

Course Information



US Government & Politics (AI)

POLS 1100-001

Fall 2025

Course Section Information

Days:

Time:

Campus: Herriman

Classroom:

Course Description

This course surveys the institutions and practices of the U.S. national government with emphasis placed on political institutions and political behavior.

Semester(s): All

Textbooks, Readings, and Course Materials

Authors: Glen Kurtz and Sylvie Waskiewicz

Publication Date: 2021

Title: American Government



Edition: 3e

Publisher: XanEdu Publishing Inc

Link: <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

ISBN: SBN-13: 978-1-711493-96-1

ATTENUATED DEMOCRACY

*A Critical Introduction to U.S.
Government and Politics*

David Hubert, Ph.D.



Authors: David Hubert

Title: Attenuated Democracy

Subtitle: A Critical Introduction the U.S. Government and Politics

Publisher: SLCC Pressbooks

Link: <https://slcc.pressbooks.pub/attenuateddemocracy/>

For more information on textbook accessibility, contact Accessibility & Disability Services at ads@slcc.edu.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

- Analyze major institutions of US Government and Politics in their origins and processes, as well as their conceptual interpretations, to provide a historical and analytical foundation for understanding the meaning and implications of participatory democracy.
- Analyze the dynamics of power in US politics and government and how it shapes such issues as knowledge and cultural production, privilege, identity, gender, political economy, religion, environment and/or race relations.
- Find, analyze, and contextualize information from a variety of political science source materials, including primary documents and online resources.
- Examine and evaluate US political issues and apply this knowledge to analyzing and participating in contemporary social dialogue.
- Formulate arguments about US government and politics and be able to express that argument clearly and cogently in writing.

- Work with others in collaborative projects as well as through participation in live and/or on-line discussions and demonstrate the ability to engage a diversity of viewpoints in a civil and constructive fashion.

Assignment Schedule

Due Date	Assignment Name	Assignment Type	Points
	10 Professional Letters	Assignment	20
	Careers in Government	Assignment	20
	Civil Liberties or Rights	Assignment	20
	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	0
	Introduce Yourself	Discussion	0
	Opinion Article	Assignment	20
	Personal Constitution	Assignment	70
	Roll Call Attendance	Assignment	100
	What if... Three pages	Assignment	20

Coursework & Assignment Descriptions

Note to the instructor: Consider adopting this template (or a similar format) for transparent assignment descriptions in the "Assignment Descriptions" section following.

Opinion Article

Points: 20

Due Date: Decided in Class

Description:

Media outlets often publish 'public opinion' via articles written by citizens.

The most published opinion articles are:

- Short and concise (500-750 words).

For this assignment, you are going to write an opinion article for either:

- The Salt Lake Tribune or the Deseret News. (Extra points if you get published)

Your audience for this article is very real, and you should keep in mind, what you say in this article may establish opinions about you personally.

The article should:

- Clearly convey your personal perspective of a single politically charged issue. (5 points)
- Pick one specific identifiable and current issue that impacts your demographic. (5 points)
- Describe how this issue effects your daily life, how it might affect others in similar situations, and how it will affect our immediate future. (5 points)

Submission to a newspaper is your final 5 points for a 20 point total.

Grading Criteria: See above.

Civil liberties and civil rights can often be mistaken.

For this assignment:

- Pick one civil liberty or civil right,
- Write two pages (single spaced, standard margin, Calibri font) on how you exercise that liberty or right (or, how it has been denied to you).

Your audience is your professor.

Your purpose is to learn how to identify when you are exercising a right or enjoying a freedom, or when you are defending them.

Grading will be assessed on how well you define a specific liberty or right (5 points), articulate an exact method of exercising or enjoying that right or liberty (10 points), and use of grammar and writing structure (5 points).

Write three pages (single-spaced, standard margin, Calibri font) on your choice of:

1. 'What if' the Articles of Confederation had succeeded?
2. How to amend the US Constitution to impose term limits.

For option 1 your audience is your professor. For option 2 you may write to either your professor or a sitting Utah Senator or Congressman.

Option 1 should include a list and analysis of events (national and global) that would have had very different outcomes based on the differences of powers granted between the US Constitution and the Articles of Confederation. Grading will be assessed on your list of

events (5 points), defining of the powers granted (10 points), and analysis of how outcomes would have altered (5 points).

Option 2 should entail a grounded purpose for taking action (the why), a comprehensive assessment of the process of amending the Constitution (the how), a list of stakeholders necessary to accomplish such action (the who), and a desired timeline (the when).

Grading will be primarily assessed on your understanding of the process (10 points) followed by correctly identifying stakeholders (4 points) clearly articulating a purpose (4 points) and defining a timeline (two points).

Write one, one page, letter (2 points each) to each of:

1. The White House
2. Senator Romney
3. Senator Lee
4. Your Congressman
5. Governor Cox
6. Your State Senator
7. Your State Representative
8. Your County Commissioner
9. Your Mayor
10. Your City Councilman

We will discuss proper format in class.

For each letter, pick one political action the recipient has taken in the last 3 months and tell them why you support, or oppose, that action. If you oppose, what action would you

rather have them take as your elected representative and why.

Careers in government are often very rewarding and provide stability for many families and even entire communities.

Pick a government agency at any level of government that you would like to work for. In two pages (single spaced, standard margin, Calibri font) describe the agency's mission and why accomplishing that mission is important to you. Describe what role, or specific job, you would like to fill in that agency and what you envision achieving in that role? Are there other agencies that have a complimentary role you could also envision yourself in?

Your audience for this paper could be your professor, but don't miss the opportunity to also have the audience be the hiring manager for that agency.

Grading will be assessed on your ability to accurately define the agency's mission (10 points), and correctly assess a specific role within that agency (10 points).

Write a Personal Constitution – A guiding document designed to establish personal values and provide a process for making decisions throughout your life. Include constraints and privileges compared to the US Constitution and/or any state constitution.

The Personal Constitution assignment is your signature assignment that you must post on your Gen Ed ePortfolio. A one-page reflection on what this assignment means to your personal development must also be included as an addendum to this assignment.

Constitutions are guiding documents that outline common values and accepted processes. They do NOT outline expected outcomes.

Using the US and other state constitutions, develop a constitution for your own life. What values will you outline? How will you formulate your decision making processes?

You are the audience for this document.

Grading will be assessed on document structure (10 points), establishment of core values (20), establishment of goal/decision making process (30), and concession of constraints and enumerations found in constitutional examples (10).

Grading Scale

Bell curve.

100-93 = A

85-92 = B

77-84 = C

70 - 76 = D

Below 70 = Fail.

General Education Information

AI

This course fulfills the above requirement for the General Education Program at Salt Lake Community College. It is designed not only to teach the information and skills required by the discipline, but also to develop vital workplace skills and to teach strategies and skills that can be used for life-long learning.

General Education courses teach basic skills as well as broaden a student's knowledge of a wide range of subjects. Education is much more than the acquisition of facts; it is being able to use information in meaningful ways in order to enrich one's life.

While the subject of each course is important and useful, we become truly educated through making connections of such varied information with the different methods of organizing human experience that are practiced by different disciplines. Therefore, this

course, when combined with other General Education courses, will enable you to develop broader perspectives and deeper understandings of your community and the world, as well as challenge previously held assumptions about the world and its inhabitants.

Engagement Plan

- I will respond to email within 36 hours. I will offer feedback on major assignments within the grading period. The best way to contact me is through the Canvas Inbox, as I will prioritize this method over other modes of communication.
- In this course I will be posting interactive announcements which will offer specific opportunities for class questions and extra credit every other week.
- Additionally, I will be participating in the discussion forums with you to share my perspective within the discipline and to offer some nuances of interpretation that may not be present in your textbook.
- Lastly, we'll be holding small group Q & A sessions, where we can learn from our peers (and faculty) on some of the more difficult units within the course.

How to Navigate to Canvas

This course uses the Canvas course management system. All students must use Canvas to retrieve course readings, access web pages, upload assignments, receive course announcements, and review the class section's syllabus.

How to Succeed in the Course

Become familiar with the course structure in Canvas.

Complete all assignments in a timely manner.

Communicate with your instructor as needed throughout the course.

Pay close attention to any course announcements.

Understand the basics of each section on US Government and Politics and understand the connections among the sections.

Additional Class Policies

Don't ever tell another student they are wrong.

The professor can be wrong, and feel free to tell me I'm wrong, but not other students.

Course Content Advisory

Please be advised that this course may include discussions, readings, and other content that some students might find distressing or triggering. Specifically, the course may cover topics such as:

- Violence or traumatic events
- Sensitive social and political issues
- Discussions of mental health, including depression and anxiety
- Graphic or explicit descriptions and imagery
- Any other specific content relevant to the course

Our aim is to explore these topics thoughtfully and respectfully, understanding their importance in our field of study. However, we recognize that such material can be challenging. If you have concerns about your ability to engage with certain course materials due to past experiences or personal reasons, please feel free to discuss this with me privately. We can explore alternative ways for you to engage with the material while ensuring your educational experience is not compromised.

Your well-being is important, and support services are available through the college's counseling support services should you need them.

Institutional Policies

As members of our academic community, we would like to invite you to review the Institutional Syllabus which covers important policies and procedures. This document contains important links for students on the code of student rights and responsibilities, academic integrity, and grading policies, Title IX and other important acknowledgements. By familiarizing yourself with this information, you can help us create a safe and respectful environment for everyone.

For more information, navigate to the Institutional Policies tab on the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page.

[Learning Support and Tutoring Services](#)

We are pleased to offer a range of tutoring and learning support services to help you achieve your academic goals. Whether you need assistance with a specific subject or want to improve your study skills, you have many options for tutoring or other support.

To learn more about the services we offer and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Tutoring and Learning Support tab. We encourage you to take advantage of these resources to help you succeed in your studies. If you have any questions or would like to schedule a tutoring session, please don't hesitate to reach out to us. We are here to support you in any way we can.

[Advising and Counseling Support Services](#)

At our institution, we are committed to supporting your academic and personal growth. That's why we offer a range of advising and counseling services to help you navigate the challenges of college life. To learn more about the resources available to you and how to access them, visit the [Institutional Syllabus](#) page under the Advising and Counseling Support Services tab. Our advising team and the support centers across campus are here to support you in achieving your goals and overcoming any obstacles you may face.

[Student Academic Calendar](#)

As students you should be aware of all important dates in the semester, such as the day that courses begin and end, as well as the drop date and the last day to withdraw. To learn more about those dates, navigate to the Student Academic Calendar below:

[SLCC Student Academic Calendar](#)

US Government & Politics (AI)

POLS - 1100 001