

CASPER COLLEGE COURSE SYLLABUS

American and Wyoming Government POLS 1000 N2 & N4

Semester/Year: Fall 2015

Distance Course

Credit Hours: 3

All work to be completed online.

Students should visit Casper College's Digital Learning Center website (<http://www.caspercollege.edu/dlc/index.html>) to review online class readiness steps. If students experience difficulties with Moodle, the CC HelpDesk is available at 307-268-3648 or at helpdesk@caspercollege.edu.

Instructor's Name: Maya E. Russell, J.D., M.A.

**Instructor's Contact
Information**

Email:
mrussell@caspercollege.edu

Skype Username:
maya.caspercollege

Office Hours:

As this is an internet course, I am available by email. I will do my best to return all emails promptly.

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.

Statement of Prerequisites: None.

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

1. more knowledgeable of the historic and constitutional bases, organization, functions, and policies of the American and Wyoming political systems;
2. better able to understand political affairs and their implications;
3. better able to understand the bases and issues associated with current events, especially political, 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. better able to identify the differences between major political philosophies and points of view; and
6. more knowledgeable of what it means to be a responsible citizen in a democratic system (this corresponds 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:

Course content will be delivered via readings, online lectures, videos, and discussions.

Required Text, Readings, and Materials:

Required Textbook: Janda, Berry, and Goldman, Schildkraut, The Challenge of Democracy. 13th edition. Boston: Wadsworth, 2016.

Recommended Readings: Making sense of American government and politics is impossible unless you stay abreast of current events. I strongly encourage you to read the local paper (www.trib.com) AND a good national newspaper every day. Two excellent sources of current political news include: www.newyorktimes.com and www.washingtonpost.com

Weaving “real-world” examples into your discussion posts for this course will make your arguments more compelling and the class discussion more interesting.

Grade Distribution:

720 – 800 points = A

640 – 719 points = B

560 – 639 points = C

480 – 559 points = D

0 - 479 points = F

Evaluation Criteria:

1. 300 points. **Examinations.** Two exams: one midterm and one final (150 points each) will be completed in accordance with the course calendar. Exams will be closed-book, timed (60 minute) proctored examinations. No late exams will be accepted.

Students based in Casper must complete their exams at Casper College’s Academic Testing Center. Students are responsible for scheduling exams (go to <http://www.caspercollege.edu/testing/>).

Students based outside of Casper must locate an *approved* testing center in their vicinity (go to <http://www.ncta-testing.org/cctc/find.php>) and schedule an appointment in accordance with the course calendar. Students are responsible for any fees and charges associated with testing at a remote center.

2. 50 points. **Personal Statement.** Students must submit a personal statement in accordance with the course schedule. The personal statement will set forth personal and professional goals for students’ time at Casper College and in the workplace. Additional details will be posted in Moodle.
3. 50 points. **Student-Instructor Conferences.** Two student-instructor conferences (each worth 25 points) will be scheduled during the semester in accordance with the course schedule. Conferences will be via skype or phone and serve as a progress report and an opportunity to meet and discuss matters in a one-on-one setting.

4. 100 points. **Research and Writing Assignment.** A short paper (four to five pages in length) will be assigned during the semester. Students will be assessed on their ability to use appropriate technology and materials to conduct research. Further, students will be assessed on their ability to effectively communicate their findings. Specific details will be distributed in Moodle.
5. 150 points. **Online Chapter Quizzes.** Students must complete 15 open-book quizzes (worth 10 points each) using the *Challenge of Democracy* textbook or online research materials. Quizzes will be completed in Moodle. No late quizzes will be accepted.
6. 150 points. **Discussion Posts.** An important part of the class will be the online discussion of the materials we are reading and learning about. One of the chief complaints about distance learning is that it fails to capture the intellectual give-and-take of the classroom. Our discussion forum is designed to address that shortcoming.

We will use our weekly forum discussion to tackle some of the most provocative questions now facing our government and our society. The discussion forums (15 in total) will be posted weekly, and must be completed in accordance with the course calendar. No late submissions will be accepted.

Discussion forums will be graded using the following rubric:

Unsatisfactory 0 points	Minimum 1-2 points	Satisfactory 3-5 points	Very Good 6-8 points	Outstanding 9-10 points
<p>No posting made.</p> <p>Posting was just a link to a website with no original information.</p> <p>Posting was just information cut and pasted off internet with no original thought or effort.</p>	<p>Brief posting lacking much thought, substance, does not address the assignment or course readings.</p> <p>Student did not use spell check.</p>	<p>Thoughtful post, obviously written by the student that shows some understanding of assignment and course readings but fails to appreciate depth of matter.</p> <p>Student did not use spell check.</p>	<p>Includes characteristics of the Satisfactory box plus includes example(s) relative to the course readings or real life.</p> <p>More thoughtful discussion that incorporates relevant current events.</p>	<p>Includes characteristics of the “Very Good” box plus includes an outside resource such as a research finding, or current media link relevant to the course reading or real life.</p> <p>Post deepens classmates’ understanding of assigned topic.</p>

Class Policies: Last Date to Change to Audit Status or to Withdraw with a W Grade:
November 12, 2015.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Please refer to the Casper College Student Conduct and Judicial Code for information concerning your rights and responsibilities as a Casper College Student.

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 email account as a primary method of communication. Students are responsible to check their account regularly. This is also, where you will find course evaluation links during course evaluation periods.

ADA Accommodations Policy: If you need academic accommodations because of a disability, please inform me as soon as possible. See me privately after class, or during my 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.

We will do our best to follow the calendar. Your instructor may modify the calendar as necessary. Any changes will be announced in Moodle.

FALL 2015 CALENDAR

Week 1, Aug. 24

1. **Print Course Syllabus (includes Course Calendar) posted in Moodle**
2. **Watch Instructor Introduction (includes review of syllabus) posted in Moodle**
3. **Personal Statement (details in Moodle) due Aug. 31 @ 5 p.m.**
4. **Read Chapter 1, Chapter 1 quiz and Ch. 1 discussion post due Aug. 31 at 5 p.m.**
(Reminder: late statements, quizzes, and forum posts will not be accepted!)

Week 2, Aug. 31

1. **Read Chapters 2 & 3, Read US Constitution (found at back of textbook at Appendix page 3)**
2. **Chapters 2 & 3 quizzes due Sept. 8 @ 5 p.m.**
3. **Chapters 2 & 3 discussion posts due Sept. 8 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 3, Sept. 8 (Note: Sept. 7 – Labor Day Holiday)

1. **Research and Writing Assignment, *Equality State*, due Sept. 14 @ 5 p.m.**
Details will be posted in Moodle.
2. **Schedule Your Midterm Exam (60 minutes) on Academic Testing Center's Website (<http://www.caspercollege.edu/testing/index.html>)**

Week 4, Sept. 14 (Happy Constitution Day for Sept. 17!)

1. **Student-Instructor Conferences (review papers, quizzes and posts)**
2. **Read Wyoming Constitution (link found in Moodle)**
(Chapter 4 quiz and discussion post will cover the Wyoming Constitution)
3. **Chapter 4 quiz and discussion post due Sept. 21 @ 5 p.m.**
4. **Read Chapter 5, Chapter 5 quiz and discussion post due Sept. 21 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 5, Sept. 21

1. **Read Chapters 6 & 7**
2. **Chapters 6 & 7 quizzes due Sept. 28 @ 5 p.m.**
3. **Chapters 6 & 7 discussion posts due Sept. 28 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 6, Sept. 28

1. **Read Chapters 8 & 9**
2. **Chapters 8 & 9 quizzes due Oct. 5 @ 5 p.m.**
3. **Chapters 8 & 9 discussion posts due Oct. 5 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 7, Oct. 5

1. **Read Chapter 10 (no quizzes, nor forums this week)**
2. **Study for Midterm Exam (Midterm Exam Review posted in Moodle)**

Week 8, Oct. 12

MIDTERM EXAM (Chapters 1 – 10, & US and WY Constitutions)

MUST be taken at the Academic Testing Center on Oct. 12, 13 or 14 ONLY!

No late exams will be accepted! Midterm grades will be posted in WebAdvisor.

FALL 2015 CALENDAR

Week 9, Oct. 21 (Note: Oct. 19 & 20 – Fall Break Holiday)

1. **Student-Instructor Conferences (review midterm exams)**

Week 10, Oct. 26

1. **Read Chapter 11, Ch. 11 quiz and forum post due Nov. 2 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 11, Nov. 2

1. **Read Chapter 12, Ch. 12 quiz and forum post due Nov. 9 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 12, Nov. 9

1. **Wyoming Courts Review (see links in Moodle)**
2. **Wyoming Courts quiz and forum post (in lieu of Chapter 13) due Nov. 16 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 13, Nov. 16

1. **Read Chapter 14 (US Courts)**
2. **Chapter 14 quiz and forum post due Nov. 23 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 14, Nov. 23 (Note: Nov. 25, 26 & 27 – Thanksgiving Holiday)

No homework ☺

Week 15, Nov. 30

1. **Read Chapters 15 & 16**
2. **Chapters 15 & 16 quizzes and discussion posts due Dec. 7 @ 5 p.m.**

Week 16, Dec. 7

1. **Study for Final Exam (Final Exam Review posted in Moodle)**

Week 17, Dec. 14

FINAL EXAM (Chapters 11-12, 14-16, and US & WY Courts)

FINAL EXAM must be taken at the Academic Testing Center on December 14, 15 or 16. No late exams will be accepted! Final grades will be posted in WebAdvisor.
