

## **PSC 101-1004, Intro to American Politics (U.S. & NV Constitution)**

Wednesday, 5:30p – 9:00p in WRI C239 (4 credits).

Dr. Jonathan D. (Doc) Bradley

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Office: WRI A207; Office Hours: Wednesday 3:30p-5:00p or by appointment.

This course satisfies the UNLV United States and Nevada Constitution requirements. This course provides an overview of the political institutions, processes, and cultures in the United States and in Nevada. It also includes an examination of current political, economic, policies and social issues.

### **Course Objectives:**

- 1) Understand the fundamental principles upon which the U. S. government is based
- 2) Know the structure, responsibilities, and contemporary issues of the executive, legislative, and judiciary branches at both the federal and Nevada state level
- 3) Be familiar with the civil liberties and civil rights guaranteed by the Constitution and laws of the United States
- 4) Examine the impact on the political system of American political culture and ideology, the political parties, interest groups, public opinion, and the media.

### **University Undergraduate Learning Outcomes (UULOs)**

This course and my lectures support the following UULOs:

- 1) Intellectual Breadth and Lifelong Learning - Integrate basic principles of the social sciences and develop skills and a desire for lifelong learning.
- 2) Inquiry and Critical Thinking - Be able to identify problems, articulate questions, and use various forms of research and reasoning to guide the collection, analysis, and use of information related to those problems
- 3) Communication - Communicate effectively in written and verbal modes  
Citizenship and Ethics - Participate knowledgeably and actively in the public life of our communities and make informed, responsible, and ethical decisions in one's personal and professional lives.
- 4) Multicultural Knowledge and Awareness – Develop knowledge of multicultural societies and an awareness of one's place in and effect on them
- 5) Citizenship and Ethics - Participate knowledgeably and actively in the public life of our communities and make informed, responsible, and ethical decisions in one's personal and professional lives.

### **Textbooks and Lecture Graphics:**

1) **Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, Tolbert, Campbell and Spitzer *We the People* (12th Essentials Edition)** (978-0393679670). This text is available at the UNLV Bookstore, the Leid Library, or may be purchased as an ebook. Referred to in the schedule as **WTP**.

2) **Bowers, Michael *The Sagebrush State: Nevada's History, Government, and Politics* (4th edition)**. Referred to in the Schedule as **SS**. (The 3<sup>rd</sup> edition of this book can be read online **for free** through the UNLV Library web link:

[https://unlv-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=01UNLV\\_ALMA21198366980004081&context=L&vid=UNLV&lang=en\\_US&search\\_scope=EVERYTHING&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default\\_tab&query=any,contains,the%20sagebrush%20state&mode=Basic](https://unlv-primo.hosted.exlibrisgroup.com/primo-explore/fulldisplay?docid=01UNLV_ALMA21198366980004081&context=L&vid=UNLV&lang=en_US&search_scope=EVERYTHING&adaptor=Local%20Search%20Engine&tab=default_tab&query=any,contains,the%20sagebrush%20state&mode=Basic)

if you would prefer not to purchase it. (You might want to wait for the first day of class before you buy this))

## **Requirements:**

**1. Communications:** Email communications must be via Canvas, Webcampus and Rebelmail. Do not send an email via Google, Yahoo, or other commercial providers. I will not answer emails sent in any medium other than Canvas, Webcampus or UNLV email server. I have no dedicated phone line so use email for all communication. Also, please feel free to make an appointment with me if you need to speak about a class matter. I can pretty flexible on appointment times.

**2. Tardiness:** I loathe tardiness. Constant tardiness will not be tolerated. It is disrespectful to your fellow students, and much more importantly, it is disrespectful to me. **Continued tardiness WILL result in a lowering of your overall final grade.** I reserve the right to restrict access to the class if tardiness by any student(s) becomes an issue. If you have extenuating circumstances that will cause you to be consistently tardy, please contact me at the beginning of the semester about the situation. I am willing to make allowances for valid reasons.

**3. Examinations:** There will be four (4) exams, one at the conclusion of each major portion of the course. Exams will consist of 75 multiple choice and true false questions. If you miss an exam, and have a valid reason for doing so, it is your responsibility to contact me to schedule a makeup exam. You have only 72 hours from the end of the testing period to arrange a make-up exam. No make-up exam will be given later than 3 days from the original exam date. Regularly scheduled exams will be conducted via Webcampus/Canvas. If you have any problems with Webcampus/Canvas it is your responsibility to contact me as soon as possible. If you do not contact me within 72 hours of the end of the exam to rectify the problem, you will receive whatever grade Webcampus/Canvas has assigned you. There will be no make-up exam for the 4th (final) exam, and you may not take the 4th exam early or late regardless of reason. Do not make plans to leave the area until you know when the 4th exam is scheduled. The first 3 exams will be conducted over a period of 5 days starting at the end of the last class and ending at midnight five days later. You will be allowed 1.5 hours (90 minutes) for each exam. Once you start the exam you cannot save your work and pause the time. Once you start the exam you will have only 90 minutes to finish. If you do not finish in the allotted time the unanswered questions will be marked with a zero score. When you take your exam make sure you have 90 minutes of undisturbed time. **One class period will be devoted to exam time, meaning that one class period per exam will be used for the testing period. You will not need to come to class for that time period. If you chose you may use that period to complete your exam, but you can take the test at any time in multiday window.**

**4. Homework:** There will be at least 4 homework assignments made throughout the semester. These will be assigned in class as well as turn-in times. Each homework is worth 5% of your final grade.

**5. Reading Quizzes:** There will be eight reading quizzes throughout the semester over the reading assignment for class according to the syllabus. The three lowest quizzes will be dropped from the final grade. Each quiz is worth 4% of your final grade.

**6. Grading:** Your course grade will be an average of the grades on the four examinations, attendance, four homework assignments, class participation, and pop quizzes. Each exam will consist of 15% of your final grade. Each homework assignments will consist of 5% of your final grade. Reading quizzes will consist of 2% of your final grade.

4 Exams = 60% of final grade

4 Homework Assignments = 20% of final grade

5 Reading Quizzes = 20% final grade.

Letter grades will be assigned as follows:

100% - 93% = A, 92.9%-90% = A-; 89.9%-87% = B+, 86.9%-83%= B, 82.9%-80%=B-; 79.9%-77% = C+, 76.9%-72% = C, 71.9% -70% = C-; 69% - 60% = D; below 60% = F

**Check your Grades:** Your test grades will be posted on the class Webcampus/Canvas site after each exam. If you have a question about your exam, or if the grade is entered incorrectly in Webcampus/Canvas, you must contact me within 72 hours after the posting of the grade to rectify the issue. You must check your grades at the very least once a week. For the final exam, this time period is 48 hours. After these 48 hours, your final grade as shown in Webcampus/Canvas will be submitted formally to the university's grading system. Final grades will not be curved. I will post your letter grade on CCanvas after the final is completed. You have till the following Monday to alert me if there is an error with the grade. An error, not just because you don't like the grade. If you want to be happy with your final grade I suggest you work hard and pay attention throughout the semester.

**Final Grade:** Your final letter grade will be posted in Webcampus/Canvas from the 13 December (End of Finals) till the 15 December (Sunday). It is your responsibility to review it. If there is any problem let me know and I can rectify it before posting it to MYCSN. After the grade is posted to MYCSN on Monday it is very hard to change it. I am more likely to make changes over the weekend than after Monday. Problems with the grade are things like "Dr. Bradley you didn't do the math right," or "Dr. Bradley I think you missed an assignment." You simply not liking your grade is not my problem. Your grade is entirely on you. If you want a good grade decide to work for one at the start of the semester as opposed to whining about one at the end of the semester.

**Extra-Credit:** I will allow for extra-credit throughout the semester. These will be random and unique. There will be no end-of-semester extra credit opportunities. I have no sympathy what-so-ever for students who show up at the end of the semester begging for better grades. You are in complete control of your grade. If you want a good grade then work for it. If you approach me at the end of the semester asking if there is anything you can do to improve your grade I will tell you that the "anything" you need to do is invent a time machine, go back in time to the start of the class, and tell yourself to actually pay attention in class and do well on the test. If you want extra credit avail yourself of the opportunities provided throughout the semester.

**Your First Extra-Credit:** Sign up for my student Twitter account: "Jonathan Doc Bradley @DocsPSCBasics." Once you do send me a message on twitter with your real name and your twitter handle so I can mark your extra credit. If you don't receive a reply from me then I have not gotten your message.

**Classroom Behavior:** Every student is entitled to a distraction-free classroom. Students may not behave in any manner that interferes with the learning of another student or my teaching. This includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1) You must arrive and be prepared to begin class on time. I loathe tardiness. If late arrivals become a problem I will lock the doors once class has started. If you have a valid reason to be tardy please inform me at the beginning of the semester. Don't be continually tardy and then try to explain to me at the end of the semester about the reasons. I am willing to be lenient on limited tardiness if there are extenuating circumstances and I am made aware of them before they happen.

- 2) Cell phones must be turned off and stored out of sight. Texting, accessing the internet, or reading email during class is absolutely prohibited and will result in your being asked to leave. Continual cell phone use during the class will result in a lowering of your class participation grade. I have no tolerance for cell phones in class. We have survived in various forms of society for 8,000 years without cell phones. You can survive for a few hours without yours. I don't even want to see them out. If they are out I will assume you are using it and I will ask you to put it away. Unless you are a brain surgeon on call or in possession of the nuclear launch codes there is absolutely no reason you need to be talking or texting on your cell phone in our class.
- 3) Laptops and tablets are allowed in class **ONLY** to take notes. You are not to access the internet (unless I request you to do so), check email or perform any other function on your computer that is not class related. I reserve the right to discontinue the use of all or individual electronic devices in class if they disrupt the learning environment.
- 4) No "side-bar" conversations or passing notes. Ignoring this rule will result in your being asked to leave. I do not tolerate students who are disruptive or inconsiderate of other students.
- 5) Do not do another class' homework in this class.
- 6) Recording devices are permitted with permission. Any recording made of the class needs to be converted to an mp3 format or some other easily playable format and emailed to the instructor before the next class.
- 7) No food or beverages (except water in a sealable container) are allowed in the classroom.
- 8) Classroom behavior should always be courteous, respectful of others, and consistent with the expectations set forth by the university.

**Schedule and Readings:** You are responsible for reading all the assigned material for each lecture. You will not pass this class without reading the assigned material. You will not graduate from college without reading copious amounts of boring stuff so you might as well start now.

**Aug 28:** Introduction, Syllabus, and lecture: The Citizens and the Government

Read: **We the People (WTP)** Ch.1; **Sagebrush State (SS)** Ch.1.

*Aug 30: Last day to drop w/ a full refund. Figure it out because there are people in line behind you.*

**Sep 4:** The operator's manual of the United States of America.

Read: **WTP** Ch.2; **WTP** US Constitution; **SS** Ch.2. **SS** Preamble and Articles 1-2 Nevada State Constitution

**Sep 11:** The way it works: Federalism

Read: **WTP** Ch.3.

**Sep 11—15th EXAM 1:** This exam will be conducted on **Webcampus/Canvas**. It will begin as soon as you leave class on the 11th. Class on the 11th will be let out early to allow students to use on campus computers if needed. You will need to use a computer with a working internet connection. The exam will become available from the **end of class on the 11th till 11:59pm the following Sunday night the 15th of September**. The exam will be **90 minutes** long, no exceptions. Make sure you will not be disturbed for the 90 minutes it takes to complete the test. If you have problems taking the exam contact me as soon as possible. **DO NOT PUT THE EXAM OFF TILL THE LAST MINUTE.**

**Sep 18:** The Congress: That would be the House and Senate (Maybe some Executive Branch).

Read: **WTP** Ch.9; Art I, U.S. Constitution; **SS** Ch.6; Articles 3-4, Nevada State Constitution

**Sep 25:** The Executive and the Bureaucracy: The big cheese and his (maybe shortly, her) minions.  
Read: **WTP** Ch.10-11; Article II, U.S. Constitution. **SS** Ch 7 and **SS** Ch.9; Articles 5, Nevada Constitution

**Oct 2:** The men (and women!) in black: The Supremes and the Federal Courts.  
Read: **WTP** Ch.12. **SS** Ch.8, Article 6 NV Constitution.

**Oct 9:** The Fourth Estate: The Media  
Read: **WTP** Ch. 6

**Oct 9—Oct 13: EXAM 2:** This exam will be conducted on **Webcampus/Canvas**. You will need to use a computer with a working internet connection. The exam will become available at the **end of the class period on the 9th and will be open till 11:59pm the following Sunday (13th) night**. The exam will be **90 minutes long**, no exceptions. Make sure you will not be disturbed for the 90 minutes it takes to complete the test. If you have problems taking the exam contact me as soon as possible.

**Oct 16:** Civil Liberties and Civil Rights. Our rights and freedoms.  
Read: **WTP** Ch. 4; Amendments 1-10 (Bill of Rights) and Amendments 13, 14, 15, 19, 24, 26 of the U.S. Constitution; **SS** Ch. 3, NV Constitution, Article 1-2.

**Oct 23:** Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Continued.  
Read: See Oct 16.

*October 25: Nevada Day. Enjoy the day celebrating the sweetest smelling state in the universe.*

**Oct 30:** Public Opinion, Political Participation, Political Parties and elections: Voting does matter, but do parties?  
Read: **WTP** Ch.5 & 7

*November 1: Last day to withdraw or drop classes.*

**Nov 6:** The Current State of American Political Discourse  
Read: Readings will be assigned via email leading up to class date.

**\*\*\* There is no lecture on Chapter 8 “Interest Groups” but you are responsible for the information in the chapter. Questions from the chapter will be included on the test.\*\*\***

**Nov 6—Nov 10: EXAM 3:** This exam will be conducted on **Webcampus/Canvas**. You will need to use a computer with a working internet connection. The exam will become available from the end of class in the **6th till 11:59pm the following Sunday (10th) night**. The exam will be **90 minutes long**, no exceptions. Make sure you will not be disturbed for the 90 minutes it takes to complete the test. If you have problems taking the exam contact me as soon as possible.

*November 11: Veterans Day. I am a veteran and everyday is my day.*

**Nov 13:** Domestic Policy: The Economics of the US.  
Read: **WTP** Ch.13. **SS** Ch.10

**Nov 20:** Domestic Policy: Social Policy in the US.

Read: See Nov 13

**Nov 27: Homework Day/Library Day. DO NOT COME TO CLASS!!!**

You will be given a library/homework assignment to complete during this class period. [I'm not going to make you come to class the night before Thanksgiving. I'm not a monster.]

*November 27: Thanksgiving. Celebrate the Union's victory over the Confederacy, and root for the greatest NFL football team in the entire history of history, The Dallas Cowboys!*

**Nov 4:** Foreign Policy: It matters more as much as it doesn't matter.

Read: **WTP** Ch.14.

**Final Exam Week: Dec 8—12**

The Final Exam is not comprehensive. It will only cover the last section of the class from the 3rd test. The test will be conducted on Webcampus/Canvas from Midnight Sunday (8 Dec) morning till 11:59PM Thursday (12 Dec) night. There is no make up for the final. **Remember to review your final letter grade in Webcampus after the final test. You have till Sunday (15 Dec) to contest your final letter grade.**

## **The Minutia**

**Academic Misconduct**—Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility, and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Student Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling at UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution. An example of academic misconduct is plagiarism. Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of another, from the Internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources. See the *Student Academic Misconduct Policy* (approved December 9, 2005) located at: <https://www.unlv.edu/studentconduct/student-conduct>.

**Classroom Conduct**—Students have a responsibility to conduct themselves in class and in the libraries in ways that do not interfere with the rights of other students to learn or of instructors to teach. Use of electronic devices such as pagers, cellular phones, or recording devices, or potentially disruptive devices or activities, are permitted only with the prior explicit consent of the instructor. The instructor may rescind permission at any time during the class. If a student does not comply with established requirements or obstructs the functioning of the class, the instructor may initiate an administrative drop.

**Classroom Surveillance**—Nevada Revised Statutes (State Law) 396.970 Surreptitious electronic surveillance on campus; exceptions. [Effective January 1, 2017.]

1. Except as otherwise provided in subsection 2, it is unlawful for a person to engage in any kind of surreptitious electronic surveillance on a campus of the System without the knowledge of the person being observed.

2. Subsection 1 does not apply to any electronic surveillance:

- (a) Authorized by a court order issued to a public officer, based upon a showing of probable cause to believe that criminal activity is occurring on the property under surveillance;
- (b) By a law enforcement agency pursuant to a criminal investigation;
- (c) By a peace officer pursuant to NRS 289.830;

- (d) By a uniformed peace officer of the Nevada Highway Patrol Division of the Department of Public Safety pursuant to NRS 480.365;
  - (e) Which is necessary as part of a system of security used to protect and ensure the safety of persons on the campus; or
  - (f) Of a class or laboratory when authorized by the teacher of the class or laboratory.
- (Added to NRS by 1993, 2138; A 2015, 575, 3668, effective January 1, 2017)

**Copyright**—The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. You are individually and solely responsible for violations of copyright and fair use laws. The university will neither protect nor defend you, nor assume any responsibility for employee or student violations of fair use laws. Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability, as well as disciplinary action under University policies. Additional information can be found at: <http://www.unlv.edu/provost/copyright>.

**Disability Resource Center (DRC)**—The UNLV Disability Resource Center (SSC-A 143, <http://drc.unlv.edu/>, 702-895-0866) provides resources for students with disabilities. If you feel that you have a disability, please make an appointment with a Disabilities Specialist at the DRC to discuss what options may be available to you. If you are registered with the UNLV Disability Resource Center, bring your Academic Accommodation Plan from the DRC to the instructor during office hours so that you may work together to develop strategies for implementing the accommodations to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. Any information you provide is private and will be treated as such. To maintain the confidentiality of your request, please do not approach the instructor in front of others to discuss your accommodation needs.

**Final Examinations**—The University requires that final exams given at the end of a course occur at the time and on the day specified in the final exam schedule. See the schedule at: <http://www.unlv.edu/registrar/calendars>.

**Incomplete Grades**—The grade of I—Incomplete—can be granted when a student has satisfactorily completed three-fourths of course work for that semester/session but for reason(s) beyond the student's control, and acceptable to the instructor, cannot complete the last part of the course, and the instructor believes that the student can finish the course without repeating it. The incomplete work must be made up before the end of the following regular semester for undergraduate courses. Graduate students receiving "I" grades in 500-, 600-, or 700-level courses have up to one calendar year to complete the work, at the discretion of the instructor. If course requirements are not completed within the time indicated, a grade of F will be recorded and the GPA will be adjusted accordingly. Students who are fulfilling an Incomplete do not register for the course but make individual arrangements with the instructor who assigned the I grade.

**Library Resources**—Students may consult with a librarian on research needs. Subject librarians for various classes can be found here: [https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians\\_by\\_subject](https://www.library.unlv.edu/contact/librarians_by_subject). UNLV Libraries provides resources to support students' access to information. Discovery, access, and use of information are vital skills for academic work and for successful post-college life. Access library resources and ask questions at <https://www.library.unlv.edu/>.

**Rebelmail**—By policy, faculty and staff should e-mail students' Rebelmail accounts only. Rebelmail is UNLV's official e-mail system for students. It is one of the primary ways students receive official university communication such as information about deadlines, major campus events, and announcements. All UNLV students receive a Rebelmail account after they have been admitted to the university. Students' e-mail

prefixes are listed on class rosters. The suffix is always [@unlv.nevada.edu](mailto:@unlv.nevada.edu). **Emailing within WebCampus is acceptable.**

**Religious Holidays Policy**—Any student missing class quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holidays shall be given an opportunity during that semester to make up missed work. The make-up will apply to the religious holiday absence only. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor within the first 14 calendar days of the course for fall and spring courses (excepting modular courses), or within the first 7 calendar days of the course for summer and modular courses, of his or her intention to participate in religious holidays which do not fall on state holidays or periods of class recess. For additional information, please visit: <http://catalog.unlv.edu/content.php?catoid=6&navoid=531>.

**Transparency in Learning and Teaching**—The University encourages students to use a transparency template to discuss with their instructors how assignments and course activities benefit student success: [https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page\\_files/27/TILT-Framework-Students.pdf](https://www.unlv.edu/sites/default/files/page_files/27/TILT-Framework-Students.pdf).

**Tutoring and Coaching**—The Academic Success Center (ASC) provides tutoring, academic success coaching and other academic assistance for all UNLV undergraduate students. For information regarding tutoring subjects, tutoring times, and other ASC programs and services, visit <http://www.unlv.edu/asc> or call [702-895-3177](tel:702-895-3177). The ASC building is located across from the Student Services Complex (SSC). Academic success coaching is located on the second floor of SSC A (ASC Coaching Spot). Drop-in tutoring is located on the second floor of the Lied Library and College of Engineering TBE second floor.

**UNLV Writing Center**—One-on-one or small group assistance with writing is available free of charge to UNLV students at the Writing Center, located in CDC-3-301. Although walk-in consultations are sometimes available, students with appointments will receive priority assistance. Appointments may be made in person or by calling 702-895-3908. The student's Rebel ID Card, a copy of the assignment (if possible), and two copies of any writing to be reviewed are requested for the consultation. More information can be found at: <http://writingcenter.unlv.edu/>.