

PS 202: Government in the United States
Fañuchånan 2024
Section 1

Instructor:	Kate L. Yusi
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Time and Date:	Monday and Wednesday 11:00AM – 12:20PM
Room:	HSS 203
Course Delivery	Face to Face
Office Hours:	TTH 9:30AM – 11:30AM FRI 11:00AM – 1:00PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an analysis of the plan and structure of the federal system of the United States, this course places special emphasis on the meaning of democracy and ideas, form, and values of political and economic institutions in the United States.

LEARNING GOALS

Course Student Learning Outcome (SLOs)	GenEd Learning Outcomes (GLOs)	Program Learning Outcomes	Institutional Learning Outcomes
Discuss opposing arguments for contemporary problems in the United States	OC SLO1: Developing and Presenting material around a central theme	PS1: Explain the American political system and its relationship to the Micronesian region	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving ILO4: Understanding and appreciation of culturally diverse people, ideas and values in democratic context ILO6: An appreciation of the arts and sciences
Explain the foundations, development, and features of a U.S. constitutional government	CSTLO1: Apply the concepts essential to examination and evaluation of argumentative discourse	PS5: Evaluate political speech and acts for their embedded values	ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving ILO6: An appreciation of the arts and sciences

			ILO7: An interest in personal development and lifelong learning
Identify the characteristics of the three (3) main branches of the Federal government (Legislative, Executive, Judicial)		PS1: Explain the American political system and its relationship to the Micronesian region	<p>ILO1: Mastery of critical thinking and problem solving</p> <p>ILO4: Understanding and appreciation of culturally diverse people, ideas and values in a democratic context</p> <p>ILO6: An appreciation of the arts and sciences</p>


REQUIRED TEXTS

Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, Tolbert, Campbell, and Spitzer. *We the People, Fourteenth Essentials Edition*.

Additional course materials will be added as we go through the semester. All course materials and supplemental resources are available on the Moodle course page. If you do not have a Moodle account, you can go to this [link](#) to find out how to. You can also contact Moodle Help at moodlehelp@triton.uog.edu or 671-735-2620/1.

Moodle Self-Enrollment Info:

Course Name: 

Enrollment Key: 

us

GRADED CONTRIBUTIONS

Attendance and Participation	10%
Weekly Quizzes	10%
Discussion Posts	15%
Midterm Reflection Paper	20%
Congressional Simulation	20%
Final Exam	25%

Grade Points are assigned as follows:

A+	100% - 98%	Outstanding
A	97% - 93%	
A-	92% - 90%	
B+	89% - 87%	Good
B	86% - 83%	
B-	82% - 80%	

C+	79% - 77%	Adequate
C	76% - 70%	
D	69% - 60%	Deficient
F	59% and below	Failure

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION (10 points)

Attendance is a required part of this class. Attendance will be taken at the **beginning** of every class. If you are late, it is your responsibility to see me at the end of the class to have your attendance recorded. Students who are more than 30 minutes late will not be counted as attending.

You will also be graded based on your active participation in class. Participation doesn't entail full mastery of our reading materials, but rather an open discussion about the topics you find interesting, confusing, and/or bringing up issues you think are related to the topic at hand. I'm also encouraging students to share any material they think will be relevant to this course.

WEEKLY QUIZZES (10 points)

Weekly quizzes are available on Moodle every Friday covering topics we discussed in the sessions within that week. You are required to complete the quiz by Saturday. You are only allowed **2** attempts for each quiz, and I will record the highest score towards your final grade.

DISCUSSION POSTS (15 points)

You are required to post four (4) 750-word reading responses to the course material we will be discussing throughout the semester. You can choose from any Week in our schedule to respond to. The reading response should highlight the content that was unclear to you and to raise a discussion question with a specific reference to our readings. Your post is due by Sunday 10:00AM, before we will have to meet for that Week (i.e. your post is due on August 21 at 10AM if you decided to do a discussion post for our Week 2 topic). You will post your reading responses on the Moodle Discussion board.

MIDTERM REFLECTION PAPER (20 points)

You are required to submit a 1500-2000-word reflection paper due on **October 13**. In this reflection paper, you will identify and research a pressing problem in the US Government about which you feel strongly about and come up with a solution. This can either be in a form of a newspaper column/essay or a formal letter to the US President. You also have the option to do a 5-minute vlog as a companion piece to your paper for an additional 5 points. This will count as an extra credit towards your final grade.

Your paper/vlog must include:

- Evidence of the existence and the extent of the problem you identify.
- Real solution and how it will be implemented by the federal government.
- Identify at least 3 sources. These sources should be of high-quality: peer-reviewed journals, scholarly books, newspaper of record, reliable websites. Your sources should

also be properly referenced in your paper. For the vlog, they should be included at the end of the video.

CONGRESSIONAL SIMULATION (20 points)

Beginning on Week 11, our classes will consist of a simulation of Congress. This will account for 20 points to your final grade. While I expect you to be knowledgeable about the workings of Congress (meaning, you read and understand the assigned readings), I will walk you through the entire process so feel free to ask questions at any time. I will provide the mechanics on October 31. In this simulation, you are expected to:

1. Propose and draft bills
2. Be a member of the Legislative branch and/or an advocate
3. Become part of a committee/a testifier

I encourage you to watch legislative hearings available online to know more about the process i.e., how they speak/present themselves during the hearing. [Here](#) is an example of a committee hearing by the US House Committee on Judiciary.

FINAL EXAM (25 points)

There will be an in-person examination for this course. The examination will be a combination of multiple-choice and short written responses. Makeups will be given in cases of documented emergencies.

GENERAL NOTES

All required submissions are due by 11:59 PM unless another time is indicated in the syllabus. No late submission will be accepted. If you missed any work, feel free to contact me to discuss the matter.

If you are having a problem that disallows you to meet the course requirements or understand our course materials, feel free to contact me or drop by my office. I will do regular check-ins to see how everyone is holding up and I encourage everyone to voice out their suggestions on how to improve the class.

Plagiarism

Students are expected to be honest in all their academic work. Academic honesty means, fundamentally, that any work you submit to this course must be yours unless proper credit is given to the owner of the work. Academic dishonesty, in forms like plagiarism or cheating, will result in a failing grade in the course and possible disciplinary action by the university. Plagiarism is a very serious offense that the university does not take lightly. For more information about plagiarism, feel free to read this:

<http://hasso.uog.edu:8080/jspui/libguides/Plagiarism.pdf>

EEO/ADA Statement

We are committed to maintaining a space for all community members of the University that is free of all forms of discrimination and harassment. If you experience harassment or discrimination, you can report them immediately at the EEO/ADA & Title IX Office,

Institutional Compliance Office located in Dorm 1. You can also contact them at 671-735-2244.

For individuals covered under the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act), if you are a **student** with a disability requiring academic accommodation(s), please contact the Student Counseling and Advising Service Disability Support Services Office to discuss your confidential request. A Faculty Notification letter from the Disability Support Services/Student Counseling and Advising Service Accommodation counselor will be provided to me. To register for academic accommodations, please contact or visit Sallie S. Sablan, DSS counselor in the School of Education, office 110, disabilitysupport@triton.uog.edu or telephone/TDD 671-735-2460.

Student's Responsibilities

Students are expected to be courteous to and considerate of others. Be respectful while in class. Students who do their homework, follow the readings, and fully participate in class will come away with a better understanding of how philosophical reflection on human nature can influence legal, moral, and cultural assumptions.

Communication and Consultation Hours

Students are expected to be I'll answer all emails regarding the class within 24 hours except on weekends. You can also request a brief one-on-one session with me about the course or academic matters. Consultation is by appointment only via e-mail. Set an appointment as early as possible so I can set aside time for our consultation.

Change to the Syllabus

There may be changes to the syllabus as we go through the course. I will notify you at least a week in advance and provide the material you must read.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 August 14	Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Syllabus • What is Political Science?
Week 2 August 19	The American Political Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 1
August 21	Right to Life, Liberty, Pursuit of Happiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roe V. Wade
Week 3 August 26	The Founding and the Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 2 • Watch Crash Course US History
August 28	Immigration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DACA
Week 4 September 4	Federalism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 3 • Watch Crash Course Federalism <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is federalism? Why was it included in the US Constitution? • How is federalism different from the separation of powers? • What is an expressed power? What is an implied power? How are they related? • What is a reserved power? What is a concurrent power? How are they related? • What are some advantages and disadvantages of the American federal system? • Is federal system necessary today, given advances in transportation and communication technology?
Week 5 September 9	State and Territories	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How the U.S. Territory of Guam Became An American Colony <p>Guiding Questions:</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does unincorporated territory mean? How is it different from incorporated territory? • What are the insular cases? How did these cases determine the relationship between • Guam and the United States? • What is plenary power? What do we mean by statutory rights? How are they different from constitutional rights? • In your own perspective, what do you think is the best political status for Guam?
September 11	U.S. Territories	<p>Northern Mariana Islands Puerto Rico American Samoa US Virgin Islands</p> <p>Watch: The Dome</p>
Week 6 September 16	Civil Liberties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapters 4 • Watch Crash Course Civil Liberties and Rights <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Freedom of Religion ○ Freedom of Speech ○ Freedom of the Press ○ Due Process ○ Search and Seizure ○ Equal Protection ○ Sex Discrimination ○ Discrimination ○ <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do we mean by Civil Liberties? How are they different from Civil Rights • How is the First Amendment different from the rest of the Bill of Rights? What has this difference meant over time? • What is meant by “Nationalizing the Bill of Rights”? How was it done?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a right to privacy in the US? If so, on what is it based? • Why is there a specific emphasis on the due process of law in the Bill of Rights?
September 18	The Right to Bear Arms	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District of Columbia v. Heller
Week 7 September 23	Civil Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 5
September 25	Parents Bill Rights Act	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parental Rights in Education Act • Transgender deaths in US on Rise With the Increase in Anti-Trans Laws, Report Shows
Week 8 September 30 October 2	Public Opinion and the Media	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 6 & 7 • Watch Crash Course Media Institution • Watch Crash Course Public Opinion <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does social media threaten democracy? • What is the role of gatekeepers? • Should all perspectives be permitted to share their views on social media sites? What impact could this have? • What changes, if any, could be made to sharing content online without limiting free speech?
Week 9 Fall Break (No Class)		<p><u>MIDTERM PAPER DUE</u> <u>OCTOBER 13</u></p>
Week 10 October 14	Political Parties and Interest Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 8 <p>Watch: Voting Matters</p>
October 16	Participation, Campaigns, and Elections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 9 • Guiding Questions

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the point of voting? • What are the different ways (rules of the game) to decide who wins an election? Which is the most democratic? • How does the Electoral College work? What are some of the concerns about the Electoral College? What are the options for reforming/removing the Electoral College? • What are some historical barriers to political participation? What are some current ones? • Does low voter turnout matter? Where does it come from? What can be done about it? What types of people tend to participate politically, and does that matter? • How has the mass media affected political campaigns? Campaign spending/finance?
<p>Week 11 October 21</p>	<p>Congress</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 10 • Watch Crash Course The Bicameral Congress <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does the Constitution set forth about the Congress? How has this changed over time? Describe what Congress does- legislation, taxation, budget production, casework, oversight, confirmation. • What is the demographic breakdown of the 114th US Congress? Why? Does it matter? Does your representative have to look like you to represent you? • What is incumbency?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does it affect the makeup of Congress? Why? Are term limits legal currently? • Explain the institutions that have been created to increase the cooperation, efficiency and/or expertise of the Congress over time, including leadership positions, committees, and rules of procedure in each house. • What are the differences between the House of Representatives and the Senate? What is the reason for those differences? • How does a bill become a law? • How likely is it that a bill can become a law? What are the veto points in the legislative process?
October 23	Congressional Stimulation	<u>Congressional Stimulation Day 1</u>
Week 12 October 28	The Presidency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 11 • Watch Crash Course Presidential Power • Watch Crash Course Presidential Powers 2 <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is the US president elected? Nominated? Why is it that way? • What are the legal requirements to be president? What are the informal requirements? • Who is likely to be president? • What are the expressed powers of the president? Delegated Powers? Inherent Powers? • How has the power of the president evolved over time? • How did the New Deal era change the presidency?

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What formal and informal resources does the president have at his/her disposal? • What concerns are there about the rise of presidential power? •
October 30	Congressional Stimulation	<u>Introduction of Bills</u>
Week 13 November 4	The Federal Courts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 13 • Watch Crash Course Federal Courts <p>Guiding Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is Judicial Review and where does it come from? • What is the term for a federal judge, and how do they get their jobs? • What is the reason for the term of office and the manner of getting the job? • What are the types of courts in the US judicial system? • What is the structure of the federal court system, and what types of cases does each court handle?
November 6	Congressional Simulation	<u>Committee Hearing</u>
Week 14 November 13	The Bureaucracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 12 • Watch Crash Course Bureaucracy Basics <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the main role of our bureaucratic institutions? • How are they different from the three main branches of the government? • How do bureaucracy enhance democracy? How do they undermine it? • What are the different types of bureaucratic institutions?

<p>Week 15 November 18</p>	<p>Domestic Policy <i>(Social Policy)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 14 <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the government use fiscal, monetary, and regulatory policies to influence the economy? • What are the arguments for and against government intervention into the economy? • What is the history of government programs designed to promote economic security? • How do education, health, and housing policies try to advance equality of opportunity?
<p>November 20</p>	<p>Universal Basic Income</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Universal Basic Income (UBI), explained
<p>Week 16 November 25</p>	<p>Domestic Policy <i>(Economic Policy)</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 14 <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the primary goals of current US foreign policy? • How does the US approach international alliances and partnerships? • What role does diplomacy play in shaping US relations with other countries? • How does the US address global security challenges in its foreign policy? • What strategies does the US use to promote economic interests abroad?
<p>November 27</p>	<p>Fiscal Policy Game</p>	<p><i>How Would You Spend \$7 Trillions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current US Federal Budget Breakdown
<p>Week 17 December 2</p>	<p>Foreign Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read Chapter 15 <p>Guiding Questions:</p>

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How is foreign policy designed to promote security, prosperity, and humanitarian goals? 2. What are the structures and roles of the major organizations and players in U.S. foreign-policy making? 3. What are the means the United States uses to carry out foreign policy today? 4. What are the foreign policy problems facing American policy makers today?
December 4		<i>Final Exam Review</i>
Week 18		FINAL EXAM