assignment will be a response question assignment, described and submitted under the “assignments” tab in Blackboard. This assignment will be similar to the discussion posts for units two and three, but will provide an exercise for focusing those discussion responses and an opportunity for feedback.

For units two and three there will be a discussion prompt posted under the GROUP discussion board. *Respond to the prompt and to at least two other group members posts.* To receive full credit, your post and both responses must be made before the unit ends and must be substantive and constructive. Please see the online etiquette section below for general rules for posting.

It is important that the content of these writing assignments is based on the class material rather than your personal opinions about American politics. You should use and reference terms and concepts from the book and lectures.

Unit Quizzes (75%):

All unit quizzes will be given on BlackBoard. You will be quizzed only on the material from that unit. Each unit exam will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions. You will have 36 hours to start the exam (noon on Thursday to 11:59 PM on Friday). You will have 80 minutes to complete them once you start. The dates are as follows.

1. March 4-5
2. April 8-9
3. May 6-7

Final Exam (16%):

There will be a cumulative final exam on BlackBoard. The exam will be posted at 9am on Thursday, May 13. You must complete it by Saturday, May 15 at 9am.. Once you begin the exam you will only have 2 and a half hours to finish the exam.

Extra Credit:

You can earn 1 point of extra credit on each of the unit writing assignments – specific requirements will be provided in the assignment instructions on blackboard. There may be additional opportunities available during the semester, but those will be announced later.

Letter Grades:

A : 100-93	A-: 92-90	B+: 89-87	B: 86-83	B-: 82-80
C+: 79-77	C : 76-73	C-: 72-70	D+: 69-67	D : 66-63
D-: 62-60	F : <60			

Online Etiquette:

- Offensive language or rudeness will not be tolerated. Discuss ideas, not the person.
- Avoid cluttering your messages with excessive emphasis (stars, arrows, exclamations).
- If you are responding to a message, include the relevant part of the original message in your reply, or refer to the original post to avoid confusion;
- Be specific and clear, especially when asking questions.
- Use standard punctuation and capitalization. Using all UPPERCASE characters gives the appearance of shouting and makes the message less legible;
- Remember that not all readers have English as their native language, so make allowances for possible misunderstandings and unintended discourtesies.

Attendance Policy: Because we are not meeting in person, there is no formal attendance policy, but it is your best interest, both for your grade and understanding of course material, to engage with the discussions and the materials posted.

Late Work Policy: Please reach out to me if you anticipate being unable to meet a deadline BEFORE THE DEADLINE. Makeup exams will be in the form of an essay exam. Makeup exams and extensions will not be granted if you reach out after the deadline. If you are experiencing a serious issue, please see Section 5 below for guidance on resources.

Part 3: Course Schedule

subject to changes

Week 1: Week of February 1 Introduction

Week 2: Week of February 8 History/Federalism

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 1: Introduction: The Citizen and Government (pages 2-26) & Chapter 3: Federalism (pages 66-92)
- On Blackboard: Diamond, M. (1959). Democracy and the Federalist: A Reconsideration of the Framers' Intent. *American Political Science Review*, 53(1): 52-68.

Week 3: Week of February 15 The Constitution

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 2: The Founding and the Constitution (pages 30-62)
- On Blackboard: Diamond, M. (1959). Zink, J.R., & C.T. Dawes. (2016). The Dead Hand of the Past? Toward an Understanding of "Constitutional Veneration". *Political Behavior*, 38(3): 535-560.
- Unit 1 Writing Assignment (response question exercise) Due by 11:59pm on Friday, February 19

Week 4: Week of February 22 Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 4: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (pages 96-140)
- On Blackboard: Suhay, E., & J. Garretson. (2018). Science, Sexuality, and Civil Rights: Does Information on the Causes of Sexual Orientation Change Attitudes?. *The Journal of Politics*, 80(2), 692-696.

Week 5: Week of March 1 Unit 1 Review and Quiz

- Quiz available Thursday, March 4 @ noon ET – Friday, March 5 @ 11:59 PM

Week 6: Week of March 8 Parties

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 7 (first half): Political Parties, Participation, and Elections (pages 204-220)
- On Blackboard: Aldrich, J. H., & D.J. Lee. (2016). Why two parties? Ambition, policy, and the presidency. *Political Science Research and Methods*, 4(2), 275-292.

Week 7: Week of March 15 Public Opinion

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 5: Public Opinion (pages 144-172)
- On Blackboard: Klar, S., Y. Krupnikov, & J.B. Ryan. (2018). Affective Polarization or Partisan Disdain? Untangling a Dislike of the Opposing Party from a Dislike of Partisanship. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 82(2): 379-390.
- Unit 2 Writing Assignment (discussion post and responses) Due by 11:59pm on Friday, March 19

Week 8: Week of March 22 Take a break

- Use this week to catch up on any readings or video lectures you feel behind on during the first half of the semester

Week 9: Week of March 29 Elections

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 7 (second half): Political Parties, Participation, and Elections (pages 220-242)
- On Blackboard: Milita, K., J.B. Ryan, & E.N. Simas. (2014). Nothing to Hide, Nowhere to Run, or Nothing to Lose: Candidate Position Taking in Congressional Elections. *Political Behavior*, 36(2): 427-449.

Week 10: Week of April 5 Unit 2 Review and Quiz

- Quiz available Thursday, April 8 @ noon ET – Friday, April 9 @ 11:59 PM

Week 11: Week of April 12 Congress

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 9: Congress (pages 274-308)
- On Blackboard: Binder, S. (2018). Dodging the Rules in Trump’s Republican Congress. *The Journal of Politics*, 80(4), 1454-1463.

Week 12: Week of April 19 The Presidency

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 10: The Presidency (pages 314-342)
- On Blackboard: Chiou, F.-Y. & L.S. Rothenberg. (2014). The Elusive Search for Presidential Power. *American Journal of Political Science*, 58(3): 653-668.
- Unit 3 Writing Assignment (discussion post and responses) Due by 11:59pm on Friday, April 23

Week 13: Week of April 26 The Judiciary & Interest Groups and Policy

- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 12: The Federal Courts (pages 376-402)
- Ginsberg et al.: Chapter 8: Interest Groups (pages 246-270) & “The Tools for Making Policy Are Techniques of Control (pages 409-416) & Chapter 14 (first half): Foreign Policy (pages 444-453)
- On Blackboard: Johnson, T. R., P. J. Wahlbeck & J.F. Spriggs, II. 2006. The Influence of Oral Arguments on the U.S. Supreme Court. *The American Political Science Review*, 100(1): 99-113.

Week 14: Week of May 3 Unit 3 Review and Quiz

- Quiz available Thursday, May 6 @ noon ET – Friday, May 7 @ 11:59 PM

FINALS WEEK

THE FINAL EXAM WILL BE POSTED ON BLACKBOARD. The exam will be posted at 9am on Thursday, May 13. You must complete it by Saturday, May 15 at 9am. Once you begin the exam you will only have 2 and a half hours to finish the exam.

Part 4: University and Course Policies**University Policies:****Student Accessibility Support Center Statement:**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical, or learning disability that may impact your course work, please contact the Student Accessibility Support Center, 128 ECC Building, (631) 632-6748, or at sasc@stonybrook.edu. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students who require assistance during emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and the Student Accessibility Support Center. For procedures and information go to the following website: <https://ehs.stonybrook.edu/programs/fire-safety/emergency-evacuation/evacuation-guide-people-physical-disabilities> and search Fire Safety and Evacuation and Disabilities.

Academic Integrity Statement:

Each student must pursue his or her academic goals honestly and be personally accountable for all submitted work. Representing another person's work as your own is always wrong. Faculty is required to report any suspected instances of academic dishonesty to the Academic Judiciary. Faculty in the Health Sciences Center (School of Health Technology & Management, Nursing, Social Welfare, Dental Medicine) and School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. For more comprehensive information on academic integrity, including categories of academic dishonesty please refer to the academic judiciary website at http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/academic_integrity/index.html

Important Note: Any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating and plagiarism, will be reported to the Academic Judiciary.

Critical Incident Management:

Stony Brook University expects students to respect the rights, privileges, and property of other people. Faculty are required to report to the Office of University Community Standards any disruptive behavior that interrupts their ability to teach, compromises the safety of the learning environment, or inhibits students' ability to learn. Faculty in the HSC Schools and the School of Medicine are required to follow their school-specific procedures. Further information about most academic matters can be found in the Undergraduate Bulletin, the Undergraduate Class Schedule, and the Faculty-Employee Handbook.

Understand When You May Drop This Course:

It is the student's responsibility to understand when they need to consider withdrawing from a course. Refer to the Stony Brook Academic Schedule for dates and deadlines for registration: http://www.stonybrook.edu/commcms/registrar/calendars/academic_calendars.

- [Undergraduate Course Load and Course Withdrawal Policy](#)
- [Graduate Course Changes Policy](#)

Incomplete Policy:

Under emergency/special circumstances, students may petition for an incomplete grade. Circumstances must be documented and significant enough to merit an incomplete. If you need to request an incomplete for this course, contact me for approval as far in advance as possible.

Course Materials and Copyright Statement:

Course material accessed from Blackboard, SB Connect, SB Capture or a Stony Brook Course website is for the exclusive use of students who are currently enrolled in the course. Content

from these systems cannot be reused or distributed without written permission of the instructor and/or the copyright holder. Duplication of materials protected by copyright, without permission of the copyright holder is a violation of the Federal copyright law, as well as a violation of Stony Brook's Academic Integrity.

Online Communication Guidelines and Learning Resources:

Maintain professional conduct both in the classroom and online. The classroom is a professional environment where academic debate and learning take place. I will make every effort to make this environment safe for you to share your opinions, ideas, and beliefs. In return, you are expected to respect the opinions, ideas, and beliefs of other students—both in the face-to-face classroom and online communication. Students have the right and privilege to learn in the class, free from harassment and disruption. The course follows the standards set in the Student Code of Conduct, and students are subject to disciplinary action for violation of that code. If your behavior does not follow the course etiquette standards stated below, the grade you receive for a posting may suffer. I reserve the right to remove any discussion messages that display inappropriate language or content.

Online Classes Require Better Communication:

It is important to remember that we will not have the non-verbal cues that occur in a face-to-face classroom. I cannot see the confused, frustrated, or unhappy expressions on your face if you encounter problems. You **MUST** communicate with me so that I can help. To make the experience go smoothly, remember that you're responsible for initiating more contact, and being direct, persistent, and vocal when you don't understand something.

My Role as the Instructor:

As the instructor, I will serve as a "guide" in our online classroom. While I will not respond to every post, I will read what is posted, and reply when necessary. Expect instructor posts in the following situations:

- To assist each of you when it comes to making connections between discussion, lectures, and textbook material.
- To fill in important things that may have been missed.
- To re-direct discussion when it gets "out of hand."
- To point out key points or to identify valuable posts.

Part 5: Student Resources

Academic and Major Advising (*undergraduate only*): Have questions about choosing the right course? Contact an advisor today. Phone and emails vary—please see website for additional contact information; website: <https://www.stonybrook.edu/for-students/academic-advising/>

Academic Success and Tutoring Center (*undergraduate only*):
<https://www.stonybrook.edu/tutoring/>

Amazon @ Stony Brook: Order your books before classes begin. Phone: 631-632-9828; email: Bookstore_Liaison@stonybrook.edu; website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/bookstore/>

Bursar: For help with billing and payment. Phone: 631-632-9316; email: bursar@stonybrook.edu; website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/bursar/>

Career Center: The Career Center's mission is to support the academic mission of Stony Brook University by educating students about the career decision-making process, helping them plan and attain their career goals, and assisting with their smooth transition to the workplace or further education. Phone: 631-632-6810; email: sbucareercenter@stonybrook.edu; website: <http://www.stonybrook.edu/career-center/>

Counseling and Psychological Services: CAPS staff are available by phone, day or night. <http://studentaffairs.stonybrook.edu/caps/>

Ombuds Office: The Stony Brook University Ombuds Office provides an alternative channel for confidential, impartial, independent and informal dispute resolution services for the entire University community. We provide a safe place to voice your concerns and explore options for productive conflict management and resolution. The Ombuds Office is a source of confidential advice and information about University policies and procedures and helps individuals and groups address university-related conflicts and concerns. <http://www.stonybrook.edu/ombuds/>

Registrar: Having a registration issue? Let them know. Phone: 631-632-6175; email: registrar_office@stonybrook.edu; <http://www.stonybrook.edu/registrar/>

SBU Libraries: access to and help in using databases, ebooks, and other sources for your research.

- Research Guides and Tutorials: <http://guides.library.stonybrook.edu/>
- Getting Help: <https://library.stonybrook.edu/research/ask-a-librarian/>

Student Accessibility Support Center: Students in need of special accommodations should contact SASC. Phone: 631-632-6748; email: sasc@stonybrook.edu; <https://www.stonybrook.edu/sasc/>

Support for Online Learning: <https://www.stonybrook.edu/online/>

Writing Center: Students are able to schedule face-to-face and online appointments. <https://www.stonybrook.edu/writingcenter/>