

POLS 115 American Government 1

Self-Paced Enroll Anytime Online Course

Instructor & Course Information

Credits 3 undergraduate credits

Prerequisites None

Instructor Mark S. Jendrysik, Ph.D.

Email & Phone Visit the Blackboard course for contact information.

*If you have any course questions prior to enrollment, please email und.online@und.edu

About the Professor

Mark Stephen Jendrysik is a Professor in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration. He has been a faculty member at the University of North Dakota since 1999. He received his M.A. and Ph.D. from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. His B.A. is from Providence College.

For more information about Dr. Jendrysik please go to the “Faculty” tab on Blackboard.

Course Description and Objectives

This course has no pre-requisites and is a self-paced course designed to provide a basic introduction to the theory and practice of modern American national government. We will examine the role of the Congress, the Courts, and the Presidency in making policy, both domestic and foreign. We will consider the role citizens play in the national political system. To do this we will study elections and public opinion, as well as other forms of political activity. Finally, we will address the role of elites such as business and the media in influencing policy outcomes. Overall, we will examine some of the problems facing the American political system in an era of new challenges and opportunities. Students should be prepared to question their basic assumptions about American government. Americans seem to alternate between overly positive self-congratulation and apocalyptic negativism about their political system. One of the goals of this course is to provide students with the necessary tools and information to make informed judgments about political events, policies and institutions. A citizen should be an informed consumer and user of political information.

In this course you will read the textbook, watch recorded lectures, take quizzes on the course material (from both the textbook and lecture) and write two short papers on current political events. After completing this course you will be better equipped to understand the mechanisms by which public policy is crafted, the reasons why public policies exist in their current form and the ongoing debates about public policy. You will be better equipped to analyzing and interpret political information and evaluate the sources of that information. Faintly, you will gain knowledge that should allow you to be a more effective citizen, not a mere passive spectator to political life.

Political Science 115, American Government, is included among the approved Social Sciences Essential Studies courses. This course provides a useful introduction to the ideological, theoretical and practical basis of American politics. Students taking this course develop a more complete understanding of the American political

system and American political culture. They are also given a greater historical understanding of the changes that have occurred in the United States and its politics, especially as regards questions of race, gender and political practice over the last 250 years.

- **Critical Inquiry & Analysis** -- This course addresses the Essential Studies learning goal of Critical Inquiry & Analysis. This means it will focus on collecting and analyzing information to reach conclusions based on the evidence. More specifically, inquiry should be thought of as a systematic process of exploring issues, objects, or works through the collection and analysis of evidence that results in informed conclusions or judgments. Analysis is the process of breaking complex topics or issues into parts to gain a better understanding. You should expect to focus on these intellectual skills as part of this course. Students are encouraged to take a critical position toward the material. They are also equipped to examine political events and actions in a critical and informed manner.
- **Informed Choices** -- Students are assisted in making informed choices, in this case, about political issues, by examining key questions, both historical and contemporary, in American government. They are given historical information that serves to educate them about contemporary problems. The goal is to further their growth as informed citizens.
- **Methods in social science** -- Students are made aware of methods employed by political scientists to analyze political events.
- **Breadth of knowledge** -- Political science deals with all the key issues of society. Therefore, this course deals with history, culture, religion, and questions of race, gender and ethnicity.
- **Diversity/Multiculturalism** -- Questions of race, gender and ethnicity are dealt with on many levels. They include law, political participation, public opinion and access to the political system. The history and practice of American government revolves, to a great extent, around the demands of excluded or marginalized groups for recognition of their rights as citizens. Students are made aware of these issues.

Textbook and Course Materials

Losco and Baker: AmGov 7e McGraw Hill
978-1-260-24293-5

Dr. Jendrysik recommends the e-book or loose-leaf edition. Do NOT purchase anything besides the book.

Technical Requirements

The [UND Technical Support webpage](#) contains information on your UND email and how to download a free version of Microsoft Office.

- Students are expected to use their official UND email in the course.
- You will use Microsoft Word to complete assignments.
- [View the basic technical requirements](#) for every online course.

Course Overview and Organization

This course contains 20 lessons designed to focus your study of modern American national government and to assist you in achieving the course learning objectives/outcomes. You will work through a combination of required readings, quizzes and comments on the readings/other course materials.

Lesson 1	Citizenship in our Changing Democracy
Lesson 2	The Foundations of American Democracy
Lesson 3	The Constitution: Ratification and Change
Lesson 4	Federalism: Theory and History

- Lesson 5 Federalism: Contemporary Trends
- Lesson 6 Political Socialization and Public Opinion
- Lesson 7 The Role of the Media in American Politics
- Lesson 8 Political Participation: Why it is more than just voting
- Lesson 9 Political Parties and Elections: Why Two Parties?
- Lesson 10 Political Parties and Elections: Running for Office and Winning Elections

First paper is due before completion of Lesson 11

- Lesson 11 Congress: How it Works, and Doesn't Work
- Lesson 12 The Presidency: Too Powerful or not Powerful Enough?
- Lesson 13 The Federal Courts: Lawmaking in Judicial Robes?
- Lesson 14 The Federal Bureaucracy: Lawmaking by Other Means?
- Lesson 15 Interest Groups in America: Organizing to Make Public Policy
- Lesson 16 Public Policy: Government Action in the Domestic Sphere
- Lesson 17 Public Policy: Government Action in Foreign and Defense Spheres
- Lesson 18 Civil Liberties: The Bill of Rights in Action
- Lesson 19 Civil Rights: What Does Equality Mean?

Second paper is due before completion of Lesson 20

- Lesson 20 A review of the 2022 Election

Assessment and Grading

Throughout the course you will complete a combination of quizzes, reflections, student engagement activities, and two papers. There is a total of 600 possible points.

- **Quizzes:** There are 20 quizzes worth 10 points each, for 200 total points. All quizzes are required.
- **Reflections on the readings:** Each lesson has an option for submitting a *Reflection on the readings*. These comments should be thought of as a discussion between you and the instructor. You only need to complete 5 of them. Each one is worth 20 points each, for a total of 100 points.
- **Student Engagement Activities:** All but the last lesson has an option for submitting a *Student Engagement Activity*. They are designed to get you to think more deeply about questions raised by the readings, to examine the political life of your community, to be a more engaged citizen. You only need to complete 5 of them. Each one is worth 20 points, for a total of 100 points.
- **Papers (2):** Two, two-page papers on current issues in American politics. The topic list and full assignment details are found in Blackboard. Each paper is worth 100 points, for a total of 200 points.

There is a total of 600 possible points. The following grading scale is used:

- A 600 to 540 points
- B 539 to 480 points
- C 479 to 420 points
- D 419 to 360 points
- F under 360 points

Course Evaluation

Once you complete your course, you will be asked to complete an online course evaluation. Your feedback on the course is very important to me. I read all comments carefully and use them to improve my course.

Netiquette

Netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online. Here are a few basic points to remember when communicating in this course:

- **Be scholarly.** Use proper language, grammar, and spelling. Explain your thoughts, justify opinions, and credit the ideas of others by citing or linking to scholarly resources. Avoid misinforming others when you are unsure of the answer. When discussing something and supplying a guess, clearly state that.
- **Be respectful.** Respect the privacy of others. Do not share personal or professional information about others unless permission has been granted. Respect diversity and opinions that differ from their own. Be tactful when you communicate.
- **Be professional.** Everyone should strive to give their best impression online. Truthfulness, accuracy, and running a final spell check are appropriate expectations for university students. Writing in a legible font and limiting the use of emoticons is considered professional behavior. Profanity and participation in hostile interactions, known as flaming, is unprofessional as well as disruptive.
- **Be polite.** Students should be addressing professors and instructors by the appropriate title or requested name. Students should interact online politely, just as they would be expected to do in a physical environment. Sarcasm rudeness, and writing in all capital letters (shouting) should be avoided.

For more information, read the [Top 12 Be-Attitudes of Netiquette for Academicians](#).

About UND Self-Paced Enroll Anytime Courses

You have 3 to 9 months to complete this course from the time of your enrollment. You may work at your own pace and complete lessons/exams on your own schedule, submitting up to 3 per week for grading.

After you finish your course, your final grade will be posted in Blackboard. Please **allow 3-5 business days for your final grade to appear** on your transcript in Campus Connection. You will receive a confirmation email from the Enroll Anytime staff once the final grade is officially posted on your transcript. You may then order an official transcript, if desired.

If you have an **administrative** question regarding course enrollment dates, extensions, withdrawals, questions regarding your transcript, or need exam assistance, please contact the **Office of Extended Learning** at und.courses@UND.edu or 701-777-0488.

Questions regarding **coursework** should be directed to the **instructor**.

For **technical support** including username and password help, assignment submission, or other technical assistance in the course, contact [University Information Technology](#).

Student Resources

Many services are available to online students such as writing assistance from the UND Writing Center, free online tutoring, and more. Visit the [Student Resources page](#) for more information. You can also access the resources webpage from the *Student Resources* link in your Blackboard course menu.

University of North Dakota Policies & Resources

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is a serious matter, and any deviations from appropriate behavior will be dealt with strongly. At the discretion of the professor, situations of concern may be dealt with as a scholastic matter or a disciplinary matter.

As a scholastic matter, the professor has the discretion to determine appropriate penalties to the student's workload or grade, but the situation may be resolved without involving many individuals. An alternative is to treat the situation as a disciplinary matter, which can result in suspension from the University, or have lesser penalties. Be aware that I view this as a very serious matter, and will have little tolerance of or sympathy for questionable practices. A student who attempts to obtain credit for work that is not their own (whether that be on a paper, quiz, homework assignment, exam, etc.) will likely receive a failing grade for that item of work, and at the professor's discretion, may also receive a failing grade in the course. Read more in the [Code of Student Life](#).

Accessibility for Students

The University of North Dakota is committed to providing equal access to students with documented disabilities. To ensure access to your classes and program, please contact Community Standards & Accessibility for Students (formerly known as Disability Services for Students) to engage in a confidential discussion about accommodations for the classroom, clinical and/or online course settings. Accommodations are not provided retroactively. Students are encouraged to register with the Community Standards & Accessibility for Students office at the start of their class/program. More information can be obtained by email UND.accessibilityforstudents@UND.edu or by phone at 701.777.2664.

If you receive an exam accommodation from Community Standards & Accessibility for Students, share the letter with the Office of Extended Learning at UND.courses@UND.edu.

Religious Accommodations

UND offers religious accommodations, which are reasonable changes in the academic environment that enable a student to practice or observe a sincerely held religious belief without undue hardship on the University. Examples include time for prayer or the ability to attend religious events or observe a religious holiday. To request an accommodation, complete [student religious accommodation request form](#). If you have any questions, you may contact the [Equal Opportunity & Title IX Office](#).

Pregnancy Accommodations

Students who need assistance with academic adjustments related to pregnancy or childbirth may contact the Equal Opportunity & Title IX Office to learn about your options. Additional information and services may be found at [Pregnancy Resources](#).

Resolution of Problems

Should a problem occur, you should speak to your instructor first. If the problem continues to be unresolved, go to the department chair, and next to the college Dean. Should the problem persist, you have the right to go to the Provost next, and then to the President.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

It is the policy of the University of North Dakota that no person shall be discriminated against because of race, religion, age, color, gender, disability, national origin, creed, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, marital status, veteran's status, or political belief or affiliation and the equal opportunity and access to facilities shall be available to all. Concerns regarding Title IX, Title VI, Title VII, ADA, and Section 504 may be addressed to Donna Smith, Assistant Vice President for Equal Opportunity & Title IX and Title IX/ADA Coordinator, by calling 701.777.4171 or emailing UND.EO.TitleIX@UND.edu. Concerns can also be directed to the Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 230 S. Dearborn St., 37th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604, or any other federal agency.

Reporting Discrimination, Harassment, or Sexual Misconduct

If you or a friend has experienced sexual misconduct, such as sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking, please contact the [Equal Opportunity & Title IX Office](#) or UND's Title IX Coordinator, Donna Smith, for assistance: 701.777.4171; donna.smith@UND.edu. You may also contact the Equal Opportunity & Title IX office if you or a friend has experienced discrimination or harassment based on a protected class, such as race, color, national origin, religion, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, genetic information, pregnancy, marital or parental status, veteran's status, or political belief or affiliation.

Faculty Reporting Obligations Regarding Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct

It is important for students to understand that faculty are required to share with UND's Title IX Coordinator any incidents of sexual misconduct or of discrimination or harassment based on a protected class they become aware of, even if those incidents occurred in the past or are disclosed as part of a class assignment. This does not mean an investigation will occur if the student does not want that, but it does allow UND to provide resources to help the student continue to be successful at UND. If you have been impacted by discrimination, harassment, or sexual misconduct, you can find information about confidential support services at the [Equal Opportunity & Title IX Office](#).

How to Seek Help When in Distress

We know that while college is a wonderful time for most students, some students may struggle. You may experience students in distress on campus, in your classroom, in your home, and within residence halls. Distressed students may initially seek assistance from faculty, staff members, their parents, and other students. In addition to the support we can provide to each other, there are also professional support services available to students on campus through the [Community Standards & Accessibility for Students](#) office and the [University Counseling Center](#). Both staffs are available to consult with you about getting help or providing a friend with the help that he or she may need. Visit the [Office of Community Standards](#) webpage for more additional information.

How to Recognize When a Student is in Distress

The term "distressed" can mean any of the following:

- Student has significant changes in eating, sleeping, grooming, spending, or other daily activities.
- Student has cut off or minimized contact with family or friends.
- Student has significant changes in performance or involvement in academics, sports, extracurricular, or social activities.
- Student describes problems (missing class, not remembering, destructive behavior) that result from experiences with drinking or drugs.
- Student is acting withdrawn, volatile, tearful, etc.
- Student is acting out of character or differently than usual.
- Student is talking explicitly about hopelessness or suicide.
- Student has difficulty concentrating or difficulty carrying on normal conversation.
- Student has excessive dependence on others for company or support.
- Student reports feeling out of control of one's emotions, thoughts, or behaviors.

Land Acknowledgement Statement

Today, the University of North Dakota rests on the ancestral lands of the Pembina and Red Lake Bands of Ojibwe and the Dakota Oyate - presently existing as composite parts of the Red Lake, Turtle Mountain, White Earth Bands, and the Dakota Tribes of Minnesota and North Dakota.

We acknowledge the people who resided here for generations and recognize that the spirit of the Ojibwe and Oyate people permeates this land. As a university community, we will continue to build upon our relations with the First Nations of the State of North Dakota - the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara Nation, Sisseton-Wahpeton Oyate Nation, Spirit Lake Nation, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and Turtle Mountain Band of Chippewa Indians.