

POS 1041-L05 (20304), American Government, 3 Credit Hours  
(Online) (Spring) (2025)

- Professor: Will Geisler
- Email: [geislerw@nwfsc.edu](mailto:geislerw@nwfsc.edu)
- Phone: 972.983.1816
- Office Hours: By appointment or via phone or zoom
- Class Location: Online
- Online Classroom with Gradebook: [Canvas class shell](#)
- Final Exam: May 4, 2024

#### Course Description

Examines government, political ideals, and institutions. Strong emphasis is placed on political thought, the origin of the American federal system, and the distribution of powers between state and national governments. This is a Gordon Rule writing course and is part of the college's Writing-Across-the-Curriculum program. A minimum grade of "C" is required if used to meet Gordon Rule requirements for general education.

#### Course-Level Student Learning Outcomes

The student will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the basic principles and practices of American democracy and how they are applied in our republican form of government (local, state, and federal).
- Assess the changing nature of political parties, party platforms, voting patterns among the American populace, and different methods to measure public opinion.
- Evaluate the three branches of the United States federal government to demonstrate an understanding of the duties of each specific branch and the application of checks and balances.
- Understand the interdependence of each institution of government and why the relationship developed.
- Explain the procedures and techniques used by various officials in the performance of their duties.
- Describe the process of policy making (foreign and domestic).
- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of the United States Constitution and amendments and their application.
- Develop and demonstrate knowledge of the founding documents and how they have shaped the nature and functions of our institutions of self-governance.
- Develop and demonstrate an understanding of landmark Supreme Court cases, landmark legislation, and landmark executive actions and their impact on law and society.

### Course Materials

Our course text is an OER text American Government: Readings and Cases, Avarus Books provided free of charge for students and can be downloaded from within the course.

### Class Attendance

Students who stop attending class or are not able to pass the course due to attendance expectations stated in the syllabus may receive a failing grade, which may impact the receipt of federal aid in subsequent courses. Students traveling for College-approved activities will not be penalized academically but will be responsible for missed work.

### Attendance Confirmation

Active participation and academic engagement are expectations of enrollment in this course. Faculty confirm each student's attendance in class after the schedule adjustment period ends. Students who have not attended class or otherwise engaged academically in the course through the submission of an academic assignment or through participation in a curricular activity may be withdrawn from the course for nonattendance.

Students who are withdrawn for nonattendance or nonparticipation early in the course may request to be reinstated in the course by contacting their instructor by email. Reinstatement in the course is at the instructor's discretion during the first three weeks of class and is not guaranteed. Reinstatement requests occurring after this three-week period may be submitted to the instructor for consideration; however, additional administrative approval will be required to grant the reinstatement. If you are withdrawn from a course due to nonattendance and are not granted reinstatement in the course, please contact a Student Success Navigator for assistance.

## Grading Scheme and Procedures

Grade Scale (based on 1000 total points possible)

A = 900-1000

B = 800-899

C = 700-799

D = 600-699

F = 0-599

Start Here/Orientation (15 points)

After you have carefully proceeded through the first three steps of the Start Here items, do the Orientation Quiz (five points) and the Introductory Discussion (10 points).

Module Work

There are 14 Modules. Work through each module doing the readings, watching the videos, and doing the assignments in the order they appear on Canvas.

Chapter Quizzes (140 points)

There are 14 chapter quizzes in this course; they are not cumulative. Each quiz will have 10 questions. The format for each quiz is "open book" and each quiz has a time limit of 30 minutes. Make sure you study!!!

Each student will have two attempts per quiz. The higher grade will be recorded. If you do not finish an attempt, it may count as a zero. The quiz questions are pulled from a larger group of questions; therefore, no two attempts will have the exact same questions. By design, there is not enough time to look up each and every question, so study prior to taking the quiz. The quizzes are automated; they are generated from dozens of questions. The grade will post immediately after submission.

If you are taking a quiz on a wireless connection, make sure it is stable one. It is also suggested that you keep an Internet radio station active without volume during the quiz to ensure your connection stays active during the examination. On rare occasions, there may be an issue with the quiz questions. Please let me know if that is the case. I always appreciate help in catching errors in the quizzes. Always feel free to check the answers against the book – if you have a question about an answer marked wrong, just email me with the question and your evidence (a pic) from the online text or book.

Unforeseen glitches during a quiz attempt can occur from time to time. There are several steps you can take to ensure you do not have a problem during an attempt. Go ahead and contact me if you have any problems with the quiz, if it is a tech support problem, I'll refer you to them.

Written Assignments (500 points)

There are 14 written assignments that are worth varying amounts of points. Make sure you carefully read the instructions for the assignment and do all the requirements before turning in the assignment in Canvas.

#### Discussions Forums (220 points)

Each module discussion forum is worth 15 points (the concluding discussion is worth 10). To get the full points, you must write a 250-300-word response to the given prompt (use your software to count the number of words and include that at the end of your post). Your response should carefully address all parts of the question in a coherent, organized, and professional manner. You must also respond to someone else's post with a 100-word response (use word count again).

Your responses should be your own words. Do not cut and paste - this is plagiarism. If you do quote the textbook or other sources, be sure to use quotation marks and parenthetical citations for proper attribution. If you cut and paste and do not use your own words without quotations marks and parenthetical citations, you may be cited for plagiarism, given a 0 on the assignment, and an F in the course. You may also face possible disciplinary action by the College.

You will primarily be graded on the completeness of your posts. Make sure you read the comments made on your posts. If I ask a follow up question, make sure you answer to receive more points for your post.

#### Final Exam

The Final Exam covers all material in Chapters 1-14.

#### Facebook Group (25 points)

There is a Facebook group assigned to your class. See details on Canvas.

#### Incomplete Grades

At the discretion of the instructor, an incomplete grade ("I") may be awarded when the student is unable to finish the required work because of unforeseen extenuating circumstances such as illness or TDY assignment. To receive an "I" grade, the student must have successfully completed a significant portion of the required coursework and be able to finish the remaining work without attending class. An "I" grade will automatically convert to a grade of "F" if the student does not complete the remainder of the coursework by the established deadline.

#### Late Work

Late work may or may not be given half credit or no credit at the sole discretion of the instructor.

#### Instructor Communication

Your NWFSC email is the official communication medium of the College. Please check College email regularly for any class and College notifications.

### Technical Skills and Specialized Technology

This course is fully online. Students must provide their own device(s) with which to access and complete this class online. In addition to baseline word processing skills and sending/receiving email with attachments, students will be expected to search the Internet and upload/download files. If you encounter any technology challenges using course resources in the Learning Management System, email the Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning at [online@nwfsc.edu](mailto:online@nwfsc.edu) or call 850-729-646

### Emergency College Closure

In the event of unusual or extraordinary circumstances, the schedule, requirements, and procedures in this course are subject to change. If the College closes for inclement weather or other emergency, any exams, presentations, or assignments previously scheduled during the closure period will automatically be rescheduled for the first regular class meeting held once the college re-opens. If changes to graded activities are required, students will not be penalized as a result of the adjustments but will be responsible for meeting revised deadlines and course requirements.

### Academic Continuity Plan

Northwest Florida State College is dedicated to protecting the health and wellbeing of its students, staff, and faculty. The College is dedicated to working with faculty and students to ensure timely course and program completion during emergencies. In the event of a College closure, the format of this course may be modified to enable completion of the course through other means, including but not limited to online course delivery through online classrooms. Check your RaiderNet College email and LMS classroom online for any updates.

### Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Academic Integrity

Students are responsible for adherence to all college policies and procedures, including those related to academic freedom, cheating, classroom conduct, computer/network/email use and other items included in the *Northwest Florida State College Catalog and Student Handbook*. Students should be familiar with the rights and responsibilities detailed in the current *Northwest Florida State College Catalog and Student Handbook*. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty is a serious breach of student responsibilities and may trigger consequences which range from a failing grade to formal disciplinary action. NWFSC prohibits the use of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, to generate text that students represent as their own independent creation.

### Academic Integrity Tools

Northwest Florida State College subscribes to *Turnitin*, an online plagiarism detection and prevention service. By enrolling in this class, students are consenting to upload their papers to *Turnitin*, where they will be checked for plagiarism. Papers submitted to *Turnitin* may be saved as source documents within these databases solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism in other papers. Please note: All assignments submitted in this course are analyzed for plagiarism and originality.

### Student Dispute Resolution

NWFSC aims to deliver high-quality instructional experiences. In the event of a concern regarding a class, students should first attempt to resolve the matter with the instructor. If a resolution cannot be reached following a reasonable effort to resolve the dispute informally, students may seek out additional counsel in Academic Leadership through a formal process by submitting a Formal Grievance/Appeal form. Students seeking to file a Final Grade Grievance must do so within 30 days of the final grade being posted.

### Campus Resources

The College is committed to offering quality resources to aid in your success as a student. Review your LMS online classroom for information on these resources such as the library, tutoring, testing, military and veteran services, etc.

### Accommodation Resources

To obtain disability-related academic accommodations, students with disabilities must contact the Accommodation Resource Center at [arc@nwfsc.edu](mailto:arc@nwfsc.edu) or call 850-729-6014. Upon request of accommodations, students will be asked to provide medical documentation that supports their disability request. If students are concerned that they may have an undiagnosed, disability-related condition that impacts their academic progress, it is recommended that they see a licensed medical professional for a diagnosis. Please contact the Accommodation Resource Center with any questions or concerns relating to permanent or temporary student disabilities.

Students who have been approved for accommodations through the ARC are encouraged to work with their professor on facilitation. All inquiries and discussions will remain confidential.

### Student Counseling Services

Northwest Florida State College has partnered with Bridgeway Center, Inc. to provide mental health resources and counseling services to all actively enrolled students. All actively enrolled students are eligible to receive an initial assessment and up to five therapeutic sessions with a Behavioral Health provider at no cost to the student. A menu of services and resources is available at [www.nwfsc.edu/studentcounselingservices](http://www.nwfsc.edu/studentcounselingservices). Bridgeway Center Confidential Helpline: (850) 833-7500, Select Option 1 - Open 24 hours/day

### Student Handbook

The complete NWFSC Student Handbook can be found at <https://catalog.nwfsc.edu/>

Thank you for choosing NWFSC for your education—and welcome to class!

### Assignment Schedule

Next to each unit is the time allotted for that unit's work to be completed. All Deadlines are by 11:59pm on the date indicated. All work for a particular Module should be done by the due date indicated. Do all Module in the order to find them in the Modules section of Canvas. Read the texts carefully, watch all the embedded videos, do all writing assignments and quizzes.

## Orientation/Start Here

Do Introductory Discussion Board (due by 1-8)

Join Facebook Group (due by 1-8)

Take the Orientation Quiz (due by 1-8)

## Module 1– Pre-Revolutionary Period to the Declaration of Independence

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents

Do Written Assignment: State of Nature in Hobbes and Locke (due by 1-14)

Do Module Discussion Forum - Citizenship (due by 1-16)

Take Module Quiz (due by 1-18)

## Module 2 – Articles of Confederation, Shay’s Rebellion, Constitutional Convention

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents

Do Written Assignment: Chipman on Equality (due by 1-21)

Do Module Discussion Forum – John Adams (due by 1-24)

Take Module Quiz (due by 1-27)

## Module 3 – The Constitution

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents

Do Written Assignment: Madison on Federalist 41 and 45 (due by 1-31)

Do Module Discussion Forum – FDR vs. Bill of Rights (due by 2-2)

Take Module Quiz (due by 2-4)

## Module 4 – Separation of Powers

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents

Do Written Assignment: EPA and Tyranny (due by 2-7)

Do Module Discussion Forum – The Administrative State (due by 2-9)

Take Module Quiz (due by 2-12)

## Module 5 – Congress

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents

Do Written Assignment: Legislative Profiles (due by 2-15)

Do Module Discussion Forum – Legislative Act (due by 2-17)

Take Module Quiz (due by 2-20)

## Module 6 – The Presidency

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents

Do Written Assignment: Executive Profile (due by 2-23)

Do Module Discussion Forum – Presidential Speech (due by 2-26)

Take Module Quiz (due by 2-28)

## Module 7 – The Supreme Court

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents

Do Written Assignment: Hamilton on Federalist 78 (due by 3-1)

Do Written Assignment: Supreme Court Chart and Summary (due by 3-3)  
Do Module Discussion Forum – Scalia/Breyer Debate (due by 3-5)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 3-7)

#### Module 8 – Federalism

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents  
Do Written Assignment: Hammer v. Dagenhart and US v. Darby (due by 3-10)  
Do Module Discussion Forum – Chemerinsky/Eastman (due by 3-13)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 3-16)

#### Module 9 – Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents  
Do Written Assignment: Dobbs v. Jackson Supreme Court Chart & Summary (due by 3-19)  
Do Module Discussion Forum – Sowell on Discrimination (due by 3-22)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 3-24)

#### Module 10 – Political Parties and Elections

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents  
Do Written Assignment: Interest Group Project (due by 3-27)  
Do Module Discussion Forum – Voter ID (due by 3-30)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 4-1)

#### Module 11 – Policymaking

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents  
Do Written Assignment: Milton Friedman on the Minimum Wage (due by 4-4)  
Do Module Discussion Forum - Immigration (due by 4-6)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 4-9)

#### Module 12 – Bureaucracy

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents  
Do Module Discussion Forum – COVID-19 (due by 4-15)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 4-17)

#### Module 13 – The Media and Politics

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents  
Do Module Discussion Forum – Carlson v. Maddow (due by 4-23)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 4-25)

#### Module 14 – America and the World

Read Through all the Modules and Sections, Watch All Videos, Read All Documents  
Do Written Assignment: Adams v. Clinton on Foreign Policy (due by 4-27)  
Do Module Discussion Forum – Ethics in the Military (due by 4-29)  
Take Module Quiz (due by 5-3)

Take Final Exam (due by 5-4)

Concluding Discussion Forum (due by 5-4)

Alternate Film Project (for those who did not doing Facebook Group) (due by 5-4)

Note: The professor reserves the right to make changes or modifications, if necessary, to this syllabus. Students will be notified of any major changes or modifications.