



FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

***SCHOOL OF HISTORY, PHILOSOPHY, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS***

***POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS PROGRAMME
POLS 207: MODERN AMERICAN POLITICS
20 POINTS***

TRIMESTER 1 2015

Important dates

Trimester dates: 2 March to 1 July 2015

Teaching dates: 2 March to 5 June 2015

Easter/Mid-trimester break: 3–19 April 2015

Last assessment item due: Research essay is due on 15 May and the in-class test will be held on 5 June.

Withdrawal dates: Refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds. If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test or examination, refer to www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats.

Class times and locations

Lectures: Wednesday, Friday: 15.10pm-16.00pm

Venue: Wednesday's lecture is held in HMLT002 and Friday's lecture is in HMLT104

Tutorials: TBA on Blackboard by the end of the first week of the course.

Names and contact details

Course Coordinator: Jon Johansson

Room No: MY 507

Phone: (04) 4636424

Email: jon.johansson@vuw.ac.nz

Office hours: Friday, 11.00am to noon. Other appointment hours can be arranged by email or by speaking with Dr Johansson after class.

Communication of additional information

This course uses Blackboard and presumes that all enrolled students have valid myvuw.ac.nz addresses. Please check that this account is active and you have organised email forwarding. Additional information and any changes to the timetable or lecture and seminar programme will be advised by email, announced in lectures, and posted on the course Blackboard site.

Note: Emails about POLS 207 **must** have POLS 207 in the subject line; if they don't they are liable to be deleted as spam.

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.

Course learning objectives (CLOs)

Students who pass this course should be able to:

1. demonstrate a good understanding of the basic features of the government and political system of the United States of America
2. demonstrate a good understanding of themes and information presented in the set text
3. write a well-organised, well-written, well-researched essay on an aspect of U.S. politics

Teaching format

The course has two 50-minute lectures per week. The second scheduled hour is for tutorials. Each student needs to join one of the two tutorial groups and may do so by attending a tutorial and advising the tutor.

Students are expected to attend the twice weekly lectures and the weekly tutorial. The course is delivered over 12 weeks of lectures and 11 weeks of tutorials. Both tutorials and lectures are essential aspects of the course and, with the textbook, constitute the primary means in which the course content is delivered. Students are expected to attend classes regularly, take part in tutorial discussion, and keep up with the required reading.

Mandatory course requirements

In addition to achieving an overall pass mark of 50%, students must:

1. attend 8 of 11 tutorials
2. submit a research proposal by 5.00pm on Wednesday 22 April and research paper by Friday, 15 May
3. sit the in-class test on Friday, 5 June.

Workload

In accordance with University Guidelines, this course has been constructed on the assumption that students will devote 200 hours to the course throughout the trimester, approximately 13 hours a week across the trimester. This total includes the following:

- weekly attendance at lectures, and tutorials; (3 hours)
- completion of all set weekly readings for tutorials; (6 hours)
- research and writing for assessment tasks. (4 hours)

Assessment

Assessment items and workload per item		%	CLO(s)	Due date
1	Research Proposal (500 words)	15%	1,3	22 April by 5pm
2	Research Essay (3,500-5,000 words)	60%	1,2,3	15 May by 5pm
3	In-class Test (1 hour)	25%	1,2,3	5 June

Submission and return of work

Submission: All work submitted for assessment must be dropped off in HARD COPY at the School Office (MY518), in the slots provided, with an essay cover sheet. You must ADD the name of your tutor and the course code. We reserve the right to ask for an electronic copy of any assessable work for checking in Turnitin.com (see www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)

Graded essays will be returned to you in tutorials in the first instance, and then returned to the School Office, MY 518, where they can be collected between the hours of 2.00-3.00 pm, Monday to Friday. We will notify students via Blackboard when graded essays are available (generally between 2-3 weeks after the date submitted).

Extensions and penalties

Extensions

Late submission of **assignments** will **not be accepted** unless the student makes an appointment as soon as practically possible with the course coordinator to explain the lateness (preferably before the assignment is due to be submitted). The circumstances under which an extension will be considered are outlined in section 3.2.1 of the Assessment Handbook. (See: www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf).

Penalties

Students will be penalised for late submission of assignments – **a deduction of 5% for the first day late, and 2% per day thereafter, up to a maximum of 8 days**. Work that is more than 10 weekdays late can be accepted for mandatory course requirements but may not be marked. Penalties may be waived if there are valid grounds (for example, illness [presentation of a medical certificate will be necessary] or similar other contingencies). In all such cases, prior information will be necessary. Extensions on deadlines for written work will only be granted under exceptional circumstances.

Set texts

William T. Bianco and David T. Canon, *American Politics Today*, 3rd edition (2013). See www.vicbooks.co.nz for details on textbook purchases.

Recommended reading

See separate Course Information Sheet, distributed in class and placed on blackboard

Class representative

The class representative provides a useful way to communicate feedback to the teaching staff during the course. A class representative will be selected at the first lecture of the course. Students may like to write the Class Rep's name and details in this box:

Class Rep name and contact details:

Student feedback

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will be covered during the course.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback_display.php.

Other important information

The information above is specific to this course. There is other important information that students must familiarise themselves with, including:

- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism
- Aegrotats: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats
- Academic Progress: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin
- Grades: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades
- Resolving academic issues: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Special passes: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/dvc-academic/publications
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy
- Student support: www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support
- Students with disabilities: www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability
- Student Charter: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter
- Student Contract: www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Turnitin: www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin
- University structure: www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure
- Victoria graduate profile: www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile
- VUWSA: www.vuwsa.org.nz