

**POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
PROGRAMME**

**POLS 207: MODERN AMERICAN POLITICS
CRN 1288**

**TRIMESTER 2, 2011
11 July to 12 November 2011**

Trimester Dates

Teaching Dates: 11 July to 14 October 2011
Mid-trimester break: 22 August to 4 September 2011
Study week: 17-21 October 2011

Withdrawal Dates

Information on withdrawals and refunds may be found at:
<http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/admisenrol/payments/withdrawalsrefunds.aspx>

LECTURER: Doctor Paul Husbands
ROOM: MY 503
PHONE: 463 9450
EMAIL: paul.husbands@vuw.ac.nz
OFFICE HOURS: Tba
LECTURE TIMES: Tuesday and Thursday: 10.00 to 10.50
VENUES: Hunter LT 323
TUTORIALS: Tuesday or Thursday: 11.00 to 11.50.
TUTOR: Corin Higgs

Tutorial allocations will be arranged *in the first week* of the trimester and tutorials will begin *during the second week*. Each student will be allocated to one tutorial group. Attendance at lectures and tutorials is compulsory. Each student is required to attend his/her tutorial each week.

COURSE DELIVERY

POLS 207 is taught in two 50 minute lectures per week and one 50 minute tutorial per week in the teaching period between Monday 11 July and Friday 14 October 2011. Students are expected to attend the twice-weekly lectures and the weekly tutorial.

COMMUNICATION OF ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Information about any changes to the timetable or programme will be announced in lectures or at tutorials and posted on Blackboard.

COURSE PRESCRIPTION

An introduction to modern American politics, with a particular focus on the continued development of America's system of government. The course examines major political themes in US politics against the background of the relationships between different branches of government under the US Constitution. 100% internal assessment.

COURSE CONTENT

This course will examine constitutional issues and broader political developments in the United States. Students have the opportunity to gain a better understanding of U.S. political institutions and the American political process. The lectures will provide an introduction to various aspects of U.S. politics, including the U.S. Constitution, the Presidency, Congress, the Supreme Court, political parties, the electoral process, social movements, special interest groups, and the ongoing struggle over the size and proper role of the national government in American life. The tutorial workshops will review matters pertaining to the essay assignment; will allow students to discuss matters raised in the textbook and lectures; and – in addition – will give each student an opportunity to make a brief presentation relating to an aspect of U.S. politics (see below for more information).

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students should have acquired a thorough understanding of:

1. The key elements of the U.S. system of government as it was established by the U.S. Constitution developed over time and functions at the present time.
2. The key elements of the American political process including the operation of democracy, political parties, social movements and the electoral process.
3. Key issues and debates confronting the American polity leading up to the presidential election of 2012.

EXPECTED WORKLOAD

In accordance with the Faculty of Humanities and Social Science guidelines, the overall workload for this course is 200 hours.

READINGS

Essential Text:

The required text for POLS 207 is: William T Bianco and David T. Canon, *American Politics Today*, Core Second Edition, (New York, W. W. Norton & Co), 2011.

Copies of the textbook are on closed reserve and 3-day loan in the VUW Library.

All undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from the Memorial Theatre foyer from 4 to 22 July 2011, while postgraduate textbooks and student notes will be available from the top floor of Vicbooks in the Student Union Building, Kelburn Campus. After week two of the trimester all undergraduate textbooks and student notes will be sold from Vicbooks on Level 4 of the Student Union Building.

Customers can order textbooks and student notes online at www.vicbooks.co.nz or can email an order or enquiry to enquiries@vicbooks.co.nz. Books can be couriered to customers or they can be picked up from nominated collection points at each campus. Customers will be contacted when they are available.

Opening hours are 8.00 am – 6.00 pm, Monday-Friday during term time (closing at 5.00 pm in the holidays). Phone 463 5515.

ASSESSMENT REQUIREMENTS

There is 100% internal assessment for this course, comprising:

1. A **mid-term test** conducted in class, during the week of 15-19 August. Worth 30 percent of the overall course grade.
2. A **tutorial presentation** on material relating to one of the chapters of the required text. Worth 20 percent of the overall course grade.
3. A **research paper** of at least 3,500 (but no more than 5,000) words to be submitted in the final week of the course. Worth 50 percent of the overall course grade.

Your research paper must be submitted by Thursday 13 October. Extensions will only be granted to those who meet the University's *aegrotat* rules (for example students with a medical certificate, a family bereavement, or critical personal circumstances beyond their control). A **hard copy** of your research paper must be handed in at the final lecture, and an **electronic copy** must be emailed to paul.husbands@vuw.ac.nz.

RETURN OF TESTS AND ASSIGNMENTS

Mid-term tests will be returned after study break. As the research paper is due in the final week of the trimester, it will be returned during the post-trimester period. Students will be advised that the paper has been assessed and is ready to be collected. It will be available from the School office, Murphy 518, and can be collected Monday-Friday, 2.00-3.00 (or by prior arrangement).

PENALTIES

Students are required to sit the mid-term test and make their tutorial presentation on the date set. Students will be penalized for late submission of essays – a deduction of **5% for the first day late**, and **2% per day** thereafter, up to a **maximum of eight** days. Work that is more than eight days late can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but will not be marked. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds such as illness (a medical certificate will be required) or similar serious contingencies. Students in such situations are urged to contact their tutor before their work is over due rather than after.

MANDATORY COURSE REQUIREMENTS

To gain a pass in POLS 207, each student must:

1. Complete all three of the required items of coursework on or by the required deadlines.
2. Attend 80% of tutorials, complete required readings and participate in tutorial discussions.

CLASS REPRESENTATIVE

A class representative will be elected in the first week and that person's name and contact details will be made available to VUWSA, the Course Coordinator and the class. The class representative provides a communication channel to liaise with the Course Coordinator on behalf of students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM

Academic integrity means that university staff and students, in their teaching and learning are expected to treat others honestly, fairly and with respect at all times. It is not acceptable to mistreat academic, intellectual or creative work that has been done by other people by representing it as your own original work.

Academic integrity is important because it is the core value on which the University's learning, teaching and research activities are based. Victoria University's reputation for academic integrity adds value to your qualification.

The University defines plagiarism as presenting someone else's work as if it were your own, whether you mean to or not. 'Someone else's work' means anything that is not your own idea. Even if it is presented in your own style, you must acknowledge your sources fully and appropriately. This includes:

- Material from books, journals or any other printed source
- The work of other students or staff
- Information from the internet
- Software programs and other electronic material
- Designs and ideas
- The organisation or structuring of any such material

Find out more about plagiarism, how to avoid it and penalties, on the University's website: <http://www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/plagiarism.aspx>

USE OF TURNITIN

Student work provided for assessment in this course may be checked for academic integrity by the electronic search engine <http://www.turnitin.com>. Turnitin is an online plagiarism prevention tool which compares submitted work with a very large database of existing material. At the discretion of the Head of School, handwritten work may be copy-typed by the School and subject to checking by Turnitin. Turnitin will retain a copy of submitted material on behalf of the University for detection of future plagiarism, but access to the full text of submissions is not made available to any other party.

WHERE TO FIND MORE DETAILED INFORMATION

Find key dates, explanations of grades and other useful information at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study. Find out how academic progress is monitored and how enrolment can be restricted at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/academic-progress. Most statutes and policies are available at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about/policy, except qualification statutes, which are available via the *Calendar* webpage at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/study/calendar.aspx (See Section C).

Other useful information for students may be found at the website of the Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Academic), at www.victoria.ac.nz/home/about_victoria/avcacademic