POL101 Introduction to American Political Process
(3 credit hours)
Course Syllabus

Course Description

A survey course that analyzes the American Democratic processes and discusses the distribution of authority and responsibility between the federal, state, and local levels. It introduces students to the principles of government outlined in the U. S. Constitution and the documents impact upon society.

Course Learning Outcomes

At the completion of this course, students should be able to:

1. Explain the concepts, institutions, and officials that make up the American political process.

2. Analyze the meaning and intent of the American Constitution and its amendments.

3. Describe how government affects our lives on a daily basis.

4. Using the knowledge gained from lectures and written material, critically assess the American political process and appraise through communicating views effectively with the spoken and written word.

Required Textbook(s) and Resources

Rom, M. C., Hidaka, M., & Walker, R. B. (2022, May 18).*Introduction to political science*. OpenStax. Houston, Texas.

This textbook is an Open Education Resource (OER) from OpenStax and is licensed under Creative Commons. It is not accessible through DragonACCESS.

Be sure to also review the weekly **Explore** sections for additional library or web resources. For access to databases, research help, and writing tips, visit the Tiffin University Library. You might consider registering for one of the library's many webinars on library research, source

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evaluation, copyright, and other topics, at the [Library Events - Upcoming Events](#) web page. For further assistance email a librarian, at: library@tiffin.edu.

Time Commitment

Effective time management is possibly the single most critical element to your academic success. To do well in this online class you should plan your time wisely to maximize your learning through the completion of readings, discussions, and assignments. Because of our accelerated, seven-week term, TU online courses are designed with the expectation that you dedicate a little over **six (6)** hours per credit hour to course activities and preparation **each week**. For example, for successful completion of a three-credit, seven-week online course you should reserve roughly **twenty (20) hours per week**.

To help plan your time and keep on track toward successful course completion, note the distinctive rhythm of assignment due dates:

1. All times assume Eastern Time (GMT-4).

2. Weeks begin at 12:00 a.m. ET on Monday and end at 11:55 p.m. ET on Sunday.

3. Unless otherwise noted, initial assignments or discussion posts are due by **11:55 p.m. ET** on **Wednesdays.**

4. Additional assignments or follow-up discussion posts are due by **11:55 p.m. ET** on **Saturdays, and**

5. Major assignments and reflections are typically due by **11:55 p.m. ET** on **Sundays.**

Learning Activities

The learning activities for this course are designed to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the U.S. political system through a blend of reading assignments, interactive media, quizzes, discussions, and written assignments. You will analyze foundational texts like the Constitution, explore the roles and interactions of different levels of government, and evaluate the impact of political processes on public policies and communities. The course emphasizes critical thinking and civic engagement, with activities that encourage you to connect theoretical concepts with real-world case studies, propose solutions to community issues, and simulate civic discourse. Throughout the course, you will develop analytical skills and enhance their ability to communicate their views effectively through spoken and written word.

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Grading and Points Distribution

The chart below identifies the individual contributions from each type of activity, per week.

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7	Total
Quiz Activity 1.2 (10)	**Quiz** Activity 2.1 (10)	**Quiz** Activity 3.1 (10)	**Quiz** Activity 4.1 (10)	**Quiz** Activity 5.1 (10)			**50**
Forum Activity 1.1 (0) Activity 1.3 (30)	**Forum** Activity 2.2 (30) Activity 2.3 (30)	**Forum** Activity 3.2 (30) Activity 3.3 (30)	**Forum** Activity 4.2 (30) Activity 4.3 (30)	**Forum** Activity 5.2 (30) Activity 5.3 (30)	**Forum** Activity 6.1 (30)	**Forum** Activity 7.1 (30)	**330**
Assignment Activity 1.4 (90)	**Assignment** Activity 2.4 (90)	**Assignment** Activity 3.4 (90)	**Assignment** Activity 4.4 (90)	**Assignment** Activity 5.4 (90)		**Assignment** Activity 7.2 (50)	**500**
					Assignments Activity 6.2 (120)		**120**
130	**160**	**160**	**160**	**160**	**150**	**80**	**1000**

Grading Scale

Grade	Percentage
A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
D	<70

Please see the Academic Bulletin for grade appeal information.

Course Schedule and Weekly Checklist

Topic	Learning Activities (Due by 11:55 p.m. ET on day designated)

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Start Here	❏ MON: Activity 1.1: Introduce Yourself
Week 1: Structure of the U.S. federal government Federal government's role in daily life Comparison with city government structure	❏ WED: Activity 1.2: U.S. Federal Government Basics ❏ SAT: Activity 1.3: City Government Comparison Report ❏ SUN: Activity 1.4: Constitutional Principles Poster
Week 2: Bill of Rights and Amendments Influence of Amendments on Society Constitutional Rights in City Policies	❏ WED: Activity 2.1: Quiz: Constitutional Elements and Their Influence ❏ WED: Activity 2.2: Impact of the Bill of Rights and Amendments ❏ SAT: Activity 2.3: Constitutional Rights in City Policies ❏ SUN: <Activity title here>
Week 3: Federalism and Governance Federal and State Government Interaction Federal-State Impact on Local Policies	❏ WED: Activity 3.1: Understanding Federalism ❏ WED: Activity 3.2: Federalism and Governance ❏ SAT: Activity 3.3: Federal-State Relations and Local Policy ❏ SUN: Activity 3.4: Comparative Roles in Policymaking
Week 4: Role of Local Governments Local Governments and Civic Issues	❏ WED: Activity 4.1: Local Governance Structures ❏ WED: Activity 4.2: Local Governments and Community Impact ❏ SAT: Activity 4.3: Civic Issues and Local Elections ❏ SUN: Activity 4.4: Civic Engagement and Local Governance

Enhancing Civic Engagement	
Week 5: Influence of Political Parties and Interest Groups Media's Role in Politics Media Portrayal of Political Issues	❏ WED: Activity 5.1: Roles and Impacts of Political Groups ❏ WED: Activity 5.2: Political Parties and Public Policy ❏ SAT: Activity 5.3: Media's Role in Politics ❏ SUN: Activity 5.4: Media Analysis Brief
Week 6: Government Decision Impact City Policy Evaluation Policy Process Analysis	❏ WED: Activity 6.1: Impactful Government Decisions ❏ SUN: Activity 6.2: Critical Analysis Presentation
Week 7: Government Impact on Communities Current Local Policies Course Knowledge Synthesis	❏ WED: Activity 7.1: Reflections on the American Political System ❏ SAT: Activity 7.1: Reflections on the American Political System ❏ SAT: Activity 7.2: Civic Discourse Exercise

Tips for Success

Successful online learning requires a good deal of self-discipline and self-direction. As seekers of the truth, we should be willing to challenge and review one another's academic work in a spirit of respectful comradery and constructiveness. Your course is a place for you to stretch and grow as you benefit from the expertise, knowledge, experience and diverse perspectives of your instructor and peers. Constructive feedback will challenge you to stretch your own thinking, thereby expanding your knowledge, understanding and application.

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To get the most out of your learning experience, you should actively engage (participate) in **ALL** course activities. Your Instructor Will Expect You to:

- Thoroughly review orientation materials (Start Here) within the first 48 hours of the term.

- Monitor your TU email account **daily** for important updates and announcements.

- Take ownership of your learning experience and act in a proactive, self-directed manner. That means:

  o Fully participate in all learning activities.

  o Complete assignments as described in rubrics or other instructions.

  o Submit all work on time and in the specified format (e.g. APA format for citations).

  o Utilize and incorporate instructor provided feedback to improve your work.

  o Ask questions so you can better understand course material or assignments.

  o Use the highest standards of intellectual honesty and integrity. For more information, see the TU Library guide: [Digital Literacy: Netiquette and Internet Safety](#).

  o Treat others respectfully and demonstrate "netiquette" (online politeness and respectfulness) at all times. TU celebrates cultural uniqueness and expects all students to be considerate and thoughtful throughout their learning experiences.

You Should Expect Your Instructors to:

In general, your instructors should advocate for your success as a learner and help guide you toward successful completion of the course activities and most importantly, attainment of the course learning outcomes. To accomplish this, your instructors should:

- Post an introductory announcement/email at the beginning of each week to provide updates and help you prepare for the week's activities.

- Maintain an active and engaged presence in all course activities and throughout the course.

- Respond to your emailed questions within 48 hours, if not sooner.

- Clearly communicate any absences or expected non-participation due to extenuating circumstances. For example, "I will be traveling to attend a funeral this week and may not be able to respond to questions or participate in forums for a couple of days."

- When grading your work, your instructors should:

  o clearly indicate their grading approach (what they like to see in submitted work as well as what types of errors they tend to penalize more harshly),

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- thoroughly review and evaluate your submissions in a timely manner (in less than 5 days for most assignments), and

- provide constructive feedback that indicates the strengths and weaknesses of your work and provides suggestions on how you can improve your performance on future assignments.

Accommodations

The **Office for Disability Services** supports the institutional commitment to diversity by providing educational opportunities for qualified individuals with disabilities through accessible programs and services in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and Title III of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. If you need reasonable accommodations due to a documented disability, contact the Office for Equity, Access, & Opportunity 419.448.3021 or via email at disabilityservices@tiffin.edu.

Additional Resources & Support

For technical support, either email moodlesupport@tiffin.edu or call the 24/7 Technical Support Call Center at 855-664-1200.

If you need to consult an academic advisor refer to TU's Meet the Team page.

For information about TU's peer tutoring program see the Murphy Center's Tutoring Policies and Procedures page. Veterans and active military can seek assistance from TU's Veteran and Military Services Web Page.

Comments or Concerns

TU's online programs are designed to be student *driven*: to empower you with a voice and stake in your learning. Our courses feature multiple and varied ways that you can share feedback, and we invite you to become an active voice and help drive our improvement efforts. In addition to providing in-course feedback, we encourage you to submit questions or comments directly to the online team at online@tiffin.edu.

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