

**Nashville State Community College  
Social and Behavioral Sciences  
Political Science**

**2023 Master Course Syllabus  
POLS 1030 – Introduction to American Government**

*(This master course syllabus template is a general guide for providing an overview of each course offered at Nashville State. Each instructor will further clarify specific criteria for grading, classroom procedures, attendance, exams and dates, etc. on their individual course syllabus. Prompts for individual adaptations are italicized and in parentheses; faculty should remove or replace these prompts when creating master syllabi and their own individual syllabi if they have not been removed previously.)*

This syllabus sets forth the expectations for course content, work, and grading as well as expectations for student performance and conduct. The syllabus does not constitute a contract between the student and the instructor or the College. The information contained here is subject to change at any time. Students will be notified if any changes are made. Though changes are possible, it is expected that the course will be conducted as described in this syllabus.

**Course Information:**

**Course Title:** Introduction to American Government

**Credits:** 3

**Class Hours:** 3

**Course Description:**

An introduction to foundations and principles of American national government; Constitutional principles, functions, and administration of American national government, Congress, the Presidency, the Supreme Court, and the U.S. political system.

**Instructor Information:**

**Name:**

**Email:**

**Office Phone:**

**Office Location:**

**Office Hours:**

**Required Textbook(s) & Other Materials:**

**Textbook(s):** O'Connor, K., Sabato, L.J., & Yanus, A.B. Essentials of American Government: Roots and Reform. Boston: Pearson. 2014 (or latest edition).

**ISBN:** 0-13-517664-6

**Reference Materials:** Available on D2L.

**Supplies:** Textbook and computer access for D2L materials.

Once enrolled, all students should verify that they have the correct textbook and materials information by consulting the D2L/NS Online shell for the course. If you are registered with the Access Center and require an alternate format for the textbook and other course materials, please contact the Access Center at 615-353-3721, 615-353-3741, or [accesscenter@nsc.edu](mailto:accesscenter@nsc.edu).

### **Digital Course Materials (DCM):**

To ensure the lowest cost for students, this course includes a materials fee. This means that some or all of the required textbooks and materials for this course are available through your *NS Online* course shell. When you register for this course, the charge will appear on your account. If you decide you do not want to purchase the course materials embedded in *NS Online*, you can opt out of the program until September 6th, 2020. If you opt out, you will be responsible for obtaining the required course materials on your own.

### **Course Outcomes:**

Upon successful completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Recognize, describe, and explain social institution, structures, and processes and the complexities of a global culture and diverse society.
- Examine the impact of behavioral and social scientific research on major contemporary issues and their disciplines' effect on individuals and society.
- Analyze and communicate the values and processes that are used to formulate theories regarding the social context of individual human behavior in the social and behavioral sciences.
- Think critically about how individuals are influenced by political, geographic, economic, cultural, and family institutions in their own and other diverse cultures and explain how one's own belief system may differ from others.
- Using the most appropriate principles, methods, and technologies, perceptively and objectively gather, analyze, and present social and behavioral science research data, draw logical conclusions, and apply those conclusions to one's life and society.

### **Course Competencies:**

The following are detailed course competencies intended to support the course outcomes:

- Analyze political systems to extract theoretical and practical information regarding their hypothetical and realistic uses.
- Engage in political discourse of increasing complexity and scope.
- Argue policy positions after self-reflection and research; engage with political topics after learning the factual fundamentals.

The following are general education competencies intended to support the course outcomes:

- Research political topics and write in-depth papers.
- Discuss and engage others in political topics, civilly, with facts.
- Demonstrate course mastery via content recognition and explanations of complex political and governmental concepts.

## **Topics to Be Covered:**

- America's Founding
- The US Constitution
- Federalism & Articles of Confederation
- Civil Rights & Liberties
- Legislative Branch & Congress
- How a Bill Becomes a Law
- US Presidency
- Executive Branch & Bureaucracy
- Justice & the Judiciary
- Public Opinion & the News
- Political Parties & Interest Groups
- Elections
- Social, Economic, and Foreign Policies & Policymaking

## **Course Assessments:**

The following performance assessments will be used to demonstrate students' understanding, knowledge, and skills:

### **Exams**

There are three (3) exams in total, each worth fifty (50) points. No exam is explicitly cumulative, but terminology will be introduced gradually throughout the class and should be understood as exams add up; terminology learned for the first exam should still be understood for the second, third, and so on.

Exams are composed of three (3) parts: (1) multiple choice; (2) essay; (3) extra credit. The multiple choice section is the longest and biggest part of your grade. The essay section will always pertain to a big concept or issue that must be explained in detail.

### **Exit Exam**

Students must take the exit exam to pass the course. The exit exam does count for a grade in the class and must be completed to receive college credit for the course.

### **Weekly Discussion Posts**

Classroom discussion will be facilitated via the built-in discussion board on D2L. Each week there will be a prompt that the student must address. The student is required to:

- (1) Post an original answer to the prompt;
- (2) Reply in two (2) threads written by others. Multiple replies to one thread will fulfill this requirement as well as posting one reply to two different threads.

Discussion is graded on a three (3) point scale.

### **Essays**

Each student is required to write three essays worth fifty (50) points each. Academic standards apply here: 12 point, times new roman font, standard 1-inch margins, double spaced.

### **General guidelines:**

- (1) 5-page minimum (double spaced)
- (2) 10-page maximum (double spaced)
- (3) Consistent citation style
- (4) Bibliography / Works Cited Page must be included

**Final Grade Determination**

Grades are calculated by points.

Assignment	Points
Three (3) Exams, 50 points each	150 points
One (1) Exit Exam, 25 points	25 points
Three (3) Papers, 50 points each	150 points
Fifteen (15) discussion posts, 3 points each <i>One Introductory Post</i> <i>Fourteen (14) Module discussions</i>	45 points
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>370 points</b>

**Grading Policy:**

**Late Work Policy & Make-up Procedures for Missed Assignments and Work:**

**Attendance Policy**

The College is not an attendance taking institution as defined by 34 CFR 668.22(b)(1) in the Code of Federal Regulations; however, students are expected to attend all scheduled classes and laboratories.

- Absences in a course may affect a student’s final grade.
- Tardiness may also affect a student’s final grade.
- Students are responsible for all work/tests that occur during any missed class session(s) regardless of reason(s) for absence.
- Students who are sick or not well enough to attend class must notify the instructor as soon as possible before the scheduled class time, unless incapacitated or unable to do so. In that case, students must contact the instructor as soon as reasonably possible.
- If a student has an unavoidable conflict with a scheduled class session, students must notify the instructor, preferably before the class session, or as soon as possible.

For purposes of financial aid continued attendance is determined via engagement in the course. This can be accomplished in several ways including, but not limited to, continued attendance and/or participation in on-ground class sessions, participating in D2L as prompted (e.g., responding to an instructor’s email, posting to a discussion board), and/or completing and submitting assignments.)

To the extent that attendance is kept in this class it is not for the purpose of the College but is instead associated with the instructor’s individual grading rubric. The attendance policy for this class is: *(add attendance policy)*.

## Grading Scale:

Letter Grade	Percentage Range
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	Below a 60

### FA

According to NSCC policy, an FA is awarded to students who do not officially withdraw from a course and do not attend after the cut-off date provided in the academic calendar. Please refer to the current academic calendar available on the Nashville State web site, looking for the date that indicates it is the "Last Day to Earn F for Attendance (FA)." Students who stop attending on or before this date receive an FA; students who stop attending after this date receive an F.

For online courses, attendance is defined by submission of assignments. Students who fail a course and whose last assignment is submitted on or before the FA date will earn an FA for the course. Students who fail a course and whose last assignment is submitted after the FA date will earn an F for the course. An FN is assigned to students who do not submit any assignments.

*(While the above information should appear in all syllabi, faculty are encouraged to make additional statements that would clarify the policy for students and provide the applicable FA date for their section.)*

### FN

An FN is awarded to students who never attended class.

## Technology Statement

- All classes at the College are web enhanced.
- It will be essential for students to have access to a computer and an internet connection to complete assignments, engage in online discussions, and access various course materials through D2L/NS Online course shells.
- Students may also be required to use free video conferencing platforms (ex: Zoom, Teams) for classes and meetings.
- Students will be responsible for appropriate dress while on video, to ensure a distraction free environment (mute sound as needed) and to ensure their background is neutral for others to view.
- If you have questions or concerns regarding access to a computer or internet resources, please contact your instructor. Additional information available: <https://www.nsc.edu/current-students/student-online-resources/access-to-internet-and-technology>.
- Certain publisher materials may not work on cellphones.

## **Computer Labs**

Computers are available for student use at each campus during campus open hours. Open computer lab availability for Fall 2020 may vary from campus to campus.

Students should check NSCC website for current hours of operation.

## **D2L/NS Online and myNSCC**

It is students' responsibility to check D2L/NS Online course shells for all enrolled courses and myNSCC, including student email, on a regular basis. These are the official communication channels between the college and students, who are responsible for the information communicated through those channels. D2L/NS Online contains specific course information and myNSCC contains information important for other purposes.

## **ADA Compliance Statement**

Nashville State complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). If you require accommodations for any courses in which you are enrolled, contact the Access Center at 615.353.3741 or 615.353.3721, or e-mail [accesscenter@nsc.edu](mailto:accesscenter@nsc.edu). If you are registered with the Access Center and require an alternate format for the textbook and other course materials, please contact the Access Center.

## **Classroom Misconduct**

Nashville State Community College has a zero-tolerance policy for disruptive conduct in the classroom. Students whose behavior disrupts the classroom will be subject to disciplinary measures. Please review the [Nashville State Student Code of Conduct policy](#). Please be aware that children are not allowed in class or to be left unattended on campus.

## **Academic Misconduct**

Any form of academic dishonesty, cheating, plagiarizing, or other academic misconduct is prohibited. Students are responsible for understanding and abiding by the [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) in the Nashville State Student Code of Conduct. In addition to other possible disciplinary measures that may be applied through regular college procedures as a result of academic dishonesty, the instructor has the authority to assign an "F" or a "zero" for the exercise, paper, or examination, or to assign an "F" for the course. Students may appeal through the appropriate college grade appeal procedures.

*(Each instructor will outline his/her expectations for academic integrity and provide individualized information about consequences for academic misconduct.)*

## **Academic Early Alert System**

Nashville State Community College uses an Early Alert System to let students know of a faculty member's concern in one or more of these academic areas: lack of attendance, lack of classroom participation, late or missing assignments, and/or poor performance on assignments/tests. \*Please note that Early Alerts do not affect a student's academic standing. If you receive an Early Alert email, please see your instructor and your academic advisor as soon as possible.

## **RAVE Emergency Alert System**

Emergency events can happen at any time, and Nashville State Community College wants to notify students if and when they occur. For this reason, all students have been enrolled in the free RAVE alert system. If you have not already done so, please log in at <https://www.getrave.com/login/nscc> to confirm and update your contact information and notification preferences. It is critical that your information be correct so that you will receive any emergency notifications. Your RAVE Username is your NSCC email address. If you've never received an email from RAVE with your password, or if you need to reset your password, select "Forgot your password?" and a new password will be emailed to you. Should the RAVE system indicate "user not found", select Register and create your own RAVE account.

## **Student Wellness**

- The general well-being of students is an important component of their academic success. With this in mind, Nashville State Community College has several resources available to provide support when needed:
  - Five free telephone therapy sessions are available via Agape Counseling by calling 615-781-3000.
  - Online tutoring is available via NetTutor within the D2L course shells.
  - A comprehensive list of online student resources may be found at <https://www.nsc.edu/current-students/student-online-resources>
  - A comprehensive list of student support services may be found at <https://www.nsc.edu/current-students/on-campus-resources/student-support-services>

## **Equity Statement**

Nashville State Community College has a relentless commitment to the transformation of our institution through the intentional design of college experiences that expect and promote excellence from students, faculty, staff and administration. We consider equity to be an obligation of higher education. We strive to ensure that each student receives what that student needs to be successful, with goals of success beyond the classroom. We do this through an evidence-based and collaborative effort, understanding that our student population has diverse needs that must be addressed. We recognize that this effort may not always be comfortable and that partnering with students is the driving force to overcome barriers to success.

## **Inclement Weather & Campus Closings**

Nashville State will use the RAVE alert system to send a text message to students, staff, and faculty about adjusted hours of operation and/or closings at individual campuses. All students should check the Nashville State web site home page at [www.nsc.edu](http://www.nsc.edu) for announcements on campus closures, which may vary from campus to campus. Campus closures will also be announced on local television stations. Students should use their own best judgment in determining whether to report to campus during inclement weather when classes are not cancelled.

Even when campuses are closed, students are still responsible for completing all assigned work. When classes are cancelled, faculty will post online assignments and any additional instructions in the D2L/NS Online course shell. Check D2L/NS Online for a message from your instructor regarding your online assignment requirements. Faculty have discretion over adjusting deadlines or due date for assignments,

but students are responsible for completing all assigned work by the due date established by the instructor.

### **Class Cancellation Policy**

If the class is cancelled, the instructor will notify all students by posting in the D2L/NS Online course, e-mailing through D2L/NS Online, and/or by posting a sign on the classroom door. In the event of class cancellation, students must access D2L/NS Online to complete classwork and the assignment that will be posted in the course D2L site.

### **Communication Statement**