

**Syllabus for Introduction to American Government**  
**POLI 101- Reinhardt University**  
**POL (101) Introduction to American Government, Spring 2024**  
**Tuesdays and Thursdays, 8am – 9:15am**  
**Lawson Hall Building, Room 110**  
**Professor: Mr. Marlon J. McBride Email: marlon.mcbride@reinhardt.edu**

To schedule an appointment, please send me an e- mail message with possible dates and times. I will respond to your email within 24-48 hours to confirm a specific date and time. Also feel free to contact me by e-mail with any questions you may have regarding course administrative matters or the material being covered. If you do not receive a response to an e-mail message within 48 hours, text me at 407-625-4443 with your name, course number, and date you submitted your email. I will respond to you as soon as possible.

**Course Description**

This course is an Introduction to American Government and is designed to provide a foundation for understanding and participating in the American political system. We will examine the theoretical ideas that informed the creation and development of America's political system and consider some of the major contemporary challenges to the maintenance of American democracy. Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to: 1) understand the origins and nature of the constitutional system 2) appreciate the relationship between the development of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches 3) understand basic social science theories concerning political behavior, bureaucracies, interest groups, and political parties 4) understand how social scientists explain and understand social and political processes 5) write thesis-based persuasive essays 6) understand how policy throughout the history of the United States has affected our current state; and 7) understand the importance of milestone events throughout our history.

**Textbook required:** Patterson, Thomas E. 2021. We the People. Fourteenth Edition. New York: McGraw Hill Publishers.

**VI. Grading**

**Attendance, and class participation – 20%**

**Exam #1: 20%**

**Exam #2: 30%**

**Final Exam #3: 30%**

**Exams:** All exams will be administered on canvas online. Exam 1 is scheduled for **Thursday, February 1st** and Exam 2 is scheduled for **Thursday, March 14th. The Final, Exam #3, will be held from 8am – 11am on Monday, April 29th.** Exams may include a combination of multiple choice, identification, short answer, and essay questions. Makeup exams will only be permitted if Professor McBride has been notified prior to the missed exam and only if he agrees that the absence is necessitated by a serious documented emergency. This does not include medical emergencies. Check your calendar now to make sure you do not have anything that conflicts with the exam schedule.

### **Class Schedule**

#### **Week 1:**

Jan 9th: REVIEW OF SYLLABUS

Jan 11th: CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY: PROMOTING LIBERTY AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

#### **Week 2:**

Jan 16: ICE BREAKER QUIZ DUE (**SUBMIT ON CANVAS BY 11:59pm**)

Jan 18: CONSTITUTIONAL DEMOCRACY: PROMOTING LIBERTY AND SELF-GOVERNMENT

#### **Week 3:**

Jan. 23 & 25 : FEDERALISM: FORGING A NATION

#### **Week 4:**

Jan 30: **REVIEW OF MATERIALS AND ANY QUESTIONS (WEEKS 1-3)\*\*\***

Feb 1: **EXAM #1 DUE (SUBMIT ON CANVAS BY 11:59pm)**

#### **Week 5:**

Feb. 6th & 8 : CIVIL LIBERTIES: PROTECTING INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS

#### **Week 6:**

Feb. 13 & 15: EQUAL RIGHTS: STRUGGLING TOWARD FAIRNESS

#### **Week 7:**

Feb. 20 & 22: PUBLIC OPINION AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION: SHAPING THE PEOPLE'S VOICE

#### **Week 8:**

Feb. 27 & 29 POLITICAL PARTICIPATION: ACTIVATING THE POPULAR WILL

#### **Week 9:**

**Spring Break: MARCH 4TH-8TH**

Mar 12th **REVIEW DAY (WILL COVER MATERIALS FROM WEEKS 5 – 8)\*\*\***

Mar 14th : **EXAM #2 DUE (SUBMIT ON CANVAS)\*\*\***

**Week 10:**

Mar. 19th : POLITICAL PARTIES, CANDIDATES, AND CAMPAIGNS: DEFINING THE VOTERS' CHOICE

Mar. 21st: CONGRESS: BALANCING NATIONAL GOALS AND LOCAL INTERESTS

**Week 11:**

Mar. 26 & March 28th: THE PRESIDENCY: LEADING THE NATION

**Week 12:**

Apr. 2 & 4: THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY: ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT

**Week 13:**

Apr. 9th & 11: THE FEDERAL JUDICIAL SYSTEM: APPLYING THE LAW

**Week 14:**

Apr. 16 & 18: **REVIEW WEEK (WILL COVER MATERIALS FROM WEEKS 11-13)\*\***

**FINAL EXAM #3 DUE: WEDNESDAY, NOV, 29TH @ 8AM-11AM**

**The Final Exam will cover material from weeks 11-13.**

**The instructor reserves the right to make adjustments to the class schedule and syllabus. If changes are made, students will be notified promptly.**

Campus Nurse within the Student Health Center  
studenthealthcenter@reinhardt.edu, 770-720-5542 or www.reinhardt.edu/nurse.

Public Safety

**Non-Emergency Phone:** 770.720.5789

**Emergency Phone:** 770.720.5911

publicsafety@reinhardt.edu

Dean of Students

deanofstudents@reinhardt.edu, 770-720-5540

Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

VPAA@reinhardt.edu, 770-720-9102.

**DISABILITY STATEMENT**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. This legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable

accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is located in the basement of Lawson Building. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letter.

**CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS.** For those students needing help with their papers, study habits, note-taking, and preparation for test-taking, please make an appointment at “the Center for Student Success” (Room 313, Hill Freeman Library). They will be more than happy to help you out.

**AN IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ATHLETES.** Those of you who play sports for Reinhardt must contact me and let me know, ahead of time, when you will be missing class because of games, injuries and/or emergencies so I could make the corresponding adjustments. You must NOT rely on your coaches’ notifications sent to me. You must contact me individually about these issues.

**COURSE FORMAL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS.** Having in mind that education is about equipping students with the values, skills, knowledge, and experiences to interact with the world in relevant and transformative ways, it is expected that students will honor a set of ethical, professional, and civil principles that will guide their actions in this course. Outlined below are some of the most important ones:

- 1.) **ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES.** To create a culture of learning, professionalism, and civility, all students are expected to attend class faithfully and on time. Although the Reinhardt Catalog states that attendance is an “obligation,” please remember that attending class is also a privilege. Formal education is a blessing not too many people enjoy. Missing too many classes (without any legitimate justifications) will have negative implications on your final grade. In the case of an emergency or justified absences, please contact me via email ahead of time to indicate the reasons why you were not or will not be in class.
- 2.) **INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM.** Throughout this course the following ethical principles are assumed as norms of conduct:
  - A. **ANY FORM OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE AND WILL BE SERIOUSLY PENALIZED. PLAGIARISM or CHEATING will make you fail this course!!!!**
  - B. Good-in-class behavior is assumed as a norm. Any form of disrupting behavior is not acceptable. It is assumed that each student will follow Reinhardt's code of conduct as explained in the student handbook.

C. This class is a FREE-CELL-PHONE ZONE. Cell phones must be turned off and put in your pockets or backpacks. Failure to comply with this requirement will have negative implications on your grade.

**D. LAPTOP COMPUTERS/TABLETS may only be used for TAKING NOTES and you must formally ask for permission to do so. During class time, you are NOT ALLOWED TO DO HOMEWORK FOR OTHER COURSES or USE SOCIAL MEDIA. You must be fully present! Failure to comply with this requirement will have negative implications on your grade.**

**E. The conditions of this syllabus are binding and must be followed faithfully. I assume you all know its content. By deciding to take this course, you ALL AGREE to follow the norms ruling this course.**

F. Any comment or suggestion that contributes to your growth as students, the improvement of this class, and a learning environment is welcome. I am here to help you learn, succeed and be a better human being. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to ask for help. Feel free to contact me at any time.

3.) **COMMUNICATION MODE.** All of you are responsible for constantly checking CANVAS (Files, Announcements, etc.) and your Reinhardt email accounts regarding issues pertaining to this course (materials, lectures, announcements, class schedule changes, grades, etc.). When you communicate with me, you must follow a formal, respectful protocol. You must be polite and/or use manners. **Do NOT use your personal emails!**