

**University of North Carolina at Wilmington
Summer Session I, 2012**

***American National Government*
PLS 101-800 (online course)**

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I. Course Meetings: Online (<https://learn.uncw.edu/webapps/login/>)

II. Dr. Seo's Office Hours: By Appointment

III. Course Description

- This summer online course provides students with an account of the basic elements of politics in the United States. The class is designed to balance the task of presenting "the basics" with the more complicated project of encouraging students to develop their own interpretations of political life in the U.S. When this short summer semester is over, students are expected to be equipped with a basic working knowledge of the political systems in the United States and the tools to be more critical consumers of political information.
- The first part of the course looks at the ideological and institutional roots of American politics, emphasizing the historical foundations of the U.S. and the subsequent evolution of basic constitutional elements into political assumptions and practices prevalent in the contemporary political system. The second section will address the institutional features of American government that are probably most readily recognizable to students, i.e. the three branches of government. We will discuss both their design and the ways in which these institutions have evolved historically and come to shape political practices. The final segment of the course uses the elements of the first two sections to examine how the American public expresses their ideas and interests through voting, parties, interest groups, the media and other vehicles of political action.
- *This course is delivered entirely online.* (<https://learn.uncw.edu/webapps/login/>) There are no required times that we will meet online, which means that students access the course materials and requirements more or less at their own pace. **All course requirements (short quiz, midterm, and final) will be posted on blackboard learning and submitted by you via the online course delivery system. (Also, please note that you should email me your presidential history assignment).** If necessary, students can meet with me face-to-face by appointment. Also, I will respond to any emails as quickly as possible. You always have access to TAC to deal with all technical issues.

IV. Course Reading

Required Textbook:

The Logic of American Politics. 5th or 4th edition (Washington D.C.: CQ Press), By Samuel Kernell, Gary C. Jacobson and Thad Kousser. You can purchase the textbook either from the UNCW Bookstore or through online. Previous editions such as the 4th edition should be perfectly fine.

V. Course Requirements

Please remember that it is imperative to catch up with summer courses without any delayed exams or late papers. *My policy is that grades on late submission drop one third of a grade for each day they are late. NO EXCEPTIONS!!!*

Students are expected to read and reflect upon assigned readings and evaluated through one quiz, one midterm, one final, and one presidential report. The dates and times listed below are the due dates. *It means that you can speed ahead, finish your assignments, and then submit them earlier than the due dates.* Yet, of course, you are not required to do so at all.

- **Short Quiz (May 24th, Th), Midterm Exam (May 31st Th), and Final (June 19th, T)**

During the semester, students will take one short quiz, one midterm, and one final exam delivered online. Each quiz and exam will be composed of multiple choice questions and/or short ID questions. Exams will cover lecture notes and chapter readings. Quiz is worth 50 points, midterm exam 150 points and final exam 200 points so that all quiz and exams combined are worth 400 points.

- **Presidential History Power Point Slides (Due June 7th, Th)**

As everyone knows, the presidential election of 2012 is around the corner. In this course, students will write one short report on presidential history/politics. The report is basically *twenty power point slides* describing three dimensions of a president you choose; *1) person, 2) politics, and 3) policy*. One example power point slides are posted on blackboard learning. The due date for you to email me your power points slides is June 7th, Thursday, by 11:59 pm. This is worth 100 points.

The total sum of all course requirements is 500 possible points for each student (400 points from quiz/exams and 100 points from presidential history report). The grading scale is a standard 10% scale with 90% or above resulting in an "A". More specifically, letter grades will be assigned according to the following point totals:

A = 500-450 points	B = 449-400 points	C = 399-350 points
D = 349-300 points	F = 299 or lower	

<i>Assignments</i>	<i>Chapters</i>	<i>Due Date and Time</i>
Short Quiz (50 points) (The Logic of American Politics and the Nationalization of Politics)	Ch 2 & 3	May 24, Th By 11:59 pm
Midterm Exam (150 points) (The Institutions of Government)	Ch 6 & 7	May 31, Th By 11:59 pm
Presidential History Report Slides (100 points) (personal, political and policy dimensions of a president you choose)	Email your slides to the instructor (seoj@uncw.edu)	June 7, Th By 11:59 pm
Final Exam (200 points) (The Public's Influence on National Policy)	Ch 10 through 14	June 19, Th By 11:59 pm

VI. Student Handbook

According to *University of North Carolina Bulletin* and the *Student Handbook*, you are advised to not commit plagiarism. Violations of these rules in any assignment may be subject to a minimum penalty of failing grade for the assignment and could result in a grade of "F" for the course.

VII. Modules

- As an online course, all materials are available to in the format of learning modules in Blackboard learning. Each module corresponds to topic and chapter listed below for a total of 13 modules. **Normally, I post modules and assignments on Monday mornings.** Each module contains lecture file and assignments as relevant.

VIII. Course Outline and Reading Assignments

Class Topics	Reading Assignments	Schedule
<i>Course introduction</i>		May 17, Th
<i>The Logic of American Politics</i>	Chapter 1	May 21, M
<i>The Constitution</i>	Chapter 2	May 22, T
<i>Federalism</i>	Chapter 3	May 23, W
Short Quiz (50 points)	Ch 2 and 3	May 24, Th By 11:59 pm
<i>Memorial Holiday (No Class)</i>		May 28, M
<i>Congress</i>	Chapter 6	May 29, T
<i>The Presidency</i>	Chapter 7	May 30, W
Midterm Exam (150 points)	Ch 6 and 7	May 31, Th By 11:59 pm
<i>The Bureaucracy</i>	Chapter 8	June 4, M
<i>The Federal Judiciary</i>	Chapter 9	June 5, T
<i>Public Opinion</i>	Chapter 10	June 6, W
Presidential History Report Slides (100 points)	Email Dr. Seo	June 7, Th By 11:59 pm
<i>Voting, Campaigns, and Elections</i>	Chapter 11	June 11, M
<i>Political Parties</i>	Chapter 12	June 12, T
<i>Interest Groups</i>	Chapter 13	June 13, W
<i>The News Media</i>	Chapter 14	June 14, Th
<i>The Prospects for Institutional Reform</i>	Chapter 15	June 18, M
Final Exam (200 points)	Ch 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14	June 19, T By 11:59 pm