

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 1310 - AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT --ANN
CLEMMER, INSTRUCTOR**

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When contacting me via e-mail regarding any matter having to do with class, please identify yourself in the subject line of the e-mail. I do not open mail from unknown recipients. I will need to know which section you are in as well. I would prefer to receive e-mails in WebCT to avoid these issues. To log on WebCT, go to webct.ualr.edu and log on with your UALR user name and your Trojan ID# as your password. Simply double click on the course name to access course information.

OFFICE HOURS: By appointment. You can usually check with me before or after class to set something up, you may also reach me by e-mail or telephone.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is an introductory course in American government designed to increase the student's understanding of the principles and concepts behind the structure and practices of U.S. government.

REQUIRED TEXT: Bardes, Shelley and Schmidt, American Government and Politics Today: The Essentials, 2009-2010 Edition.

CLASS FORMAT: The presentation of course material will be predominately lecture and discussion. Students are encouraged to initiate appropriate discussion and questions. I will post assignments and grades onto WebCT/Blackboard, computer and Internet access is required. If you do not own a computer, you will need to locate one with Internet access that you will be able to use during the course of the semester. During the lecture, students are encouraged to initiate discussion and ask questions. Accessing the class through the online course shell is a wonderful way to interact with your fellow students. It is a great resource to use before exams.

CLASS DECORUM: Students in this class must adhere to the UALR policies on student behavior. Students not abiding by the following rules will be asked to leave the classroom. Repeated instances can result in the student being permanently removed from the class.

- 1. Conduct disruptive to others in class is not permitted. The determination of what constitutes a disruption is the discretion of the instructor.**
- 2. Cell phones, i-pods, and other electronic devices must be turned off during class.**
- 3. Leaving class early is strongly discouraged; if you must leave early, see me before class.**
- 4. Leaving the classroom before you have completed an exam is not allowed—re-entry may be denied.**

ATTENDANCE: Students are expected to be at every class. Regular attendance generally will result in higher grades. I will take attendance checks during the semester, which will factor into any borderline grades. The most frequent cause of poor performance in my

class is non-attendance. The student is responsible for assignments, announcements, and materials covered if classes or portions of classes are missed. This means that if you need information regarding announcements or material covered during class, you will need to connect with another student to find out what you missed. While I will make myself available for questions over material, or other problems you may have in class, please do not contact me to ask what was covered during your absence. If an extended illness should cause you to miss several classes, by all means get in touch with me. At that point I would like to see documentation regarding your extended absence. A small part of the participation/quiz grade will be regular attendance.

MAKE-UP POLICY: Make-up exams and quizzes will NOT be given. The student will be able to drop one exam score.

EXAMS AND GRADING: Exams (100 points each) and quizzes (50 points each) will cover both lecture and reading material and will consist of any combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and essay. (My typical exam is 50 multiple choice questions.) You should come to class on exam day with a #2 pencil. Your assignments will be discussed in class and posted online. Out of class work will be submitted online. Your grade for the course will be based on the following:

3 Exams (top 2 scores)	200 points
Research/Quizzes/Participation	150 points
Final Exam	100 points
Total points possible	450 points

The grading scale is 90-100%-A; 80-89%-B; 70-79%-C; 60-69%-D; 59% and below-F. The first three exams will cover material in each unit only; dates for the first three exams will be announced at least one week prior to the exam. The final exam will be comprehensive and will be given during the final exam period set by the university.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY: Cheating, helping others to cheat, or plagiarism will be punished. Plagiarism is "To adopt and reproduce as one's own, to appropriate to one's own use, and incorporate in one's own work without acknowledgment, the ideas of others or passages from their writings and works... When a faculty member believes that a student has behaved dishonestly, he or she will immediately notify the dean of students of his or her suspicion of cheating, plagiarism, collusion, or a similar activity..." (UALR Faculty Handbook).

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES: It is the policy and practice of the University of Arkansas at Little Rock to create inclusive learning environments. If there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in barriers to your inclusion or to accurate assessment of achievement--such as time-limited exams, inaccessible web content, or the use of non-captioned videos--please notify the instructor as soon as possible. Students are also welcome to contact the Disability Resource Center , telephone 501-569-3143 (v/tty). For more information, visit the DRC website at www.ualr.edu/disability.

The Political Science Department at UALR has articulated both knowledge and skill goals for our majors and for those who take classes in our department. These are articulated below; the goal is listed first and the application in this course is listed next. The mission statement follows at the bottom.

Knowledge Goals – students majoring in political science will be exposed to a wide range of substantive information about the world of politics, covering subjects such as:

1. The history, characteristics, and impact of political institutions and systems, including international, national, state, and local governments. This class will focus on examining the organization of the national government, although we will draw upon comparisons to other countries' governments.
2. The behavior of individual actors at both the mass and elite levels. We will look at both national political leaders and voter behavior.
3. The processes involved in creating government policy and the impact of those policies. We will look at the role of Congress, the presidents, and the courts as well as how interest groups and political parties influence public policy.
4. The debates over the normative foundations of the state, the scope of its activities, and the nature of justice. This course begins with a theoretical examination of why we need government and a discussion of the options we have had for organizing and designing a responsive government. These normative assessments are made throughout the course, filling an important segment in each chapter.

Skill Goals – students majoring in political science will develop practical and marketable skills which will help them to apply that knowledge to any number of career paths. These skills include:

1. Critical thinking – the ability to read and evaluate primary texts, ideas, theories, and political analysis. Students will read online documents, primarily newspapers and editorials and will discuss the comparison to text materials.
2. Analysis/Research – the ability to pose and answer questions effectively. Students will engage in basic research on the Internet using assigned sources questions for each unit of study.
3. Argumentation/Persuasion – the ability to use logic and evidence to build a persuasive argument. These skills will be honed in the chapter and/or unit discussion postings, where students will build and evaluate answers to topics.
4. Written and Verbal Communication – the ability to communicate ideas clearly on paper or through oral presentations. Students will participate in this activity through written online discussions.

5. **Working in Groups** – the ability to effectively coordinate with others on a project. Students will be asked to engage in classroom or online exercises as members of a group.
6. **Practical Applications** – the ability to take information gained through coursework and use it effectively in real world or simulated exercises. Students will conduct online research to find current events relating to the course material.

Political Science Department Mission Statement

The mission of the department is to provide students with both a substantive knowledge of politics and the skills necessary to make use of that knowledge effectively, not only as private citizens participating in a democracy, but also in a wide range of careers. The department has implemented a program of assessment to measure achievement of these objectives. Students in the department are exposed to both the theory and practice of politics. The department's faculty covers a broad range of substantive specializations, encompassing American politics, comparative politics, constitutional law, international relations, and political theory. Courses in the department also strive to instill in students a number of important skills, including critical thinking, analysis, writing, and the practical application of ideas to real world situations. The combination of substantive knowledge and practical skills instilled by courses in the department provide a solid background to help our students to excel as leaders in a variety of fields, including politics, government service, law, teaching, and business.

Tentative Class Schedule (subject to change) (The link academic calendar for the University may be found at the bottom of the UALR home page. The link to the final exam schedule can be found on the Academic Calendar.)

Unit 1 Exam 1-- September 21-- Chapters 1-3

Unit 2 Exam 2 --October 30 --Chapters 6-9

Unit 3 Exam 3-- December 2--Chapters 10, 11, 13, 4 and 5

Final Exam Week-- December 7-15—See Blackboard Calendar for our class date

Last Day to Drop an Individual Class and receive a W —November 12, 5:00 pm

Last Day to Withdraw from all Classes-December 7, 5:00 pm

