

Spring 2014

**PLS 101: AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT  
INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE  
Dr. Roger C. Lowery**

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I hope that you had a good holiday and are looking forward to getting started on your new courses. In order to get an overview of our course's objectives, structure, assignments, and schedule, please:

- print a copy of these instructions and
  - complete the following assignments before the next class.
  - Send me an e-mail from your UNCW email account if you have any questions or concerns.
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**ASSIGNMENTS TO BE COMPLETED  
PRIOR TO OUR 2ND CLASS, TUESDAY, 15 JANUARY 2013**

- I. Go to the course web site at: [http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/index\\_new.htm](http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/index_new.htm)
  - A. Click the **SYLLABUS** link and print a copy of the course syllabus.
  - B. Go back to the course homepage and click the **COURSE SCHEDULE** link and print a copy of the course schedule.
  - C. Read the syllabus and schedule carefully. If you have any questions, phone or e-mail me.
- II. Purchase the two course materials required for this course:
  - A. Wilson, James Q. 2014. *American Government: Brief Version*. [11<sup>th</sup> edition]. [ISBN-13: 9781133594376](#).
  - B. eInstruction.com. 2010. *CPS RF Pulse Clicker*. [1<sup>st</sup> edition]. [ISBN-13: 9781881483816](#).
- III. Once you have purchased your student-response keypad,
  - A. Follow the activation instructions posted at:  
[http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/Student-response\\_keypad\\_instructions\\_Spring\\_2013.pdf](http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/Student-response_keypad_instructions_Spring_2013.pdf).
  - B. Bring your activated *Student Response Keypad* to every class – starting with the first class meeting.
    1. You will use the keypad in every class meeting to anonymously respond to true/false or multiple-choice questions that arise during class discussion.
    2. The aggregated class responses are projected on an overhead screen as full-color bar- or pie-charts, so that the class and I can see and comment upon the distribution of class responses.
    3. I find that the anonymity and confidentiality of this feedback method encourages all students to enthusiastically participate in this interactive form of active learning. Students who rarely or never raise their hand in response to questions are comfortable in responding with their keypads and are more likely to join the resulting discussion of how and why the class divided in their collective responses.
    4. The keypad responses also give me immediate feedback regarding the extent to which students understand concepts being discussed. This allows me to make informed decisions

about the pace and organization of class discussions.

IV. Memorize the following definitions:

- A. **Society**: a collection of individuals that interact with each other
- B. **Politics: the process of conflict resolution**
- C. **Law**: the rules and principles used to resolve conflict
- D. **Government**: law makers, enforcers, and adjudicators
  - 1. The basic *ends* of government:
    - a. Balancing individual liberty with collective security or order
    - b. Balancing individual liberty with collective equality
  - 2. The alternate *means* that can be used to achieve those ends:
    - a. Constitutional limits on governmental power
    - b. Unlimited (authoritarian or totalitarian) governmental power

V. Go to the course web site at: [http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/index\\_new.htm](http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/index_new.htm)

- A. Click the link to **WEEKLY QUIZ STUDY GUIDES**
- B. Under **1: What Should We Know About Government?**, click the link to **TEXTBOOK CHAPTER OUTLINE**
- C. Print a copy of this outline for Chapter 1 in the Wilson textbook.

VI. Read Chapter 1 in the Wilson textbook

- A. Take notes on your chapter outline as you read the chapter,
- B. Highlight material in the chapter that you judge is likely to be on the quiz,
- C. Bring the Wilson textbook and Chapter 1 outline to class.

VII. Review the Practice-Quiz Study Guide for Chapter 1.

- A. Go back to the course web site at: [http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/index\\_new.htm](http://people.uncw.edu/lowery/pls101/index_new.htm)
- B. Click the **WEEKLY QUIZ STUDY GUIDES** link.
- C. Under **1: What Should We Know About Government?**, click the link to **PRACTICE-QUIZ STUDY GUIDE**
- D. Print a copy of this practice-quiz for Chapter 1 in the Wilson textbook.
- E. **Keep this printout (and bring it to the next class).**
- F. **This practice-quiz explanation will not only be useful in preparing for the first in-class, graded quiz, but – along with other practice quizzes – will also be an important study aid to use when you prepare for the first hourly exam.**