

AMERICAN POLITICS

Course code	<i>POL 139</i>
Compulsory in the programmes	<i>Economics and Politics, Economics and Data Analytics, Finance</i>
Level of studies	<i>Undergraduate</i>
Number of credits and	<i>6 ECTS (48 contact hours + 6 consultation hours, 106 individual work hours)</i>
Course coordinator (title and name)	<i>Dr. Danielle Vinson</i>
Prerequisites	<i>None</i>
Language of instruction	<i>English</i>

THE AIM OF THE COURSE:

This course explores who has power in the US political system, the sources of that power, and the limits on the power of various groups and institutions. It particularly examines the impact of the structure of American government and political polarization on the processes and outcomes of American government. The following topics are covered: the US Constitution and US political culture, the institutions of government including the president, Congress, the courts, the bureaucracy, and political parties, and the role of the public in the American political process through elections and other forms of political participation.

MAPPING OF COURSE LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOMES (OBJECTIVES) WITH DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES (See Annex), ASSESSMENT AND TEACHING METHODS

Course level learning outcomes (objectives)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of BLO)	Degree level learning objectives (Number of ELO)	Assessment methods	Teaching methods
CLO1. Describe the structure of the American government and identify the checks and balances in the political system. Identify the primary powers given to each branch of government.	BLO1.1 BLO4.3	ELO1.1 ELO1.2 ELO4.3	Midterm exam, homework	Lectures, homework, seminars
CLO2. Define federalism; explain how the national government influences state governments.	BLO1.1 BLO4.3	ELO1.1 ELO4.3	Midterm exam, homework	Lectures, homework, seminars
CLO3. Identify key civil liberties and civil rights protected by the U.S. Constitution. Explain their application to current controversies in American politics.	BLO1.1 BLO4.3	ELO1.1 ELO1.2 ELO4.3	Midterm exam, homework	Lectures, homework, seminars
CLO4. Define partisan polarization; explain its origins and its impact on American government.	BLO1.1 BLO4.3	ELO1.1 ELO1.2 ELO4.3	Midterm and final exams, research paper	Lectures, homework, seminars
CLO5. Describe how politicians in the U.S. are nominated and elected to office. Explain the role of political	BLO1.1 BLO4.3	ELO1.1 ELO4.3	Final exam, homework	Lectures, homework, seminars



parties in this process.				
CLO6. Explain the legislative process in the U.S. Congress Explain the role committees and parties play in this process.	BLO1.1 BLO4.3	ELO1.1 ELO1.2 ELO4.3	Final exam, homework	Lectures, homework, seminars
CLO7. Explain the role of the presidency in policymaking and the rise of the unitary executive in American politics.	BLO1.1 BLO4.3	ELO1.1 ELO1.2 ELO4.3	Final exam, homework	Lectures, homework, seminars

ACADEMIC HONESTY AND INTEGRITY

ISM University of Management and Economics Code of Ethics, including cheating and plagiarism are fully applicable and will be strictly enforced in the course. Academic dishonesty, and cheating can and will lead to a report to the ISM Committee of Ethics.

COURSE OUTLINE

Topic	In-class hours	Readings
Introduction: American Political Culture (3 April) What is American political culture? Why is it important? What tensions are evidence in American political culture?	2	Declaration of Independence Max Boot, "Why Can't U.S. Solve Problems?"
The U.S. Constitution (3 April) The historical context that led to the Constitutional Convention. The central issues addressed—representation, executive and legislative power, state and national power. The role of compromise in writing the Constitution.	2	Robertson, "The Constitution and America's Destiny"
U.S. Constitutional Framework and Powers (4 April) Separation of Powers. Checks and Balances. The three branches of government—legislative, executive, and judicial.	4	U.S. Constitution (p. 577-586) <i>Homework 1</i>
Federalism (5 April) How the balance between state and national power has developed over time.	4	Kettl, "Federalism: Sorting out who does what"
Campaigns and Elections (6 April) The nomination process and the role of political parties. Primary elections. The general election and the electoral college. The role of party identification, issues, and candidates in elections. Influences on voting.	4	Monkey Cage Blog, "Analysis of 2022 Midterm Elections." Wells et al. "How Trump Drove Coverage to the Nomination..." Han, "The Presidency and General Elections" (p. 255-260) <i>Homework 2</i>

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (April 7) First Amendment: freedom of speech, press, religion, assembly, and petition. Due process. Rights of the accused. Civil rights and equal protection. Current controversies in civil liberties and civil rights.	8	U.S. Constitution, Amendments I-X, XIV (p. 586-588, 589-90); Girard and Hybel, "Free Exercise Clause" <i>Homework 3</i>
Midterm Exam (11 April)	2	
Political Polarization, Parties, and Ideology (11-12 April) What do parties do in the U.S.? The two dominant ideologies in American politics—liberalism and conservatism. How does ideology interact with party identification in the U.S. to create polarization. The role of the media in polarization.	6	Klein, <i>Why We Are Polarized</i> (p. 225-248) <i>Homework 4</i>
U.S. Congress (13 April) The organization of the U.S. Congress: the House and Senate; parties; committees. The legislative process.	6	Schier and Eberly, <i>Polarized</i> (p. 87-107) Monkey Cage Blog, "Budget Reconciliation Process" <i>Homework 5</i>
Presidency and the Bureaucracy (14 April) Formal and informal powers of the presidency. Presidential leadership of the federal bureaucracy. The rise of the unitary presidency.	6	Dodds, <i>The Unitary Presidency</i> (p. 1-11) Neustadt, "Power to Persuade" <i>Homework 6</i>
The Courts (17 April) The federal courts and judicial review.	4	Posner, "Am I a Potted Plant?" Cole, "The Supreme Court Embraces Originalism"
	Total: 48 hours	
CONSULTATIONS	6	
FINAL EXAM	2	

FINAL GRADE COMPOSITION

Type of assignment	%
<i>Group Components</i>	0%
<i>Individual Components</i>	100%
Homework Assignments	35%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%



Research Assignment	15%
Total:	100

DESCRIPTION AND GRADING CRITERIA OF EACH ASSIGNMENT

(Provide short descriptions and grading criteria of each assignment)

Homework Assignments: These short assignments will be posted to the e-learning system. They are designed to help students understand and apply the reading. Grades will be based on whether students address the questions asked and whether their responses provide evidence of familiarity with the reading.

Research Assignment: Students will choose a current unresolved issue in American politics that they want to learn about. They will write a 1200-1500 word paper examining public opinion on the issue, analyzing what governing institutions are responsible for this policy, and explaining why the issue is unresolved. Grades will be based on whether students address the research questions, credibility of their sources, demonstration of an understanding of the issue, and application of what they have learned in class in their explanation of the issue.

Midterm and Final Exams: Midterm exam will cover topics 1 – 6 and the final will consist of topics 7 – 10. Both exams will include multiple choice and short answer questions. Students will be graded on their understanding of the lectures and assigned readings.

Retake Exam. Students failing the course will be able to take a retake examination, consisting of material covered in the midterm and in the final. Retake exam will comprise 50% of the final grade. Homework and Research Assignment cannot be retaken.

REQUIRED READINGS

Will be provided through the E-learning system.

ADDITIONAL READINGS

Additional resources and optional reading will be provided through the E-learning system.

ANNEX

DEGREE LEVEL LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Business Management

Programmes:

*International Business and Communication,
Business Management and Marketing,
Finance,
Industrial Technology Management,
Entrepreneurship and Innovation*

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	BLO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the business disciplines
	BLO1.2. Students will be able to conduct a contextual analysis to identify a problem associated with their discipline, to generate managerial options and propose viable solutions
Students will be socially responsible in their related discipline	BLO2.1. Students will be knowledgeable about ethics and social responsibility
Students will be technology agile	BLO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	BLO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	BLO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	BLO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	BLO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper

Learning objectives for the Bachelor of Social Science

Programmes:

*Economics and Data Analytics,
Economics and Politics*

Learning Goals	Learning Objectives
Students will be critical thinkers	ELO1.1. Students will be able to understand core concepts and methods in the key economics disciplines
	ELO1.2. Students will be able to identify underlying assumptions and logical consistency of causal statements
Students will have skills to employ economic thought for the common good	ELO2.1. Students will have a keen sense of ethical criteria for practical problem-solving
Students will be technology agile	ELO3.1. Students will demonstrate proficiency in common business software packages
	ELO3.2. Students will be able to make decisions using appropriate IT tools
Students will be effective communicators	ELO4.1. Students will be able to communicate reasonably in different settings according to target audience tasks and situations
	ELO4.2. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively through an oral presentation
	ELO4.3. Students will be able to convey their ideas effectively in a written paper