

POL 010-020 - **AMERICAN GOVERNMENT** - 3.0 credit hours  
*Kutztown University of Pennsylvania*  
Spring 2012 – MWF: 10:00-10:50 A.M. – AF 200

Professor Dr. Glenn W. Richardson Jr.  
Office 304 Old Main A Wing  
Office Hours 11:05-11:35 MWF; 2:15-2:45 MW; 4:30-5:45 W; 2:15-3:00 T  
(hours subject to change as announced)  
Phone 610-683-4450  
e-mail richards@kutztown.edu  
Class homepage <http://faculty.kutztown.edu/richards/010/010.html>

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course is designed to introduce students to the essential elements of government and political life in the United States. We will be focused on the institutions, processes, people, and ideas upon which American politics is based, and will consider many of the challenges and opportunities faced by a free and self-governing people. Our journey will include past, present and future explorations, as we seek to engage our political heritage, our current environment, and our legacy to generations yet unborn. Class meetings will include lectures, discussions, and various activities. Assignments include three mid-term examinations and a final. Additional points may be available for completion of a range of in-class exercises and take-home projects, as announced in class.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- Provide students with an awareness of the intellectual origins, key features and ongoing evolution of the institutions and processes of politics in the United States (such as the separate branches of the federal government, federalism, campaigns and elections, political parties, interest groups and the mass media) as demonstrated by proficiency in fixed-response examination.
- Help students develop critical reasoning, reading, analysis, and communication skills and to apply them to the current political environment, as it unfolds during the spring of 2012, as demonstrated by proficiency in fixed-response examination.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Students are required to complete three midterm examinations, a final examination, and assignments and quizzes as announced in class.

**GRADING:**

Points will be awarded on the following basis:

Assignment	Date	Points Available
In-class assignments	TBA	5
Exam I	Friday, February 10	15
Exam II	Monday, March 5	20
Exam III	Friday, April 13	30
Final Exam	Monday, May 7	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>January 23-May 7</b>	<b>100</b>

Grade	Points
A	80 +
B	70 +
C	60 +
D	50 +
F	< 50

Students who have shown improvement over the course of the semester, and those who have participated in class discussions may be given the benefit of the doubt in borderline cases.

## ASSIGNMENTS:

### Examinations

There are four examinations scheduled during the course of the semester (three midterms and a final). The exams will emphasize multiple-choice questions, but may also include short answer and essay questions (students will be notified ahead of time if this is the case). Examinations will be administered online via D2L.

Exam material will be drawn directly from the class readings, discussions, lectures and headlines from the *New York Times* pertaining to Congress, the president, and the Supreme Court. A limited number of free copies of the newspaper are available on campus; discount print and electronic subscriptions are available to KU students.

The textbook website <[http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073379069/student\\_view0/index.html](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073379069/student_view0/index.html)> offers a number of resources that you may find helpful in your preparations for examinations, including chapter summaries, outlines and practice multiple choice and true/false questions.

Midterm examinations are scheduled for Friday, February 10, Monday, March 5, and Friday, April 13. The final exam is scheduled for Monday, May 7.

## ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION:

If you wish to send a message to me personally, you must address it to my e-mail address (richards@kutztown.edu). *Please include a recognizable subject line.* Doing so allows me to instantly recognize your message as important and distinguishes it from the many messages from strange e-mail addresses that arrive on a daily basis, and facilitates a prompt response from me. If you send me an e-mail message and do not receive a prompt response, please do not hesitate to send a follow-up. You might want to try a different subject line in case the previous subject tripped the spam filter. While I try to answer each e-mail, it can be easy to accidentally overlook any particular message, and on occasion messages may be improperly screened by spam filters, etc.

A web page has also been set up for this class. Important course information will be posted there along with links to other relevant web sites. The URL is:

<<http://faculty.kutztown.edu/richards/010/010.html>>.

This course uses Desire 2 Learn. A D2L student tutorial is available online at <[http://www.kutztown.edu/academics/lt/lc/KU\\_D2L\\_Student\\_Orientation/index.html](http://www.kutztown.edu/academics/lt/lc/KU_D2L_Student_Orientation/index.html)>.

## ATTENDANCE POLICY:

Students are responsible for class attendance, and for all materials discussed and assigned during class. There will be no make-up assignments for unexcused absences. Excused absences include but are not limited to illness, scheduled university-related activities, death in the family, jury duty, and impassable roads.

You must notify the instructor (in person, by phone, or via e-mail) *before* an absence. Excuses must also be submitted to the instructor in writing before make-up assignments will be accepted.

Students who are unable to complete an assignment for legitimate reasons that do not qualify as excused under university guidelines, and who notify the instructor *before* the assignment is due, may, at the discretion of the instructor, turn in late assignments for partial credit.

In addition, at the instructor's discretion, students may be given the opportunity to complete a supplemental assignment. Typically, the amount of work involved in supplemental assignments would be disproportionate to the credit that can be earned (these policies are designed to discourage late assignments). If you have any doubt at all about your ability to complete an assignment you should notify the instructor in advance "just in case." Failure to do this will assure that you will not receive credit for missed assignments.

**NOTE:** *Make-up tests and assignments may not be graded and returned before the end of the semester. Make-up tests and assignments may differ from those given in class in terms of both content and form. Make-up examinations will be administered at 11:00 A.M. on Thursday, February 16, at 11:00 A.M. on Thursday March 9, and at 11:00 A.M. on Thursday, April 19. Signed, written requests for make-up exams must be submitted to the instructor before taking a make-up examination or submitting a late assignment. Late penalties for failure to notify the instructor of a missed exam or assignment will apply as described below.*

## LATE ASSIGNMENT PENALTIES:

Assignments turned in on the day they are due but after assignments were collected in class will face a five-percent penalty. Each additional late day will accrue an additional ten percent deduction. Electronic submission of assignments will not be accepted except at the discretion of and by the invitation of the instructor.

**NOTE:** *If a student misses an exam or assignment due date, late assignment penalties apply for each day the student fails to notify the instructor and discuss a make-up exam or submission of late work.*

## CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE:

Students are expected to observe all rules of proper classroom conduct. In order to insure an appropriate environment conducive to learning there are two rules governing behavior in the classroom that you must be aware of:

- Use of electronic devices of any kind is ***strongly discouraged*** in class. Students who distract others or the instructor by "surfing," "texting," "sexting," "facebooking" or otherwise engaging in electronic communication of any kind may be penalized by having points taken away from the total number of points they have earned in the course. Students with special needs should discuss accommodations with the instructor.

- Please refrain from talking, eating, leaving your cell phone ringers on, or other disruptive activity during class. Even one or two conversations quickly create distractions for other students and the instructor.
- Please do not leave class early. If you must do so, tell the instructor before hand and arrange to sit near the door so your exit will be less noticeable.

Serious violations of these rules may result in a request that the offending individual(s) leave the classroom. Grading penalties (up to a half-letter grade for first-time offenders and a full letter-grade for recidivists) may be imposed at the discretion of the instructor.

#### **POLICY ON ACADEMIC ETHICS AND HONESTY:**

If a student has plagiarized or cheated in a course, the instructor may impose sanctions upon the student up to and including the penalty of failure in the course with a grade of "F".

Plagiarism is stealing and passing off (the ideas, words, work, themes, reports, drawings, laboratory notes, computer programs or other products of another) as one's own. In short, it is using a created production without crediting the source. The surest way to avoid plagiarism is to provide proper citation to all works quoted directly or otherwise indirectly borrowed from. Proper citations include the title, date, and author of the work. If you are not familiar with the formatting of bibliographic citations, please consult a writer's style guide or manual. An excellent online guide to citation can be found on the internet at:

[http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)

Cheating includes (but is not limited to) providing or receiving unauthorized assistance during exams, an attempt by one or more students to use unauthorized information in the taking of an exam; or to knowingly assist another student in obtaining or using unauthorized materials. Further specific delineation of academically dishonest behavior and Kutztown University's academic dishonesty policies can be found in the student handbook *The Key 2011-2012* (pp. 51-61) available online at <http://thekey.kutztown.edu/>. If you have any doubts as to whether particular behavior would amount to cheating, please ask the instructor for clarification. Ignorance of the rules is not a valid defense.

#### **COURSE STRUCTURE:**

Class meetings will be comprised of introductory and concluding comments from the instructor, lectures, questions, discussions, and activities involving the whole class. For the class to be most successful, each student must come to each class prepared. That involves reading, studying, analyzing and often re-reading and re-analyzing materials *before* class. Much of what is said in the class, both by students and by the instructor, will make little sense to the unprepared student.

You must also try to resist the temptation to discount the comments of your fellow students. The course is designed to give students the opportunity to articulate key concepts and criticisms. Many of the important statements in the class will be made by students. It is essential that you give the utmost respect to your classmates.

Also, keep in mind that in no case should any of the comments in the class be taken or directed personally. A college classroom is perhaps the singular place in our society where people gather for the purpose of giving deliberate and reasoned consideration to a wide range of

views, including many of great controversy. Indeed, I encourage you to present views you may not necessarily agree with in order to explore and develop relevant themes or issues.

#### TEXTBOOKS:

There is one **(1)** required textbook:

Patterson, Thomas E. *An Introduction to American Government* (2011 Kutztown University Edition). Boston: McGraw-Hill. 2011.

The textbook is available at the KU Bookstore in the David E. McFarland Student Union Building.

Students are also **required** to read the *New York Times* for stories pertaining to Congress, the president, and the Supreme Court.

## READING AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

### WEEK ONE: January 23-27

#### INTRODUCTION

POL 010 Course Syllabus.

#### THE INTELLECTUAL ROOTS OF THE AMERICAN REPUBLIC

“Political Thinking: Becoming a Responsible Citizen.” (Ch. 1 in Patterson).  
“The Declaration of Independence” (Appendix, pp. 629-631 in Patterson).

### WEEK TWO: January 30-February 3

#### THE CONSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

“Constitutional Democracy: Promoting Liberty and Self-Government.” (Ch. 2 in Patterson).

### WEEK THREE: February 6-10

*Federalist No. 10* by James Madison (Appendix, pp. 651-655 in Patterson or online at:  
< [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/fed10.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed10.asp)>).

“The Constitution of the United States of America” (Appendix pp. 633-650 in Patterson or online at:  
< [http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution\\_transcript.html](http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/constitution_transcript.html)>).

**\*\*\* EXAM I: FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 10 \*\*\***

**WEEK FOUR:  
February 13-17  
FEDERALISM**

“Federalism: Forging a Nation.” (Ch. 3 in Patterson).  
James Madison, *Federalist No. 51* (Appendix, pp. 656-58 in Patterson or online at  
< [http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/fed51.asp](http://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/fed51.asp)>).

**WEEK FIVE:  
February 20-24**

LIMITED GOVERNMENT  
AND CIVIL LIBERTIES

“Civil Liberties: Protecting Individual Rights.” (Ch. 4 in Patterson).

**WEEK SIX:  
February 27-March 2**

CIVIL RIGHTS AND EQUALITY

“Equal Rights: Struggling Toward Fairness.” (Ch. 5 in Patterson).

**WEEK SEVEN:  
March 5-9**

**\*\*\* EXAM II: MONDAY, MARCH 5 \*\*\***

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH I

“Congress: Balancing National Goals and Local Interests.” (Ch. 11 in Patterson).

**SPRING BREAK:**

*Begins:* 8:00 A.M., MONDAY, MARCH 12

*Ends:* 8:00 A.M., MONDAY, MARCH 19

**WEEK EIGHT:  
March 19-23**

THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH II

**WEEK NINE:  
March 26-30**

THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH I

“The Presidency: Leading the Nation” (Ch. 12 in Patterson).

**WEEK TEN:****April 2-6**

## THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH II

“The Federal Bureaucracy: Administering the Government.” (Ch. 13 in Patterson).

**WEEK ELEVEN:****April 9-13**

## THE JUDICIARY

“The Federal Judicial System: Applying the Law” (Ch. 14 in Patterson).

**\*\*\* EXAM III: FRIDAY, APRIL 13 \*\*\***

**WEEK TWELVE:****April 16-20**

## PUBLIC OPINION AND THE MEDIA

“Public Opinion and Political Socialization: Shaping the People’s Voice.” (Ch. 6 in Patterson).

“The News Media: Communicating Political Images.” (Ch. 10 in Patterson)

**WEEK THIRTEEN:****April 23-27**

## POLITICAL PARTIES AND INTEREST GROUPS

“Political Parties, Candidates, and Campaigns: Defining the Voter’s Choice.” (Ch. 8 in Patterson).

“Interest Groups: Organizing for Influence.” (Ch. 9 in Patterson).

**WEEK FOURTEEN:****April 30-May 4**

## PUBLIC POLICY

“Economic and Environmental Policy: Contributing to Prosperity.” (Ch. 15 in Patterson).

“Welfare and Education Policy: Providing for Personal Security and Need.” (Ch. 16 in Patterson).

---

**FINAL EXAMINATION**

**\*\*\* MONDAY MAY 7: 11:00 A.M. \*\*\***

**PLEASE NOTE:** *If a class examination is scheduled or a class assignment is due on a day when classes are cancelled, the exam will be given or the assignment will be due on the next day classes do meet.*

**ALL ASSIGNMENTS SUBJECT TO CHANGE AS ANNOUNCED IN CLASS.**