

# POLS 110: U.S. GOVERNMENT

Spring 2024

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| <b>Instructor:</b> Dr. Neil S. Williams (he/him)   | <b>Time:</b> M W 1:00 p.m. – 2:15 p.m. |
| <b>Email:</b> <a href="mailto:shaun.williams@louisiana.edu">shaun.williams@louisiana.edu</a> | <b>Place:</b> Mouton Hall, Room 110    |

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## Course Pages:

1. <http://www.neilswilliams.com/teaching.html>
2. <https://moodle.louisiana.edu/>
3. <https://digital.wwnorton.com/wethepeople14ess>

**Student Hours:** 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm Tuesday on Zoom  
10:45 am -12:45pm Wednesday in Mouton Hall 118, or by appointment.

## Required Texts:

- We the People: Fourteenth Essentials Edition” by Ginsberg et al. (2022)
  - I **HIGHLY** recommend getting the online 180-day access version on the [Norton website](#). This includes an online version of the textbook, as well as a code to access the InQuizative assignments and other resources. To access this version:
    1. Go to [the page of the book on the Norton website](#)
    2. Click ebook and learning tools and then View All Options
    3. “Click Sign in, Register a code, or Purchase Access” and then “I want to purchase access”
    4. Put in your information, create a login, and then select the \$41.95 ebook with InQuizative access.

**InQuizative:** Go to <https://digital.wwnorton.com/wethepeople14ess> and put in your InQuizative code which you should have after buying the textbook (automatically if using the online version), then the student code **779286** to access our online InQuizative class. You will need to create an account to use the website. Use your university email address and input your C# when prompted.

## Objectives:

This course is important – whether you are a Political Science major or not. You will be introduced to the fundamentals of the American government, such as its political institutions and main actors. Most importantly, this class aims to demonstrate how you are connected to the federal and state government in your daily life and present you with tools to become informed and act in politically meaningful ways. For this purpose, we will also examine what being American means in today’s society and how our political institutions and behavior compare to other countries. Ultimately, you will leave this class with a comprehensive understanding of how to critically evaluate and actively participate in the American political system.

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Credit to Alexa Bankert at the University of Georgia for the course description.

**General Education Student Learning Objectives**

1. SB1: Evaluate data, evidence and arguments using discipline specific theory and methods.
2. SB2: Identify theories in the discipline relevant to understanding human behavior and society.
3. SB3: Distinguish the forces shaping human behavior and society.
4. SB4: Describe relations among individuals, groups and society utilizing discipline specific terminology.
5. SB5: Recognize the significance of individual, cultural and societal diversity.

**Important Dates:** Below are important test and due dates. Note that they, as well as everything else in the syllabus, may be changed as the semester continues. I will notify you in good time of any updates.

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|---------------|--|
| <b>Exam 1</b> | Monday, February 26 <sup>th</sup> , 2024 |
| <b>Exam 2</b> | Wednesday, April 3 <sup>rd</sup> , 2024  |
| <b>Exam 3</b> | Thursday, May 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 2024     |

**Grading**

**Late work** will not be accepted for InQuizative assignments. Moodle discussion posts will lose 10 points for every day late. After three days the assignment will receive a 0. Please contact me in good time with a valid excuse if there are any issues with exams for purposes of a make-up exam.

- **Attendance: (5%)** Attendance will be taken on random days.
- **In-class Participation: (5%)**  
 Active participation implies paying attention in class and engaging with the material and with your fellow student colleagues. You will get the most out of class if you watch them after having read assignments and are capable to discuss and respond to the assigned material. Keep in mind these points as you read:
  1. What is the main point or argument?
  2. What evidence do they use to support their argument?
  3. Is there contradicting evidence?
  4. How does the author’s argument relate to the other content from the course?
- **Discussion posts: (15%)**: Most weeks, online Moodle discussion posts will be due by 11:59 p.m. on that Friday. However, check the online Moodle calendar and syllabus for specific deadlines.
- **Inquizative: (15%)**: Most weeks, Inquizative assignments will be due by 11:59 p.m. on that Friday. However, check the online Inquizative website for specific deadlines.
- **Exam 1: (20%)**: In-class exam covering module 1’s material.

- **Exam 2: (20%):** In-class exam covering module 2's material. Not cumulative but builds on the previous module's concepts.
- **Exam 3: (20%):** In-class exam covering module 3's material. Not cumulative but builds on the previous module's concepts.

### Grade Scale

|   |  |               |
|---|--|---------------|
| A |  | >= 90.00      |
| B |  | 80.00 - 89.99 |
| C |  | 70.00 - 79.99 |
| D |  | 60.00 - 69.99 |
| F |  | <= 59.99      |

**Academic Honesty** *“The University holds that all work for which a student will receive a grade or credit shall be an original contribution or shall be properly documented to indicate sources. Abrogation of this principle entails dishonesty, defeats the purpose of instruction, and undermines the high goals of the University. Cheating in any form will not be tolerated. Students shall be assumed to know the acceptable methods and techniques for proper documentation of sources and to avoid cheating and plagiarism in all work submitted for credit, whether prepared in or out of class.”* (From [University of Louisiana Lafayette page on Academic Honesty.](#)) Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and if discovered will be appropriately punished. For more information about what constitutes cheating, plagiarism, or intellectual dishonesty, consult me or the university web page.

### Statement on AI software such as ChatGPT

Continuing with the previous statement on academic dishonesty, the use of ChatGPT and other AI software is prohibited for graded assignments. Using AI software is grounds for a 0 on the assignment, a 0 in the course, and a possible referral to the University. Furthermore, for assignments, we will be using Turnitin software which has tools to detect AI-generated text and responses, making the use of AI for assignments especially inadvisable.

**Disability Resources:** Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first be registered with the Office of Disability Services (ODS) to verify the disability and to establish eligibility for accommodations. Students may call 337-482-5252 or visit the ODS office in the Agnes Edwards Hall, room 126. Once registered, students should then schedule an appointment with their instructor to make appropriate arrangements for accommodations.

### Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

- If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to visit the Counseling and Testing Center page with tips on the [Mental Health & Wellness Resources](#) page. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

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Contact me in good time for deadlines on make-up work.

- Make sure to seek help when needed. FREE counseling is available to you at the University Counseling and Testing Center. For more information, please contact the office at 337-482-6480, [counseling@louisiana.edu](mailto:counseling@louisiana.edu), or stop by the Saucier Wellness Center (OK Allen Hall).

**Technology:** I permit laptops and other devices such as Kindles and iPads if they are being used for class-related purposes. If you are off-task (Facebook, Instagram, Myspace, Tik Tok, Neopets, Club Penguin, etc.) while on these devices, it will be deducted from your participation grade.

## Coronavirus Information for Students

### Fall 2022 Overview

#### Vaccinations Required

UL Lafayette students are required to provide proof of COVID-19 vaccination, a physician's certification that the vaccine is medically contraindicated, or a written dissent. Learn more about the vaccination requirement.

#### Boosters are strongly encouraged.

#### Face masks recommended on campus

The University's Face Covering Policy was recently amended to recommend, but not require, that everyone wear face coverings in all indoor settings and outdoors while on University property.

A department or unit may require all individuals wear face coverings over their mouths and noses if it is determined to be necessary during a specific face-to-face course, in a specific classroom, laboratory, and/or private office/workspace, or other areas.

Additional exemptions and face covering guidelines are outlined in the policy. [Read the Face Covering Policy](#) on the University Policies website.

Courses to return to original delivery methods, employees to return to normal work schedules

The transmission rate of COVID-19 remains high in the Acadiana region and throughout the state, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Louisiana Department of Health. However, the University is seeing a decline in positivity rates among its students and employees.

This decrease, combined with the University's comprehensive testing protocols, is enabling a return to normal course delivery methods and operations. Classes that transitioned to remote learning at the start of the spring semester will begin to transition back to their original course delivery methods beginning Monday, Feb. 7. All courses should have returned to their original modes of instruction by Monday, Feb. 21. Students should check Moodle and with their professors for more details regarding when their classes will transition back.

In-person student organization events, including meetings, socials, and service projects, will continue to be allowed on and off campus provided masks are worn and proper social distancing can be maintained. Additionally, intramural sports will resume.

#### COVID-19 testing available on campus

COVID testing is available by appointment at Student Health Services on campus.

See a [list of other local COVID-19 testing sites](#) from the Louisiana Department of Health.

**University’s COVID-19 testing strategy** As of April 7, testing of asymptomatic University employees and students (regardless of vaccination status) is suspended.

**Stay home if you do not feel well.**

### **Students**

Students who feel ill should stay home and call Student Health Services at (337) 482-1293 to schedule an appointment. Students are required to report illness or a known COVID-19 exposure [via the UL Lafayette Student Quarantine and Isolation form](#).

View pdfs of the CDC’s latest quarantine and isolation guidelines and what to do if you have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19.

### **Staff and Faculty Members**

As a reminder, staff and faculty members who test positive for COVID-19 must contact their supervisors and complete the COVID-19 positive test reporting form. Additionally, faculty and staff who have been in close contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 must complete the COVID-19 exposure reporting form.

Reporting forms must be completed by faculty and staff who work on campus or remotely, and by those who are on leave awaiting test results.

**Tentative Course Outline:**

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**Yellow** indicates important information

Credit to Dr. Alexa Bankert (University of Georgia) for the structure and outline of the course calendar.

## Module 1: Foundations of U.S. Government

### 1.1 Week 1: Introductions—(January 10-January 17)

- **NO CLASS THIS WEEK (WEDNESDAY), I WILL BE AT A CONFERENCE**
- Topic: Introductions
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Syllabus Quiz** due on Moodle Wednesday, January 15, by 11:59 p.m.
  2. **Introduction discussion** due on Moodle Wednesday, January 15, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Quantitative Literacy** on InQuizitive due Thursday, January 18 by 11:59 pm.

### 1.2 Week 2: Americans and Their Political Values—(January 15-January 19)

- **NO CLASS ON MONDAY, MLK DAY**
- Topic: Americans and Their Political Values
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 1: Americans and Their Political Values and “[The U.S. White Majority Will Soon Disappear Forever](#)”
  2. **Values discussion** due on Moodle Monday, January 22, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 1** on InQuizitive due Monday, January 22 by 11:59 pm.

### 1.3 Week 3: The Founding and the Constitution—(January 22-January 26)

- Topic: The Founding and the Constitution
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 2: The Founding and the Constitution
  2. **Founding discussion** due on Moodle Friday, January 26, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 2** on InQuizitive due Friday, January 26 by 11:59 pm.

## 1.4 Week 4: Federalism—(January 29-February 2)

- Topic: The Founding and the Constitution
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 3: Federalism
  2. **Federalism discussion** due on Moodle Friday, February 2, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 3** on InQuizitive due Friday, February 2 by 11:59 pm.

## 1.5 Week 5: Civil Liberties—(February 4-February 9)

- Topic: Civil Liberties
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 4: Civil Liberties
  2. **Civil Liberties discussion** due on Moodle Friday, February 9, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 4** on InQuizitive due Friday, February 9 by 11:59 pm.

## 1.6 Week 6: NO CLASS MARDI GRAS—(February 12-February 16)

## 1.7 Week 7: Civil Rights—(February 19-February 23)

- Topic: Civil Rights
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 5: Civil Rights
  2. **Civil Rights discussion** due on Moodle Friday, February 23, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 5** on InQuizitive due Friday, February 23 by 11:59 pm.

# Module 2: Opinions, Parties, and Elections

## 2.1 Week 8: Public Opinion—(February 26-March 1)

- Topic: Public Opinion
- *Important Date:*
  - **Exam 1 on Monday February 26**
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 6: Public Opinion
  2. **Public Opinion discussion** due on Moodle Friday, March 1, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 6** on InQuizitive due Friday, March 1 by 11:59 pm.



## 2.2 Week 9: The Media & Political Information—(March 4-March 8)

- Topic: The Media & Political Information
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 7: The Media & Political Information
  2. **The Media & Political Information discussion** due on Moodle Friday, March 8, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 7** on InQuizitive due Friday, March 8 by 11:59 pm.

## 2.3 Week 10: Parties and Interest Groups—(March 11-March 15)

- Topic: Parties and Interest Groups
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 8: Parties and Interest Groups
  2. **Parties and Interest Groups discussion** due on Moodle Friday, March 15, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 8** on InQuizitive due Friday, March 15 by 11:59 pm.

## 2.4 Week 11: Participation, Campaigns, and Elections—(March 18-March 22)

- Topic: Participation, Campaigns, and Elections
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 9: Participation, Campaigns, and Elections
  2. **Parties and Interest Groups discussion** due on Moodle Friday, March 22, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 9** on InQuizitive due Friday, March 22 by 11:59 pm.

## 2.5 Week 12: NO CLASS SPRING BREAK—(March 25-April 1)

## 2.6 Week 13: Exam 2—(April 1-April 5)

- *Important Date:*
  - **NO CLASS ON MONDAY APRIL 1**
  - **Exam 2 on Wednesday April 3**

## Module 3: Institutions and Policy

### 3.1 Week 14: Congress—(April 8-April 12)

- Topic: Congress
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 10: Congress
  2. **Congress discussion** due on Moodle Friday, November 3, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 10** on InQuizitive due Friday, November 3 by 11:59 pm.

### 3.2 Week 15: The Presidency & Bureaucracy—(April 15-April 19)

- Topic: The Presidency and Bureaucracy
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 11: The Presidency and Chapter 12: The Bureaucracy
  2. **The Presidency discussion** due on Moodle Friday, April 12, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **The Bureaucracy discussion** due on Moodle Friday, April 12, by 11:59 p.m.
  4. **Chapter 11 and Chapter 12** on InQuizitive due Friday, April 12 by 11:59 pm.

### 3.3 Week 16: The Federal Courts—(April 22-April 26 )

- Topic: The Federal Courts
- *Weekly Assignments:*
  1. **Read** Chapter 13: The Federal Courts
  2. **The Federal Courts discussion** due on Moodle Friday, April 26, by 11:59 p.m.
  3. **Chapter 13** on InQuizitive due Friday, April 26 by 11:59 pm.

Exam 3 on **Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. in Mouton Hall, Room 110**