

# What to Expect

## POLS 201 American Government

*This is a general course preview. The actual course syllabus may change each term.*

### Course Details

#### Format

- 15-week course
- Not self-paced: Assignments have specific weekly deadlines
- Students login when convenient

#### Orientation

*Before Class Begins*

- New students must complete an online student orientation in Blackboard BEFORE the class begins.
- Students will be emailed a login link.
- Allow 2 hours to complete.

#### Email

- New students must set-up a Concordia email account
- During a term, all communication is through Concordia email

#### Attendance

- Attendance is recorded when a discussion or assignment is posted.
- Login at least 5 times per week.

#### Payment

- Students are emailed an invoice
- Pay online, by mail, or by phone
- Concordia processes invoices for state funded students.

**Course Overview:** This course studies the basic foundations and underlying principles of American national, state and local government. 3 credits.

#### Course Evaluation and Grading

Journals/Discussion	20%
Quizzes	20%
Written response papers	30%
Four exams	30%

This course will challenge students to analyze both historic and contemporary issues with these two main goals:

1. to help you grow in your understanding of the structure and function of the system of Government in the United States.
2. to give you the opportunity to explore the function of government from a Christian worldview perspective.

This class will require 5-8 hours of study time per week, approximately half for reading and half for written work.

- **Journals and Discussions:** Students will make a weekly journal entry or post and reply to a discussion board topic.
- **Quizzes:** Weekly multiple-choice quizzes are used to check understanding of the weekly reading assignments.
- **Written response papers (2-3 pages double-spaced):** Each week, students will submit a written response and analysis to specific questions posted about the topics of the week.
- **Exams (3-5 pages of double-spaced writing):** Four essay exams will ask students to demonstrate understanding of concepts and to apply learning to a given situation.

**Textbook** Links to the free online textbook are included in the class.

**Counts as...** POLS 201 counts in the SOCIETY AND CULTURE portion of Concordia's Liberal Arts Core curriculum.

### Technology Requirements

#### Hardware

- Students need a laptop or desktop with reliable broadband internet access.
- The Blackboard App should be used on tablets and mobile devices.
- (Some courses) Camera & microphone may be needed for video conferencing.
- Speakers or headphones.

#### Browser

- Concordia uses **Blackboard Learn** which runs best in **Firefox** or **Chrome**.
- Disable pop-up blockers and ENABLE cookies.
- Check your browser compliance at: [bit.ly/cuwaachek](http://bit.ly/cuwaachek)



Errors are OK if they are for compliance of Java, Shockwave, and Flash.

#### Software

- A word processor is required. Office, Pages, Google docs will work.
- Some courses will require presentation or video software (PowerPoint or equivalent).
- Students have FREE access to Microsoft Office 365 ([download](#) / [instructions](#))



### Drop Policy

- After a course begins, the student will pay for a course, even if dropped.
  - The student pays based on the number of weeks completed.
    - Week 1-5 : A percent refund
    - Week 6-10 0% and 'W' grade
    - Week 11-16 0% and 'F' grade
- "W" Withdraw does not count in GPA  
"F" Counts as a 0.0 in GPA

## **POLS 201 Course Schedule**

### **Unit 1 Students and the System**

Wk 1: American Government and Christian Civic Engagement

Quiz on Reading, Journal assignment, Written Assignment: Church and State

Wk 2: The Constitution and its Origin

Quiz on Reading, Discussion assignment, Written Assignment: E Pluribus Unum

Wk 3: Federalism and American Exceptionalism

Quiz on Reading, Journal assignment, Written Assignment: Who Should Decide?

### **Unit 2 Individual and Agency Action**

Wk 4: Civil Liberties & the First Amendment

Quiz on Reading, **Unit 1 Essay Exam**

Wk 5: Civil Rights - Creating and Equal Playing Field

Quiz on Reading, Discussion assignment, Written Assignment: Documenting Hate

Wk 6: Public Opinion

Quiz on Reading, Journal assignment, Written Assignment: Ideology

Wk 7: Voting & Elections in 2020 Context

Quiz on Reading, Discussion assignment, Written Assignment: Campaign Ads

### **Unit 3 Toward Collective Action: Mediating Institutions**

Wk 8: The Media & Truth

Quiz on Reading, **Unit 2 Essay Exam**

Wk 9: Political Parties in an Age of Divide

Quiz on Reading, Journal assignment, Written Assignment: Major Political Parties

Wk 10: Interest Groups and Advocacy Unit 3 Exam

Quiz on Reading, Journal assignment, Written Assignment: De Tocqueville

### **Unit 4 Delivering Collection Action: Formal Institutions and the Outputs of Government**

Wk 11: Congress & Government Inertia

Quiz on Reading, **Unit 3 Essay Exam**

Wk 12: The Presidency in a New Age

Quiz on Reading, Journal assignment, Written Assignment: Executive Orders

Wk 13: Courts in a Partisan Era

Quiz on Reading, Written Assignment: Supreme Court Cases

Wk 14: State and Local Government, Foreign Policy

2 Quizzes on Readings, Journal assignment

Wk 15: **Unit 4 Exam**