

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & POLITICS

POLITICAL SCIENCE 105
AN EXPLORE COURSE (SOCIETY) | 3 CREDITS

FALL 2017 | TR 1:20–2:50 | SAGE 2232
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH

PROFESSOR

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines the organization, principles, and workings of the national government in all its institutions. The centerpiece of the course is institutions—congress, presidency, courts, and agencies. The course first examines the Constitutional framework within which the system operates, including federalism, civil rights, and civil liberties. Considerable attention is given to the social and political elements that influence institutions, such as voting and citizen participation, interest groups, media, and political parties. The course also examines institutional outputs (policies), especially environmental policy and social policies related to race, gender, socio-economic status, and sexuality.

This is an Explore course in the Society category in the University Studies Program.

TEXT AND READINGS

The textbook includes an access code to Connect, an online supplement we use for weekly quizzes.

We the People: An Introduction to American Government, 12th Edition (Thomas E. Patterson). ISBN: 9781260218749



Marlene Dumas, *The Woman of Algiers* (2001)

Marlene Dumas's work explores a range of human emotion while reflecting on social and political attitudes toward women, children, people of color, and others who historically have been victimized. The *Woman of Algiers*'s composition is based on a photograph that appeared in the French newspaper *L'Express*; a naked woman is restrained by men on either side of her, her breasts and pubic area obscured by censor bars that evoke the socio-representational conventions of Dumas's source material while also suggesting the rectangular forms of Mark Rothko. The title references work by artists including Pablo Picasso in which the subject is depicted as the exotic other.

Source: Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course-Specific Learning Goals

Describe major components of the American political system, emphasizing institutions

Discuss with classmates issues related to civil rights

Evaluate policy outcomes using a constitutional framework

Critically evaluate political ideologies and apply ideological frameworks to students' own political and policy views.

Political Science Department Learning Goals

Understand and apply theory frameworks

Apply theoretical arguments and to explain or predict political phenomena

Understand and explain contemporary politics

Connect theory and history to answer “big questions” facing contemporary politics

Analyze and explain political behavior, patterns, & events

Use evidence in a variety of forms to construct arguments

Communicate effectively

Express information in ways accessible and appropriate to different audiences



INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

Every citizen is part of the environment regardless of race, gender, sex, sexuality, socio-economic status, national origin, ethnicity, physical or learning ability, and many other characteristics with which students commonly identify. Hence, this course uses inclusive excellence pedagogies and activities that foster input from everyone.

Input from all students is valued and expected.

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

I use the 93/90/87 grading scale for this course.

A 93–100 B 83–86 C 73–76 D 63–66

A- 90–92 B- 80–82 C- 70–72 D- 60–62

B+ 87–89 C+ 77–79 D+ 67–69 F 0–59

Grades are based on the following elements.

Assignments (20%): There are regular homework assignments and in-class activities, such as short papers and group projects.

Participation (20%): The participation grade is based primarily on student preparation for and contributions to class discussions. This means reading material before you come to class. Participation comfort levels vary substantially. At one end of the spectrum, some students fear public speaking (more than death) and would prefer to remain anonymous in class. These students should work actively to overcome this fear. On the other end of the spectrum are gunners. Gunners are eager to speak and tend to dominate conversation. These students should be mindful that learning involves active listening and should provide others an opportunity to speak. Quality of participation is as important as quantity. Students receive the best participation grades when they think critically and assimilate complex ideas, including classmates' ideas, across a range of topics. Such participators contribute meaningfully to the learning of others, including the professor. There are formal opportunities for participation, including group projects and presentations.

Exams (2 exams x 20% each = 40%): Exams will be a combination of objective questions, short answer questions, and essays.

Connect Quizzes (20%): Students take regular quizzes in Connect. In Connect, there is a folder for each chapter. In each folder there is a quiz and several review exercises. The review exercises are optional, but the quizzes are required.

CONNECT

To access Connect, you need the *Connect Access Code* that comes with your textbook if you purchased it at the campus bookstore. You can also purchase an access code online when you register, but I highly recommend you purchase it at the bookstore so you can have a printed copy of the textbook to bring to class.

Registering with Connect is simple. Just follow the instructions at this website:

<http://connect.mheducation.com/class/j-thomas-american-government--politics-fall-2017-1>

You can get *temporary access* at no charge for 14 days. Just be sure to register with an access code within the 14-day period to keep all your files. For further questions about Connect, start [here](#).

QUIZ GUIDELINES

1. All quizzes are posted and taken in *Connect*.
2. You may use textbooks for quizzes. Quiz questions are based on textbook material.
3. Quizzes are automatically graded. As soon as you finish each quiz, you receive your grade.
4. You may take each quiz *up to three times* before the deadline. I record the grade from your *highest* attempt. Questions are pulled randomly from a pool. If you take a quiz more than once, some questions will be different.
5. Quizzes are *due at 1:00 PM before the class when we discuss that chapter*. Quizzes are available well ahead of due dates.
6. I drop the lowest quiz grade.

EARLY ALERT

During the fifth week of classes, you will receive by e-mail notice about your progress in this course. This is called *Early Alert*. Early Alert helps you evaluate your study skills and class attendance so you know if you are on the right track. If you need to make changes, there are tons of resources available. Early Alert grades are not permanent and do not appear on your transcript.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is expected. I take attendance at the beginning of each class mainly to learn student names. Remember, participation is required. You cannot participate if you are absent. Absences are sometimes necessary, but it is unnecessary to contact me unless it is an extended absence. Students should contact a classmate for missed notes or assignments. I do not supply notes or give one-on-one lectures, but I am always happy to meet with students to review unclear points.



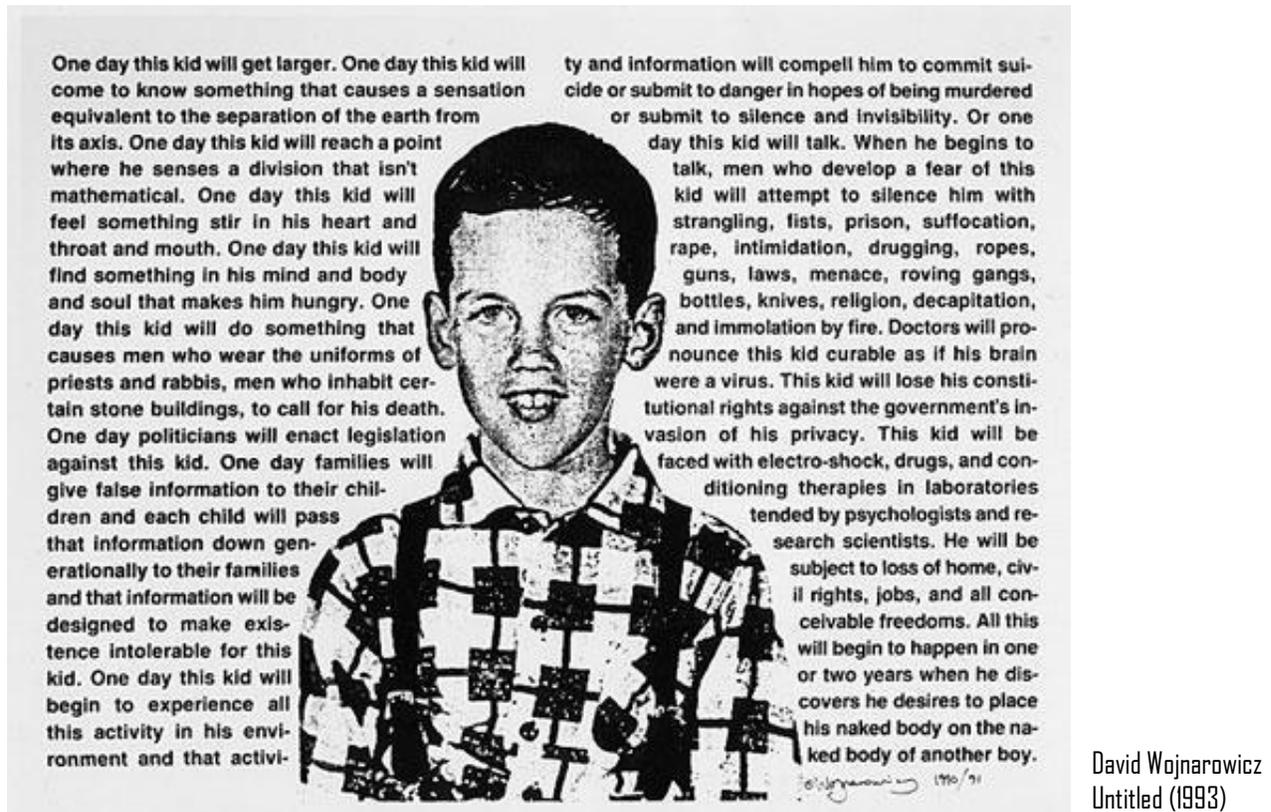
Rashid Johnson's "Run" (2016), part of the conceptual art project "For Freedom."

DEADLINES AND MISSED ASSIGNMENTS

Students are expected to turn in assignments on the due dates. Students who miss assignments will be excused only if they have a bona-fide excuse according to university policy (e.g., documented illness, family death, university-sponsored activity). In short, turn in assignments on time. If you are unable to do this, please contact me to discuss your individual situation.

POLITICAL SCIENCE MAJOR AND MINOR

American Government & Politics (105) is required for political science majors and minors. As a reminder, students should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore year or first semester of junior year. PS245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political Analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently.



CAMPUS RESOURCES

I want you to be successful. For campus services available to support your success, please visit www.uwosh.edu/home/resources. Here are a few key resources that may be helpful.

Center for Academic Resources: The Center for Academic Resources (CAR) provides free, confidential tutoring for students in most undergraduate classes on campus. CAR is located in the Student Success Center, Suite 102. Check the Tutor List page on CAR's website (www.uwosh.edu/car) for a list of tutors. If your course is not listed, click on a link to request one, stop by the Center, or call 424-2290. To schedule a tutoring session, simply email the tutor, let him/her know what class you are seeking assistance in, and schedule a time to meet.

Writing Center: The Writing Center helps students of all ability levels improve their writing. Trained peer consultants help writers understand an assignment, envision possibilities for a draft, and improve their writing process. They even help writers learn to identify their own proofreading errors. Students can make a free appointment or

stop by to see whether a consultant is available. For more information, view their website (www.uwosh.edu/wcenter), call 424-1152, email wcenter@uwosh.edu, or visit them in Suite 102 of the Student Success Center.

Reading Study Center: The Reading Study Center is an all-university service whose mission is to facilitate the development of efficient college-level learning strategies in students of all abilities. The center offers strategies for improved textbook study, time management, note-taking, test preparation, and test-taking. For more info, email readingstudy@uwosh.edu, view the website (www.uwosh.edu/readingstudycenter), visit them in Nursing Ed Room 201, or call 424-1031.

Polk Library: Polk Library has many professional librarians who can help you find resources for your research. Ted Mulvey, the Information Literacy Librarian, is available to assist you as you access, evaluate, and use information. Contact him at 424-7329 or mulveyt@uwosh.edu. You may also set up a research advisory session with a librarian at rap@uwosh.edu.



The Untouchables is a photography project created by Cuban artist and photographer Erik Ravelo to raise awareness of various attacks against children: war, obesity, sex tourism, school shootings, sexual abuse, black market organ "donation" and nuclear disaster.

UWO ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

UWO is committed to a standard of academic integrity for all students. The system guidelines state, "Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect of others' academic endeavors." Students are subject to disciplinary action for academic misconduct, including suspension. Procedures related to violations of academic honesty are on the Dean of Students website at www.uwosh.edu/stuaff/policies-procedures. Questions about provisions in the code and procedures to implement the code should be directed to the Dean of Students Office.

SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

Changes to the schedule are inevitable and will be communicated in class or through e-mail.

Week 1 (Sept 7): Introductions and Course Overview

- Syllabus Review
- Using Connect, D2L Profiles

Week 2 (Sept 12): Political Thinking and Political Culture

- Political Thinking and Culture (chapter 1)
- Model of American Political System
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 1

Week 3 (Sept 19): Constitutional Democracy

- Constitutional Democracy (chapter 2)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 2

Week 4 (Sept 26): Federalism

- Federalism (chapter 3)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 3

Week 5 (Oct 3): Civil Liberties

- Civil Liberties (chapter 4)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 4

Week 6 (Oct 10): Civil Rights

- Equal Rights (chapter 5)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 5
- Group Projects and Presentations

Week 7 (Oct 17): Review and Assessment

- Review and Exam 1

Week 8 (Oct 24): Public Opinion and Political Participation

- Public Opinion/Political Socialization (chapter 6)
- Political Participation (chapter 7)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 6 and Ch. 7.

Week 9 (Oct 31): Political Parties

- Parties, Candidates, & Campaigns (chapter 8)
- Discussion: Political parties and small town gas stations (rational choice model)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 8

Week 10 (Nov 7): Media

- The News Media (chapter 10)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 10
- Media Group Projects

Week 11 (Nov 14): Congress

- Congress (chapter 11)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 11

Week 12 (Nov 21): Presidency

- The Presidency (chapter 12)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 12
- Thanksgiving Break (No class Nov 23)

Week 13 (Nov 28): Bureaucracy

- The Federal Bureaucracy (chapter 13)
- Connect Quiz for Ch. 13

Week 14 (Dec 5): Courts

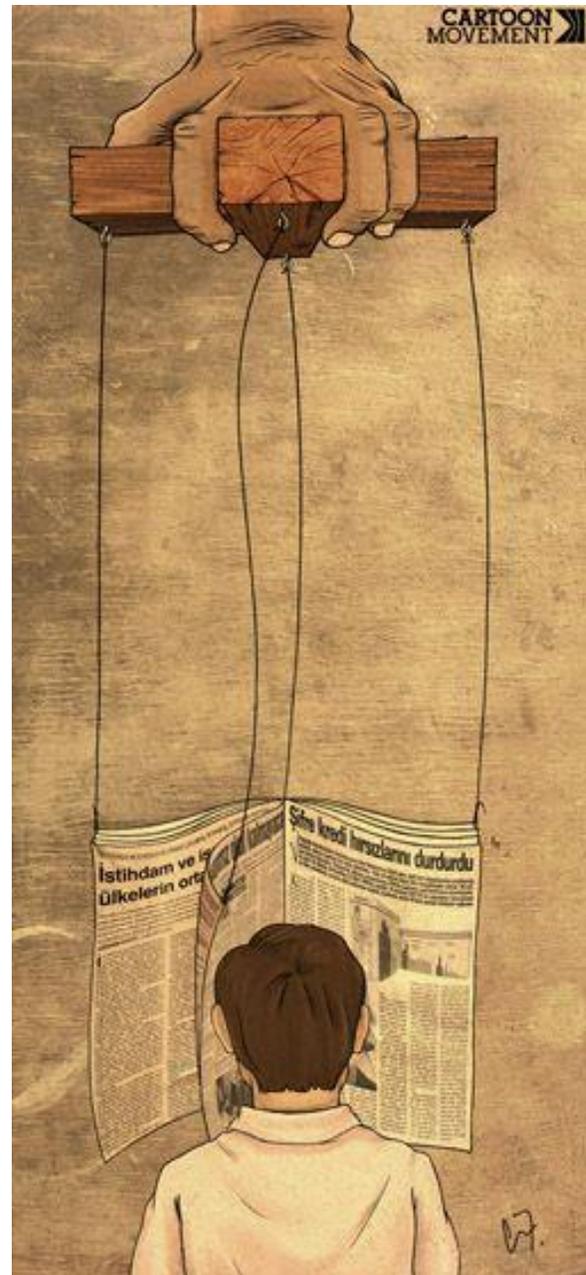
- The Federal Judicial System (chapter 14)
- Activity: Connect Quiz for Ch. 14

Week 15 (Dec 12): Review and Assessment

- Review and Exam 2

CLASS GUIDELINES

I have four principles I ask students to observe in class. Be *honest*, *energetic*, *reliable*, and *respectful*.



SYLLABUS ART THEME AND QUESTION

The Preamble of the U.S. Constitution speaks of securing “liberty to ourselves and our *posterity*” (emphasis added). Political theorist Lee Edelman suggests it is political suicide for political candidates not to champion policies that benefit children. (Think of environmental policies concerned with conserving and preserving the planet for future generations.) If the emblem of the child is so strong in our political culture, why must artists raise awareness of children’s issues?