



# PENSACOLA STATE COLLEGE

American National Government POS2041 Section P1289  
Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11am – 12:15pm Room 1443  
Spring 2025 Syllabus, A-Session

**Instructor's Name:** Robert Thead

**Email:** [rthead@pensacolastate.edu](mailto:rthead@pensacolastate.edu) (or over Canvas)

**Phone:** 850-484-1313

**Office Hours:** Main Campus Room 1408 Building 14 (1<sup>st</sup> floor) or over Zoom (accessible via Canvas)

Monday:

Tuesday:

Wednesday:

Thursday:

*Or by appointment.*

**Catalog Description:** FA, SP, SU – A study of the American federal system of government with emphasis on the constitutional distribution of powers among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches and the states. An analysis of policy formation as related to democratic theory and the role of government in the society.

**Department:** History & Social Sciences

**Department Head:** Scott Schackmann, Bldg. 14, Room 1461, [sschackmann@pensacolastate.edu](mailto:sschackmann@pensacolastate.edu)

**Department Phone:** (850) 484-1425

**Credit Hours/Contact Hours/Location:** 3 college credit hours/3 contact hours/Zoom Live

**Textbook:** Free “Open Educational Resources” required. Available via Canvas.

**Prerequisite:** ENC 1101, English Composition I

**Supplemental Materials:** As assigned (see course schedule, below); see also district syllabus

**Course Companion Site:** The course companion website is in Canvas (eLearning) at <https://pensacolastate.instructure.com/>. Between class meetings, we will communicate using our Canvas messaging system or Pirate Mail email accounts. Most class handouts, course resources, & PowerPoints will be uploaded into Canvas for the convenience of the students.

**Important Dates:**

- Drop/Add Deadline: January 16, 2025
- Last Date for Student Withdrawals: April 7, 2025
- Final Exam: TBD

**Course Description and Learning Outcomes:** Please refer to the district syllabus for this course.

**Method of Evaluation:** Will include 1 test, 1 midterm, 1 final exam, 3 written papers, 3 participation assignments & attendance.

**Grading Scale**

- 90 – 100 = A
- 87 – 89 = B+
- 80 – 86 = B
- 77 – 79 = C+
- 70 – 76 = C
- 67 – 69 = D+
- 60 – 66 = D
- Below 60 = F

**Grading**

Your final grade in this course will be calculated as follows:

1 test @ 10 percent	10 percent
1 midterm @ 15 percent	15 percent
1 final @ 15 percent	15 percent
3 writing assignments @ 15 percent each	45 percent
3 participation assignments @ 5 percent	15 percent
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TOTAL	100 percent

**Textbook:** This course does *not* require a textbook. On Canvas you can find curated reading for the course, all online and free and organized by topics in the order we will go through them, that will get you through the course. However, if you prefer one the book listed on page 1 of this syllabus will assist you in following along. It is a free online textbook, and the link to the text is available via the course Canvas page.

**Exams:** The exams will be primarily essay-based. They will be conducted at the regular class time, and will be proctored using Canvas. We will not be using any sort of lockdown browser. A review for each exam will be made available.

**Written assignments:** You will be submitting 3 written assignments throughout the semester (the due dates for each are clearly noted in the semester schedule), each covering major themes and issues covered in the textbook and the classroom. In each of these assignments, you will argue/take a side on an issue. All writing assignments will be submitted electronically, via Canvas. You will be issued topics/prompts at least one week before each writing assignment is due. Length will range from 2 – 4 pages, double spaced, 12 point font.

**Turnitin:** Your writing assignments will be submitted via Turnitin. Some of you might be familiar with this program. Turnitin is used as a plagiarism checker. Although it is often used to catch plagiarism after the fact, I prefer to use Turnitin as a teaching tool. If you submit drafts of your papers BEFORE they are due, you will have the opportunity to revise areas of your paper where you might be unintentionally plagiarizing sources and/or not citing them correctly. We will discuss this further in class before the due date of your first written assignment.

**Participation:** Your participation in this exercise counts for 15% of your total grade. Throughout the semester, there will be 3 participation assignments. We will be discussing this further in class. **You will not be required to speak in class.**

## Essay Rubric for Writing Emphasis Courses

Grade Equivalent	A (90-100)	B (80-89)	C (70-79)	D (60-69)	F (0-59)
<b>Thesis (Central Idea)</b>	The essay includes a clear thesis that articulates a central idea about the essay's topic.	The essay includes a clear thesis that addresses the topic, but the thesis is not as strong or precise as that of an "A" paper.	The thesis may be unclear, weak, or may not match the essay's content sufficiently.	The thesis is unclear or inappropriate to the topic.	The essay lacks a recognizable thesis statement or central idea.
<b>Organization and Coherence</b>	The essay flows logically and uses a clear organizational pattern appropriate to the assignment. Proper sentence order and effective transitions are evident.	The essay flows logically most of the time and includes an appropriate organizational pattern. With minor exceptions, the writer is in control of sentence order and transitions.	The essay's logic is discernible but flawed. The essay includes an acceptable organizational pattern; however, some lapses in sentence order and use of transitions are evident.	The essay's logic is discernible at times but often difficult to follow. The essay is not organized appropriately, and ideas often lack clear connections.	The essay has no discernible plan or organization and is difficult to follow.
<b>Content</b>	The essay is skillfully developed. Critical thinking about the topic is evident through the use of vivid details and relevant examples to support key ideas.	The essay is mostly developed and uses appropriate details and examples that indicate critical thinking about the topic.	The essay is somewhat developed. Supporting details and examples are present but minimally effective.	The essay lacks development and provides few details. It lacks specific, vivid, and relevant examples.	The essay is undeveloped and fails to use relevant details or examples.
<b>Style, Grammar, Mechanics, Format</b>	The language is clear and precise. The essay uses an appropriate academic tone. The essay has no discernible departures from <b>Standard Edited Written American English (SEWAE)</b> . Contains no major errors in MLA/APA/Turabian format. If documentation is used, no major errors are present.	The language is clear and mostly precise. An academic tone is used throughout with only a few minor lapses. The essay has few departures from SEWAE. May contain a few minor errors in formatting or documentation.	The language is understandable throughout. Tone is occasionally inappropriate or uneven. The essay exhibits some departures from SEWAE which may occasionally interfere with readability. May contain errors in formatting or documentation.	The language is often confusing. Tone is inappropriate or uneven. The essay exhibits numerous departures from SEWAE which interfere with readability. May contain significant formatting or documentation errors.	The language makes the essay difficult to read. The tone is inappropriate. Errors are so numerous that the reader must struggle to discern meaning. Formatting or documentation is absent or inadequate.

## Tentative Course Schedule

Week 01 – Introduction

- Tuesday, August 20<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, August 22<sup>nd</sup>

Week 02 – Topic: Introduction & The Founding and the Constitution **Participation Assignment #1 Due**

- Tuesday, August 27<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, August 29<sup>th</sup>

Week 03 – Topic: The Founding and the Constitution; The Electoral College Explained;

- Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Thursday, September 5<sup>th</sup>

Week 04 – Topic: Civil Liberties, Civil Rights **First Writing Assignment Due**

- Tuesday, September 10<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, September 12<sup>th</sup>

Week 05 – Topic: Civil Rights cont'd

- Tuesday, September 17<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, September 19<sup>th</sup> **First exam, Topics 1 – 5**

Week 06 – Topic: In-Depth Current Events

- Tuesday, September 24<sup>th</sup> Financial Literacy & Student Loans
- Thursday, September 26<sup>th</sup> The U.S. Dollar and the Global Financial System

Week 07 – Topic: In-Depth Current Events

- Tuesday, October 1<sup>st</sup> Ukraine War Backgrounder
- Thursday, October 3<sup>rd</sup> U.S. Household Debt Crisis

Week 08 – Topic: In-Depth Current Events

- Tuesday, October 8<sup>th</sup> Gen Z and Mental Health
- Thursday, October 10<sup>th</sup> **Midterm Due, Topics 6 – 8**

Week 09 – The Media and Social Media

- Tuesday, October 15<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, October 17<sup>th</sup>

Week 10 – Topic: Campaigns & Elections

- Tuesday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Thursday, October 24<sup>th</sup>

Week 11 – Interest Groups & *The Swamp (2020)* **Second Writing Assignment Due**

- Tuesday, October 29<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, October 31<sup>st</sup>

Week 12 – Presidential Election Week

- Tuesday, November 5<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, November 7<sup>th</sup>

Week 13 – Topic: Congress

- Tuesday, November 12<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, November 14<sup>th</sup>

Week 14 – Topic: The Judiciary

- Tuesday, November 19<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, November 21<sup>st</sup>

Week 15 – Topic: American Democracy & the Thanksgiving Holiday

- Tuesday, November 26<sup>th</sup>
- Thursday, November 28<sup>th</sup> NO CLASS, FALL BREAK

Week 16 –Topic: Legacy of 9/11 & the Global War on Terror cont'd: **Third Writing Assignment Due**

- Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>
- Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

Week 17 – Final Exam

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> 8am-10am

## Course Policies:

### Attendance policy:

- Regular, punctual attendance is required per the Pensacola State College Catalog. **To be clear: if you miss more than 3 classes this semester you are considered excessively absent.** Refer to the explanation of Excessive Absences in the current catalog for more information.
  - Tardiness and leaving class early may be converted to absences.
  - **If a student is excessively absent—exceeds more than 3 absences—each additional absence will result in a 10% penalty of your total grade.**
  - If a student comes into the class session after the instructor has taken roll, it is the responsibility of the student to see the instructor at the end of class to request that his/her attendance status be updated.
- Class disruptions, including but not limited to persistent talking while the instructor or another student is speaking, could result in your being asked to leave the class.
  - College policy disallows visitors in the labs or classrooms.
  - PSC's no smoking policy includes a ban on e-cigarettes even in Live Online format.
  - If you are asked to leave class for violating class policies, you will be counted absent from class and may not be allowed to make up work from that day. Before returning to class, you must meet with the instructor and/or the Director of Student Conduct.
  - Late work will be accepted under special circumstances, but points will be taken off.
  - Student Perception Surveys – EvaluationKit: During the term, you will receive a notification in PirateMail and/or Canvas with a link to EvaluationKit, the online evaluation system used by Pensacola State College. Please take advantage of this opportunity to provide anonymous feedback to your instructors about their courses. Your opinions are valuable, and your evaluations enable instructors to assess their teaching style and help them decide what changes to consider in curriculum, textbooks, or assignments.
  - Flexibility Statement: It is the intention of the instructor to accomplish the objectives specified in the course syllabus. However, circumstances may arise which prohibit the fulfilling of this endeavor. Therefore, this syllabus is subject to change. When possible, students will be notified of any change in advance of its occurrence.
  - If you miss a day in class, first consult your syllabus, and then get with a classmate for any notes you might need. Do not email me with “what did I miss?” or “did I miss anything important?” While I will be happy to answer any specific questions you might have, after you have consulted with classmates about getting notes, I will not redeliver entire lectures in response to “what did I miss?”
  - **Academic Dishonesty Statement:** Pensacola State College is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic conduct. All forms of academic dishonesty, to include plagiarism and cheating, are prohibited. Penalties for academic dishonesty include but are not limited to one or more of the following: the awarding of no credit on the assignment, a reduction in the course grade, or the assignment of a final course grade of F and removal from the course. See the College Catalog for more details.
  - **Student Email Accounts:** Pensacola State College provides an institutional email account to all students enrolled in courses for credit. PirateMail is the official method of communication, and students must use PirateMail when communicating with the College. In cases where companion software is used for a particular class, email may be exchanged between instructor and student using the companion software.
  - **Flexibility:** It is the intention of the instructor to accomplish the objectives specified in the course syllabus. However, circumstances may arise which prohibit the fulfilling of this endeavor. Therefore, this syllabus is subject to change. When possible, students will be notified of any change in advance of its occurrence.
  - **ADA Statement:** Students with a disability that falls under the Americans with Disability Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, it is the responsibility of the student to notify Student Resource Center for ADA Services to discuss any special needs or equipment necessary to accomplish the requirements for this course.

Upon completion of registration with the Student Resource Center for ADA Services office, specific arrangements can be discussed with the instructor.

- **Equity Statement:** Pensacola State College does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, color, gender/sex, age, religion, marital status, pregnancy, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or genetic information in its educational programs, activities, or employment. For inquiries regarding Title IX and the College's nondiscrimination policies, contact the Executive Director, Equal Opportunity Compliance at (850) 484-1759, Pensacola State College, 1000 College Blvd., Pensacola, Florida 32504.
- **Security Statement:** Pensacola State College is committed to encouraging all members of the College community to be proactive in personal safety measures. In case of emergency, students should ensure that they are aware of the building exit closest to each of their classrooms, as well as all alternative building exits in case circumstances require using a different route.
- **Emergency Statement:** In the case of severe weather or other emergency, the College administration maintains communication with appropriate state and local agencies and makes a determination regarding the cancellation of classes. Notices of cancellation will be made through the College's PSC Alert system and on the College's website.

This class will be conducted under the regulations defined in the Pensacola State College Code of Student Conduct in the College Catalog.

### **Student Resources**

<https://www.pensacolastate.edu/documents/student-resource-guide/>