

CASPER COLLEGE COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number and Title: POLS 1000, section 01-U. S. & Wyoming Government

Semester/Year: Fall 2015

Lecture Hours: 3 **Lab Hours:** 0 **Credit Hours:** 3

Class Time: 8:00-8:50am **Days:** MWF **Room:** LH 183

Instructor's Name: Erich Frankland

Instructor's Office #: LH 175I **Phone #:** 268-2490

Office Hours: MF 9:00-10:00am; **E-mail:** efrankland@caspercollege.edu
TTH 9:30-11:00am; W 11:00am-12:00pm;
Or by appointment

Academic Assistant: Crystal Sosalla in LH 166, 268-2368, csosalla@caspercollege.edu

Course Description: This course examines the organization and nature of the American national government and Wyoming state government and their constitutional development. This course meets the statutory requirement for instruction in the Constitutions of the United States and Wyoming. Credit earned for POLS 1000 will replace and delete credit earned for POLS 1010.

Statement of Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course, but it is presumed that you possess college level reading and writing abilities. In addition, you are expected to maintain a commitment towards personal excellence and improvement during the course of this semester.

General Objectives (Goals): This course is designed to provide you with information on the bases of government in the United States, the relationship of the federal government to other political actors, the institutions and processes of this government, and the roles of other political actors and the results of politics in the United States. Our analysis of Wyoming's government will serve to illustrate how such political systems work on the state level in the United States. Much of what you learn in this course is dependent upon you. Your full participation through completing the readings and assignments, taking part (and attending) in class discussion and work, and keeping informed of current political events will make this course a fruitful endeavor for everyone involved. The people and governments of the United States are confronted with numerous challenges--domestic, foreign, confidence, and of civility--that this course hopefully will help you to understand better.

Specific Objectives (Outcomes): It is expected that completion of this course will assist each student in becoming:

1. more knowledgeable of the organization, bases, functions, and policies of the American and Wyoming political systems;

2. better able to understand political processes and their implications;
3. better able to understand the bases and issues associated with current events in the local, state, national, and international realms;
4. better able to meet the reading, writing, researching, and speaking demands essential for a college experience (this corresponds with the college's outcomes #1 "Demonstrate effective oral and written communication" and #6 "Use appropriate technology and information to conduct research");
5. more aware of other political philosophies and points of view;
6. appreciate the balance between rights and responsibilities in the American and Wyoming political systems (this correspond with the college's outcome #7 "Describe the value of personal, civic, and social responsibilities").

*Casper College may collect samples of student work demonstrating achievement of the above college outcomes. Any personal identifying information will be removed from student work.

Methodology/Evaluation Criteria:

Examinations (300 points)- There will be three, three-part exams. Part one will contain a set of multiple choice questions derived from important points and key terms from the lectures, course readings, and current events. Part two will contain a set of matching questions of important individuals discussed in class and/or in the readings. Part three will require an identification and description of key terms, concepts, and events from class and the readings in the form of short essays (one paragraph answers generally addressing four or more components). In part three, you will have a choice of questions. Although the exams are equal in their number of points, individual improvement will be factored into the final grade. Each exam will be preceded by a review session during which you are encouraged to raise questions about the material that will be on the exam.

Papers (100 points)- There will be three written assignments for this course. These papers will deal with the issues raised by the Grover & Peschek book. Grover & Peschek explore some of the key issues facing American politics as well as the concerns about key political institutions. You are not restricted to the issues assigned in the syllabus, but may choose from any of the 40 articles.

For the **first paper**, you are to select one issue from one of the 40 articles, and using just that selection critique the key points and concerns regarding the selected issue (e.g., Bill Moyers's argument that an independent media is essential for an informed public in article 16). You may find things to agree and disagree with in your critique. This paper should be 2-3 pages in length excluding the title page and is worth 25 points.

For the **second paper**, you are to select a different article/chapter from the first paper and enhance this critique with material drawn from a minimum of 2 legitimate outside sources chosen through the Casper College Library's databases (in addition to the Grover & Peschek article, so you would

have a minimum of 3 sources). All materials used should be correctly listed in your bibliography attached as the end of your paper. Again, you may find points of agreement and/or disagreement. This paper should also be 2-3 pages in length excluding the title page and bibliography, and is worth 25 points.

For the **third paper**, you are to select a third issue and this time examine how the political parties or major political officials (President Obama and U.S. House Speaker Boehner will be the easiest, but feel free to look at others) address the issue. You will need a minimum of 4 legitimate outside sources chosen through the Casper College Library's databases (in addition to the Grover & Peschek article, so you would have a minimum of 5 sources), but you may also want to draw from the parties or officials directly (websites, etc.). All materials used should be correctly listed in your bibliography attached at the end of your paper. This paper should be 4-6 pages in length excluding the title page and the bibliography page and is worth 50 points.

Each paper should address the key points or arguments regarding the issue as well as your evaluation of these. Your paper could simply be informative on that issue or you may take an argumentative approach (write in support of the author(s) or you may take a contrary stance). Each paper must be drawn from a different selection of the book. The basic guidelines for these papers and the current events journal are included at the end of this syllabus.

Quizzes, In-class Writing (60 points)- Sometimes, there will be quizzes and in-class writing assignments that may or may not be announced. In general, there will be at least one quiz before each exam.

Issue Discussions (80 points)- Over the course of the semester, we will have eight in-class discussions of the articles required for that week from the Grover & Peschek book that are listed later in the syllabus. You will be reminded in class prior to their date of our discussion. Therefore, every student should make sure that he or she has completed the readings. For our discussion each student is required to submit three questions in-class that they would like to discuss regarding the readings. Class discussion of the readings will be preceded by small group discussion of your questions on the readings. Your attendance and participation in these discussions, as well as keeping up with the readings, are key and will enhance your understanding of the complex issues that we will be exploring.

Current Events (35 points)- For this course, it will be important for you to keep up with political events in the United States, Wyoming, and the world, which will be integrated into the lectures, class discussion, and exams/quizzes. Please keep yourself informed by reading newspapers such as The Casper Star-Tribune, magazines like Time, and television and radio programs like "60 Minutes," or utilizing the many news sites on the internet.

Also, you must hand in a **current events journal** on the next to last class day describing 10 **political** events (local, state, national, international) that have occurred over the semester. The journal should include a title page and a full bibliographic listing (single spaced) of a source for each event listed at the start of each event write-up. Each event write-up should be a one paragraph (double spaced) description of the event, and you may also include your opinion. For this assignment, you may utilize magazines, newspapers, the internet, radio, and television as sources,

but you may not use your class notes as a source (though you may cover events discussed in class as long as you have outside sources). The current events journal is worth 25 points.

In addition, each student is required to **present** briefly one current event to the class over the course of the semester (an example of this will be provided in class) and turn in a brief write-up accompanying your current event presentation (this may be typed or handwritten, and is required to receive the points for this assignment). This presentation is worth 10 points.

Attendance and Participation (50 points)- Please attend this class on time and on a regular basis. You will be encouraged to participate in class discussion and ask questions of the instructor and your classmates. If you miss an exam or paper deadline, you must arrange for a make-up, which will only be given in extraordinary circumstances. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get the lecture notes for that class session. Since the due dates are known in advance computer and related problems are not acceptable excuses for late work.

***Please do not use cellphones or similar electronic devices (this includes texting) while this class is in session! Violating this directive will impact your enrollment in the course.**

Contact the Instructor- Please see me during my office hours if you have any questions or concerns at any time during this course. Also, please arrange for an appointment if these hours are inconvenient. I will do my utmost to assist you in making this course a valuable learning experience, and I hope that you do the same.

Student Rights & Responsibilities- If you have any questions regarding your rights and responsibilities, please refer to the Casper College Student Handbook.

Chain of Command- If you have any problems with this class, you should first contact the instructor to attempt to solve the problem. If you are not satisfied with the solution offered by the instructor, you should then take the matter through the appropriate chain of command starting with the Department Head/Program Director, the Dean, and lastly the Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Academic Dishonesty (Cheating & Plagiarism)- Casper College demands intellectual honesty. Proven plagiarism or any form of dishonesty associated with the academic process can result in the offender failing the course in which the offense was committed or expulsion from school. See the Casper College Student Code of Conduct for more information on this topic.

Official Means of Communication- Casper College faculty and staff will employ the student's assigned Casper College e-mail account as a primary method of communication. Students are responsible to check their account regularly.

ADA Accommodations Policy- If you need academic accommodations because of a disability, please inform the instructor as soon as possible privately after class or during office hours. To request academic accommodations, students must first consult with the college's Disability Services Counselor located in the Gateway Building, Room 344, 307-268-2557, bheuer@caspercollege.edu. The Disability Services Counselor is responsible for reviewing documentation provided by students requesting accommodations, determining eligibility for accommodations, and helping students request and use appropriate accommodations.

Grade Distribution-

Exam 1	100 points	Paper #1	25 points
Exam 2	100 points	Paper #2	25 points
Exam 3	100 points	Paper #3	50 points
Issue Discussions	80 points	C.E. Presentation	10 points
Quizzes, etc.	60 points	C.E. Journal	25 points
Attendance & Participation	50 points		

Total of 625 points*

*90-100% A, 80-89% B, 70-79% C, 60-69% D. Also, there may be opportunities for extra credit during the course of the semester

Required Texts, Readings, Materials: You will need the following materials for this class. Additional readings and hand-outs may also be utilized.

Grover, William F. and Joseph G. Peschek, eds. 2013. Voices of Dissent: Critical Readings in American Politics. 9th ed. Boston: Pearson.

Lowi, Theodore J. et al. 2014. American Government: Power and Purpose. 13th brief ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Wyoming State Constitution (this will be provided by the instructor).

Last Date to Change to Audit Status or Withdraw with a W Grade: Last date to change to audit status or to withdraw with a "W" grade is November 12.

Course Outline*:

August 24, 26, 28, 31: Introduction
Read Lowi chapter 1

September 2 and 4: The Prelude to the Founding
Read Declaration of Independence (in Lowi Appendix 3-6), Articles of Confederation (in Lowi Appendix 7-12); Grover articles 5 and 6

September 7: No classes due to Labor Day holiday

September 9 and 11: The Founding

Read Lowi chapter 2; Federalist Papers #10 and #51 (in Lowi Appendix 34-42)

September 14, 16, 18: The US and Wyoming Constitutions

Read the U.S. Constitution (in Lowi Appendix 13-33); the Wyoming Constitution;
Grover articles 9-12

September 21: Library Orientation

September 23: Outside Class Work on Paper #1

September 25 and 28: Federalism

Read Lowi chapter 3

Paper #1 due September 28 in class

September 30: **Exam #1, in-class**

October 2, 5, 7: The US Congress and Wyoming Legislature

Read Lowi chapter 5; Grover articles 21 and 22

October 9, 12, 14: The Presidency and Wyoming Governor

Read Lowi chapter 6; Grover articles 25-28

October 16 and 21: The Bureaucracy

Read Lowi chapter 7

Paper #2 due October 21 in class

October 19 and 20: No classes due to Fall Break

October 23, 26, 28: The Judiciary

Read Lowi chapter 8; Grover articles 29-31

October 30 and November 2: Civil Rights and Liberties

Read Lowi chapter 4

November 4: **Exam #2, in-class**

November 6: No classes due Advising Day

November 9, 11, 13: Public Opinion, Political Participation, and the Media

Read Lowi chapter 9; Grover articles 13-16

November 16 and 18: Political Parties and Interest Groups

Read Lowi chapters 11 and 12

Paper #3 due November 16 in class

November 20 and 23: Campaigns and Elections
Read Lowi chapter 10; Grover articles 17-20

November 25-27: No classes due to Thanksgiving Break

November 30, December 2 and 4: Domestic Policy (Focus on Social and Economic Policies)
Read Lowi chapter 13; Grover articles 33-35

December 7, 9, 11: Foreign and Defense Policy
Read Lowi chapter 14
Current Events Journal due December 11 in class

December 14-17: **Exam #3, in-class**

*This outline may be modified due to time constraints or other unforeseen factors.

General Paper Guidelines

These guidelines must be followed for the above written assignments. Also, please proofread your papers as presentation, appearance, content, and following directions do matter in the calculation of each paper grade. If you have any questions regarding these guidelines, please see me.

1. Title page: this should include a descriptive title, your name, the class, and the date. The title page should not be numbered, but it serves as your first or cover page (this page does not count towards the assignment page requirements).
2. Format: the body of your paper should be typed, double spaced (except for your bibliographic sources and use of long quotes), have one inch margins on all sides, use regular-sized font (10 to 12 point), and be consecutively numbered. Also, your paper should be stapled so binders and folders are not necessary.
3. Citing: you must cite the source of any specific material or opinion that is not yours. Use quotation marks for direct cites, but try and paraphrase when possible (put material into your own words, but still list the source). You must use the following in-text citation format:

"Quoted material (Jillson 2013, 10)." Where Jillson is the author's last name, 2013 is the year of publication, and "10" is the page number for your quoted material (you do not need to say "quoted material").

Paraphrased material (Jillson 2013, 12). Same format for paraphrased material.

4. Structure: your papers should include a strong introductory paragraph with a clear thesis as well as a thoughtful conclusion. The body of each paper should provide a thoughtful and complete essay.

5. Bibliography: for your current events journal you must include the information for each of your ten sources. A reminder that your bibliographic information should precede each event write-up and that this information should be single spaced within a source of more than one line. Your actual write-ups for the events will be double spaced. If there is no clear author, you may use Anonymous or the periodical's title as the author. For papers #2 and #3, both the course materials and outside sources must be included on a separate bibliographic page at the end of the paper. These sources should come from the Casper College Library's databases (journals, magazines, newspapers, books).

For journals, magazines, and newspapers:

Johnson, Melissa. 2015. "The Dilemmas Facing Women in Politics." National Digest
March 10, pp.12-15.

For electronically retrieved sources:

LaPlant, James. 2015. "The Political Dilemmas Facing Youth Today." Political Times April
15, pp.2-9. Retrieved from EBSCO.

For internet sources:

Nostrum, Robert. 2015. "The Influence of Money on American Politics." January 10,
www.votesmart.org.

For Grover selections:

Moyers, Bill [2011] 2013. "Facts Still Matter: The Need for an Independent Media." In
Voices of Dissent: Critical Readings in American Politics. 9th ed. William F.
Grover and Joseph G. Peschek, eds. Boston: Pearson.

6. Miscellaneous: Typically, in academic papers you do not use contractions. Be sure to develop your paragraphs and use transitions between them. Finally, please pay attention to the comments on your papers as they will be beneficial for subsequent papers.