



# SYLLABUS: POLITICAL SCIENCE 1100 (12388) INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICS SUMMER 2015

## Course overview

### Instructor

**Instructor:** Lauren Ratliff

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Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:00-4:00pm via Carmen Chat

### Course description

Welcome to Introduction to American Politics! This course is an introduction to the institutions, processes, and influences of American government, politics, and political behavior. It is roughly broken into two sections. The first part of the course will focus on political elites, discussing the history and theories of American democracy, as well as its political institutions (Congress, Executive, and Judiciary). In the second half of the course, we will shift gears and focus on mass political behavior and interests. This is a team-based course as it was designed and taught by a team – Professor Jan Box-Steffensmeier, Vanessa Bouche, Matthew Hitt, Emily Lynch, and Lauren Ratliff. You will hear lectures from a variety of instructors, but I will be leading this course for the spring. If you have any questions during the semester, please do not hesitate to contact me.

This course satisfies the Social Sciences, Organizations & Politics GEC requirement. In this course, you will learn about the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; of the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and of the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources. These goals and the expected learning outcomes will be achieved through lectures, debates, discussions, assignments, and exams throughout the semester.

### Course learning outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to meet the goals of:

Students understand the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; the structure of human societies, cultures,

### Organizations and Politics Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they are applied to the study of organizations and politics.
2. Students understand the formation and durability of political, economic, and social organizing principles and their differences and similarities across contexts.
3. Students develop abilities to comprehend and assess the nature and values of organizations and politics and their importance in social problem solving and policymaking.

## Course materials

### Required

Evans, Jocelyn and Kristy Michaud. 2013. *Central Ideas in American Government* (5<sup>th</sup> Edition). Asheville, NC: Soomo Publishing. ISBN: 978-0-9893097-7-6.

The course textbook is available as both an electronic, web-based version, and as a print version. You can sign up and pay for the course textbook via the publisher's site here:

<http://soomopublishing.com/get-started>.

## Course technology

### “Two Locations for the Course”

This course will take place, essentially, in two locations: on Carmen & *Central Ideas in American Government* (eTextbook website).

1. [Carmen](#) is OSU's online learning management system [LMS]. You will use Carmen for the instructor's content, for graded reading quizzes, for news and updates, and for access to the gradebook and your progress in the course.
  - a. On the Carmen site menu under **Content**, you will find the course syllabus, full lectures with PowerPoint slides, and separate corresponding PowerPoint slides on which you can take lecture notes. Weekly “topic videos” will be posted on the Carmen course homepage, too.
  - b. You will use Carmen to complete your weekly quizzes on the readings. To access the quizzes, simply click on **Quizzes**, within the **Activities** tab in the menu bar within the top of the course page. The quizzes tab is also where the midterm and final examinations will be taken.
  - c. It is important to check the Carmen site daily because I will post important information and reminders in the “News” section on the Carmen course homepage.
2. [www.soomopublishing.com/signin](http://www.soomopublishing.com/signin) is where you will access the online textbook, view/read all the supplementary material for the course (see below), and where you will

complete the supplementary quizzes. The Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) materials are required for this course. Go to <http://soomopublishing.com/signin>, click on “New Student,” and follow all the prompts. There are further instructions available on Carmen. The course textbook, *Central Ideas in American Government*, is available through the Soomo Publishing website as well as at the OSU Bookstore. You have two purchase options through Soomo:

- a. *Central Ideas in American Government* e-textbook (\$50)
- b. *Central Ideas in American Government* e-textbook + hard copy textbook (\$80)

### Baseline technical skills necessary for online courses

- Basic computer and web-browsing skills
- Navigating Carmen

### Necessary equipment

- Computer: current Mac (OS X) or PC (Windows 7+) with high-speed internet connection

### Necessary software

- Up to date web browser. Firefox is the most efficient browser for Carmen.
  - List of Carmen supported browsers: <http://resourcecenter.odee.osu.edu/carmenwiki/supported-and-recommended-browsers>

## Grading and faculty response

### Grades

| Assignment or category                 | Percentage of Grade |
|--|---------------------|
| Carmen Quizzes                         | 40%                 |
| “Room for Debate” Issue Response Paper | 20%                 |
| Midterm Exam                           | 20%                 |
| Final Exam                             | 20%                 |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>100%</b>         |

See course schedule below for due dates

## Late assignments

All assignments have specified due dates – please see the course schedule for specific assignments.

- All assignments listed within Carmen have automatic availability windows that will close at the specified time; after the window closes; no late submissions to Carmen are allowed.

## Grading scale

|             |              |
|-------------|--------------|
| 93–100: A   | 73–76.9: C   |
| 90–92.9: A- | 70 –72.9: C- |
| 87–89.9: B+ | 67 –69.9: D+ |
| 83–86.9: B  | 60 –66.9: D  |
| 80–82.9: B- | Below 60: E  |
| 77–79.9: C+ |              |

## Faculty feedback and response time

I am providing the following list to give you an idea of my intended availability throughout the course. (Remember that you can call **614-688-HELP** at any time if you have a technical problem.)

### Grading and feedback

For Carmen assignments, automatically scored feedback will be available for incorrectly answered items for one week following the exam. Please contact me if you have any questions regarding your quizzes and/or exams.

### E-mail

I intend reply to e-mails within **24 hours on school days**.

## Course policies

### Student participation requirements

Because this is a distance-education course, your attendance is based on your online activity and participation. The following is a summary of everyone's expected participation:

- **Logging in: AT LEAST ONCE PER WEEK**  
Be sure you are logging in to the course in Carmen each week, including weeks with holidays or weeks with minimal online course activity. (During most weeks you will probably log in many times.) If you have a situation that might cause you to miss an entire week of class, discuss it with me *as soon as possible*.

- **Office hours and live sessions: OPTIONAL OR FLEXIBLE**  
All live, scheduled events for the course, including my office hours, are optional. For live presentations, I will provide a recording that you can watch later. If you are required to discuss an assignment with me, please contact me as soon as possible to set up an appointment for your convenience as well as mine.

## Other course policies

### Academic integrity policy

The Ohio State University's *Code of Student Conduct* (Section 3335-23-04) defines academic misconduct as: "Any activity that tends to compromise the academic integrity of the University, or subvert the educational process." Examples of academic misconduct include (but are not limited to) plagiarism, collusion (unauthorized collaboration), copying the work of another student, and possession of unauthorized materials during an examination. Ignorance of the University's *Code of Student Conduct* is never considered an "excuse" for academic misconduct, so I recommend that you review the *Code of Student Conduct* and, specifically, the sections dealing with academic misconduct.

**If I suspect that a student has committed academic misconduct in this course, I am obligated by University Rules to report my suspicions to the Committee on Academic Misconduct.** If COAM determines that you have violated the University's *Code of Student Conduct* (i.e., committed academic misconduct), the sanctions for the misconduct could include a failing grade in this course and suspension or dismissal from the University.

If you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course, please contact me.

Other sources of information on academic misconduct (integrity) to which you can refer include:

- The Committee on Academic Misconduct web pages ([COAM Home](#))
- *Ten Suggestions for Preserving Academic Integrity* ([Ten Suggestions](#))
- *Eight Cardinal Rules of Academic Integrity* ([www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.htm](http://www.northwestern.edu/uacc/8cards.htm))

### Accommodations for accessibility

#### Requesting accommodations

If you would like to request academic accommodations based on the impact of a disability qualified under the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, contact your instructor privately as soon as possible to discuss your specific needs. Discussions are confidential.

In addition to contacting the instructor, please contact the Office for Disability Services at [614-292-3307](tel:614-292-3307) or [ods@osu.edu](mailto:ods@osu.edu) to register for services and/or to coordinate any accommodations you might need in your courses at The Ohio State University.

Go to <http://ods.osu.edu> for more information.

### Accessibility of course technology

This online course requires use of Carmen (Ohio State's learning management system) and other online communication and multimedia tools. If you need additional services to use these technologies, please request accommodations with your instructor.

- [Carmen \(Desire2Learn\) accessibility](#)
- Streaming audio and video
- Synchronous course tools

## Course Schedule

| Week | Topics, Dates             | Readings, Assignments, Deadlines  |
|------|---------------------------|---|
| 1    | Constitution<br>5/10—5/16 | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 1  |
|      |                           | Carmen Quizzes: Syllabus quiz & Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday 5/16  |
|      |                           | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quizzes (optional): Pre-Test & Chapter 1 quizzes “US Citizenship” & “The US Constitution” |
| 2    | Federalism<br>5/17—5/23   | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 2  |
|      |                           | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday 5/23  |
|      |                           | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional): Chapter 2 “Visions of Federalism”  |
| 3    | Congress<br>5/24—5/30     | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 3  |
|      |                           | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday 5/30  |
|      |                           | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional): Chapter 3 “United We Stand”  |

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| 4   | Political Parties<br>& Interest<br>Groups<br>5/31—6/6 | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 4 and Chapter 5  |
|   |   | Carmen Quizzes: Reading quizzes (2) due by 10pm on Sat. 6/6   |
|   |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 4 “2012 Party Platforms” and Chapter 5 “Evil Lobbyists” |
| 5   | Presidency<br>6/7—6/13                                | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 6  |
|   |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday<br>6/13   |
|   |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 6 “Eavesdropping on the Oval Office: LBJ’s First Days”  |
| 6   | Judiciary<br>6/14 – 6/20                              | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 8  |
|   |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday,<br>6/20  |
|   |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 8 “The First Cowgirl”                                   |
| <b>MIDTERM EXAM: Take the midterm on Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup> between 7am – 10pm. The midterm will cover material from Weeks 1-6. The exam will be on Carmen.</b> |   |   |
| 7   | Civil Liberties<br>6/21 – 6/27                        | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 9  |
|   |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday<br>6/27   |
|   |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 9 “You Have the Right”                                  |
| 8   | Civil Rights<br>6/28 – 7/4                            | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 10   |
|   |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday<br>7/4  |
|   |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 10 “Till We Have Suffrage: The Amendment”               |
| 9   | Voting and<br>Political<br>Participation<br>7/5—7/11  | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 11   |
|   |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday<br>7/11   |
|   |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 11 “Getting Out the Vote in Toledo”                     |

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|--|---|---|
| 10   | Public Opinion<br>7/12—7/18             | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 12   |
|  |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday<br>7/18                                 |
|  |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 12 “Learn About Congress”   |
| 11   | Elections and<br>Campaigns<br>7/19—7/25 | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 13   |
|  |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday<br>7/25                                 |
|  |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 13 “Elizabeth the Elector”  |
| 12   | Media<br>7/26—8/1                       | Readings: Central Ideas, Chapter 14   |
|  |   | Carmen Quizzes: Carmen reading quiz due by 10pm on Saturday<br>8/1                                  |
|  |   | Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quiz (optional):<br>Chapter 14 “On the Ground in Haiti” |
| COMPLETE “Room for Debate” ISSUE RESPONSE PAPER by 10pm on Monday, August 3 <sup>rd</sup> , NO EXCEPTIONS.   |   |   |
| OPTIONAL CIAG QUIZZES due by 10pm on Monday, August 3 <sup>rd</sup> , NO EXCEPTIONS.   |   |   |
| FINAL EXAM: Take the final exam on Wednesday, August 5 <sup>th</sup> between 7am – 10pm. NO EXCEPTIONS. The final will cover material from Weeks 7-12. The exam will be on Carmen. |   |   |

## Additional steps for completing the course:

1. **Carefully read this syllabus and take the syllabus quiz.** The syllabus contains important information about the course, so it is imperative you read through it before the quarter begins. After you carefully review the syllabus, you must take the syllabus quiz on Carmen during the first week of class. You have until Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 10pm to complete this quiz. Note: You must complete two quizzes on CARMEN by the end of the first week of class – the syllabus quiz and the first reading quiz. The syllabus quiz grade cannot be dropped (see below for more information).
2. **Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) Pre-Test:** You must complete the pre-test, the very first page of the *Central Ideas in American Government* web text, by Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup>, at 10pm. The title of the pre-test is “US Citizenship.” You will receive one extra credit point for completion of this quiz.



3. ***Do the reading and listen to lectures:*** To start each week, you should read the assigned chapter(s) for that week. As previously addressed, the e-textbook is located directly on the Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) website. You should also listen to the full lectures for that week and use the corresponding PowerPoint slides to facilitate note taking on these lectures (both the midterm and final exams will cover material in the PowerPoint lectures). For maximum effectiveness, you should also take notes as you do the readings and listen to the lectures.

I will also post a “topic video” each Sunday on that week’s readings. Each topic video is a short 5-10 minute lecture that introduces the material for that week by highlighting many of the main points about the week’s topic. The topic video is meant to supplement the full lecture by presenting important concepts in a short animated video to help you understand the material. The link to the topic lecture video will appear on the CARMEN course homepage as a “News” item as well as in the weekly overview.

**Note: The weekly quizzes and exams will cover material in these short videos.**

4. ***Take quizzes on the reading:*** After you’ve completed reading the chapter(s) for the week and watching the full lecture and topic video, you should login to the CARMEN site and take the quiz on that week’s material. The quizzes contain 10 multiple-choice questions and are worth approximately 6-8 points each. Quizzes for weekly modules are available only during the week that module is assigned. Quizzes are available starting at 7am Sunday and become unavailable at 10pm Saturday. For example, you must take the first week’s quiz on the Constitution anytime between Sunday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 7am and Saturday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at 10pm. After that time, the quiz will be unavailable and you will receive a 0. Also, the quizzes are timed, and you have 15 minutes to complete them. After 15 minutes from the time you start, the quiz will no longer be available to you. That means you should read the book carefully before taking the quiz and you should NOT use your book while taking the quiz. In addition, you should NOT wait until the last minute to take the quiz.

I will drop the TWO lowest quiz grades of the semester (not including the Syllabus Quiz). Because of this, I do not extend deadlines or make exceptions when something goes wrong with the computer at the last minute. I also do not allow make-up quizzes for any reason other than death in the family or a serious medical condition requiring a doctor’s note.

Therefore, plan for contingencies and do not wait until the last minute. These Carmen quizzes are worth 40% of your overall grade in the class. Quiz answers to the questions you answered incorrectly will be available on CARMEN for 1 week after the quiz closes for you to study from. To see these answers, re-enter the quiz and look under “Submission Views”. More specific information on the Carmen quizzes can be found on CARMEN with the syllabus materials.

5. ***Watch/read supplementary materials:*** Every week, there is supplementary material that you must view/read by logging into <http://soomopublishing.com/signin>. The

assigned material is located within the required chapters in *Central Ideas in American Government* (CIAG). Pay close attention to the material as you view or read it because you can take an optional quiz on this material to improve your overall quiz grade. Material in these quizzes will also be helpful for you in studying for the weekly quizzes and exams.

6. **Complete “Room for Debate” Issue Response Paper:** You must complete the “Room for Debate” Issue Response Paper by Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10pm. Modeled after the “Room for Debate” series in the *New York Times* (<http://www.nytimes.com/roomfordebate>), you will be required to write a response paper about a topic that will be assigned to you. This response is worth 20% of your overall course grade. Responses will be graded for strength of argument, use of facts to support argument, civility of tone, and clear, concise writing, among others. Further details about this assignment and paper rubric will be posted on Carmen by the end of May. Completed responses should be uploaded to the Dropbox folder on Carmen on or before Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>.
7. **Take midterm and final exams:** You must complete the midterm exam on Friday, June 19<sup>th</sup> between 7am—10pm. The final exam must be taken on Wednesday, August 5<sup>th</sup>, between 7am—10pm. If you have any scheduling conflicts for the midterm or final exam, **you must let me know by the end of the first week of class.** Each exam is worth 20% of your final course grade. Both the midterm and final exams will mostly cover material in the textbook, but on each of the exams there will be questions that cover material in the full lectures and topic videos, and questions from the *Central Ideas in American Government* (CIAG) supplementary material quizzes (see below). They both consist of 55 multiple-choice questions (very similar to the types of questions on the weekly Carmen quizzes), and you will have 75 minutes to complete them. The midterm will cover Weeks 1-6. The final exam will cover Weeks 7-12 (i.e., the final is not comprehensive). DO NOT wait until the last minute to complete the midterm and final exams because, just like the quizzes, things can go wrong with the computer, and I will not make exceptions based on technical problems that occur at the last minute.
8. **Take quizzes on supplementary material (OPTIONAL):** The supplementary material is located within each of the *Central Ideas in American Government* (CIAG) chapters (you should refer to the “Course Schedule” for the list of optional quizzes). After viewing or reading the supplementary material at <http://soomopublishing.com/signin>, you can take a multiple-choice quiz on the website that corresponds with that material, which is located directly beside the material. Unlike the quizzes on CARMEN, there is no time limit on these quizzes. You can take as long as you want or need. There is also no mandatory time period within which you have to complete these quizzes.

Completing these optional quizzes will be helpful for doing well on your weekly Carmen quizzes and your midterm and final exams. Additionally, if you complete all weekly

Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) quizzes, you can add up to 10 points to your overall Carmen quiz grade!

While you do not need to complete these quizzes the week that module is assigned, I strongly encourage that you watch/read the material and take the quizzes while you are reading the chapters during the week it is assigned in order to keep up and get most out of the class. *Do not wait until the last few weeks of the course to complete these quizzes because it will take you some time, and some of these questions will appear on your midterm and final exams.*

If you want an additional 10 points added to your quiz grade, you must complete ALL Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) assignments by Monday, August 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10pm. Any quizzes you complete past this deadline will NOT count towards your grade (I can view the date and times each quiz is completed) and I do not make exceptions to this rule, so do not go past this deadline. These quizzes are out of approximately 180 total points. You can view your grade on each assignment, called "Investigations", in the "Notebook" tool of the web text. More specific information on the CIAG quizzes can be found on CARMEN with the syllabus materials.

9. ***Extra credit opportunities:*** In addition to the optional CIAG quizzes, there will be a few extra credit opportunities that will be announced throughout the semester. Be sure to take advantage of all of the opportunities, as I do not curve final grades.