



**FACULTY OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES**

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

**POLITICAL SCIENCE, INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND STRATEGIC STUDIES PROGRAMME**

**POLS 207 AMERICAN POLITICS  
20 POINTS**

**TRIMESTER 1 2016**

**Key dates**

**Trimester dates:** 29 February to 29 June 2016

**Teaching dates:** 29 February to 5 June 2016

**Easter break:** 24–30 March 2016

**Mid-trimester break:** 25 April to 1 May 2016

**Last assessment item due:** 13 May 2016

**Withdrawal dates:** Refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/withdrawals-refunds).

If you cannot complete an assignment or sit a test in the last three weeks of teaching, or an examination, it may instead be possible to apply for an aegrotat (refer to [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/aegrotats)).

**Class times and locations**

Lectures: Tuesday 10.00-10.50am, Wednesday 9.00-9.50am

Venue: Tuesday's lecture is held in Hugh MacKenzie HMLT 002 and Wednesday's lecture is held in Maclaurin MCLT 102

**Tutorials**

Please see the Academic Timetable 2016 [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/timetables).

**Names and contact details**

Course Coordinator: Jon Johansson

Room No: MY 507

Phone: (04) 4636424

Email: [jon.johansson@vuw.ac.nz](mailto: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 tutorial programme will be advised by email, announced in lectures, and posted on the course Blackboard site.

## Prescription

An introduction to 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 five 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.

## 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	1 April
2	Research Essay (3,500 – 5000 words)	60%	1,3	13 May
3	In-class Test (1 hour)	25%	1,2,3	1 June

## Submission and return of work

**All research proposals are due before 5.00pm on 1 April and research essays are due before 5.00pm on 13 May.**

**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](http://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](http://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*, 4<sup>th</sup> edition (2015). See [www.vicbooks.co.nz](http://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.

## Student feedback

Enhancements made to this course, based on the feedback of previous students, will include more focused discussions on the presidential primaries and the General Election that are taking place in 2016.

Student feedback on University courses may be found at [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/feedback/feedback\\_display.php](http://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](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/exams/integrity-plagiarism)
- Academic Progress: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/academic-progress) (including restrictions and non-engagement)
- Dates and deadlines: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/dates)
- FHSS Student and Academic Services Office: [www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/fhss/student-admin)
- Grades: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/study/progress/grades)
- Special passes: refer to the *Assessment Handbook*, at [www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/documents/policy/staff-policy/assessment-handbook.pdf)
- Statutes and policies including the Student Conduct Statute: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/strategy)
- Student support: [www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/students/support)
- Students with disabilities: [www.victoria.ac.nz/st\\_services/disability](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/st_services/disability)
- Student Charter: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/student-charter)
- Subject Librarians: <http://library.victoria.ac.nz/library-v2/find-your-subject-librarian>
- Terms and conditions: [www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/study/apply-enrol/terms-conditions/student-contract)
- Turnitin: [www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin](http://www.cad.vuw.ac.nz/wiki/index.php/Turnitin)
- University structure: [www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/about/governance/structure)
- Victoria graduate profile: [www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile](http://www.victoria.ac.nz/learning-teaching/learning-partnerships/graduate-profile)
- VUWSA: [www.vuwsa.org.nz](http://www.vuwsa.org.nz)