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2020

### POL 103 POLITICS & GOVERNMENT IN UNITED STATES

David O. Monda  
*CUNY York College*

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## **SYLLABUS: York College Spring 2020**

### **POLITICS & GOVERNMENT IN UNITED STATES POL 103**

Professor: David O. Monda

Email: [dmonda1@york.cuny.edu](mailto:dmonda1@york.cuny.edu)

Class Hours: 6-8:50pm

Class location: Academic Core 4D02 (Class available on Blackboard at: [https://bbhosted.cuny.edu/webapps/blackboard/execute/modulepage/view?course\\_id=1842960\\_1&cmp\\_tab\\_id=2220010\\_1&editMode=true&mode=cpview](https://bbhosted.cuny.edu/webapps/blackboard/execute/modulepage/view?course_id=1842960_1&cmp_tab_id=2220010_1&editMode=true&mode=cpview))

Office Hours: Tuesday 5-6 pm (Adjunct faculty room)

**#Open Stack's OER American Government material available at <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-2e>** (*Links for material for each week provided under the "Course Schedule and Reading Assignments section"*)

Prerequisites and/or Co-requisites: None

#### **\*DESCRIPTION American Government**

This course will examine the fundamental institutions, players and processes of American government. The class will study the relationship between the executive, judiciary and legislature and the constitutional process around which American government operates. The class will also analyze the governmental policy process, public opinion, political socialization, interest groups, media and the role of elections in the political process.

\*In this class, students will also engage in active learning. This is a process of learning via engaging with the content. It means students are interacting with the material in any way that can promote active thought, via learning activities. In addition to this, the class will also promote open pedagogy.

*Students will also actively engage in creating knowledge through the CUNY Commons. This is a set of teaching and learning practices only possible in the context of the free access and 4R (reuse, revise, remix, redistribute) permissions characteristic of open educational resources. This will involve their Group Class Project and their Group Reflection Assignment. Both the Group Class Project and Group Reflection Assignment will contribute towards collaborative learning. In the Group Class Project, students will share their knowledge on the US Constitution by proposing a 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution. In their Group Reflection Assignment, students will suggest new ways in which they can combat Climate Change in*

*their communities. Their work on both assignments will be publicly accessible to the York College Community as learning material with each Group member's consent.*

**COURSE NARRATIVE:** This course is an undergraduate level introduction to American Government. It can also serve as a survey or review for advanced students. Because the key concepts and theories are also key political science concepts and theories, it is not exclusively intended for those majoring in Political Science; all are welcome. The focus of the class will be on the broad history of American Government with an emphasis on key conceptual and theoretical frameworks that influence the application of American Government.

**REQUIRED LEARNING MATERIALS:**

Open Education Resources (OER) will be provided for the class

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:** Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Understand American democratic ideals.
2. Analyze the major documents, institutions, actors, policies and issues in American politics at the federal, state and local levels.
3. Examine the public policy making process in the US.
4. Develop the skills and knowledge necessary for analyzing American politics according to the ideals of American democracy.
5. Critique the theory and practice of the politics and government of the United States

**Major topics:**

- Political Socialization and Public Opinion
- The Executive, Judiciary and Legislature
- Bureaucracy
- Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
- New York State Politics
- Elections and Political Parties

**ANCILLARY LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

- Students will use technology to develop a group webpage for class group assignments on the Constitution and Climate Change
- Students will work collaboratively in groups
- Students will illustrate their work in brief class presentations

**SAMPLE COURSE PROJECT:**

Students will work collaboratively in groups to develop a sample course project using the CUNY commons website at:

<https://commons.gc.cuny.edu/register/>. Groups will suggest a 28<sup>th</sup> Amendment they would add to the American Constitution and highlight an argument for the amendment. Their argument will be posted on the CUNY Commons group page.

**SAMPLE GROUP REFLECTION:**

Students will work collaboratively in groups to develop a sample group reflection on a major issue in climate change using the CUNY commons website at: <https://commons.gc.cuny.edu/register/>. Groups will develop a group journal of suggested local solutions to problems of climate change in

their communities. In developing this project, students will be expected to conduct primary research on climate change literature and use these materials in developing local solutions to problems of climate change in their communities.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

### **Readings**

Students are strongly encouraged to complete weekly reading assignments. There are several important benefits to doing course readings promptly. First, class discussions and lectures will be easier to understand. Second, a majority of questions on quizzes and exams will be derived from material covered in the readings. Third, completing reading assignments will enable students to actively participate in class discussions. Complete your readings on time so that you won't fall behind.

### **Attendance**

Students are encouraged to actively engage in the classes. Please see York College's Catalog for the school's attendance policy. It is the student's responsibility, not the professor's, to drop the course if he/she should decide to discontinue the class. The professor will not process student drops.

***NO LATE REWRITES WILL BE ACCEPTED. NO EXCEPTIONS.***

**Late Assignments:** It is the student's responsibility to adhere to deadlines for course assignments as established by the faculty. • All deadlines are Eastern Standard Time (EST) unless otherwise noted. • No late assignments will be accepted.

**Extra Credit Assignments:** *No extra credit assignments*

**GRADING BREAKDOWN: (Also available on the Blackboard Grade Center)**

### **GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

**(Please note the due dates for ALL your assignments. No late work will be accepted!)**

- ***2 Quizzes: 20 points (10 points each) (Quiz 1 – 02/10, Quiz 2 – 02/24)***
- ***Group Course Project – 03/23 (10 points)***
- ***Mid-term 25 points (03/16)***

- ***Group Reflection on American National Government: 20 points  
(03/30)***
  - ***Final 25 points (TBD)***

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***Total Possible Points: 100 points***

### **GRADING SCALE**

<b>A</b>	<b>93-100</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>87-92</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>81-86</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>75-80</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>69-74</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>63-68</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>58-62</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>52-57</b>
<b>D+</b>	<b>46-51</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>40-45</b>
<b>P</b>	<b>34-39</b>
<b>F</b>	<b>0-33</b>

### **CLASSROOM CONDUCT**

Students are required to conduct themselves in appropriate manner at all times. Any improper behavior that disrupts fellow classmates and/or the professor will result in a warning from the professor. On the second offense, the student may be referred to the Department Dean for further action. Additional offensive behavior may result in the student being dropped from the course or receiving a failing grade.

During the course of this semester, we will discuss numerous controversial and sensitive topics, which may include affirmative action, gay rights, separation of church and state, abortion, illegal immigration and more. Please refrain from posting derogatory terms and insensitive speech that may upset your fellow classmates. While expressions of differing opinions and views are encouraged, personal attacks against anyone in class or use of derogatory and hurtful speech are strictly prohibited.

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students are expected to uphold the York College's standard of conduct relating to academic honesty. Students assume full responsibility for the content and integrity of the academic work they submit. The guiding principle of academic integrity shall be that a student's submitted work (e.g.,

examinations, reports, and projects) must be that of his/her own work. Students shall be guilty of violating the honor code if they represent the work of others as their own or misrepresent the content of submitted work. Plagiarism or any form of cheating will not be tolerated. Students caught cheating will be reported to appropriate authorities for disciplinary action and will receive an F for the course.

### STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

Students with disabilities and other special needs who require academic accommodations should discuss options with the professor during the first two weeks of class. Contact Disabled Students Programs and Services for additional information and assistance.

## COURSE SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

*\* February 17<sup>th</sup> (President's Day) (no class)*

*\* Spring Break! No classes April 8<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> (no class)*

<i>DATE</i>	<i>TOPICS</i>	<i>READINGS &amp; ASSIGNMENTS</i>
<b>WEEK 1</b> <b>Jan 27<sup>th</sup></b>	American Political Culture	OER Materials will be provided (and available on Blackboard) for each learning session <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction:</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15193/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15193/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>What is government:</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15194/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15194/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Democratic engagement</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15196/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15196/overview</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 2</b> <b>Feb 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Founding & the Constitution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction:</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15197/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15197/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Pre revolutionary period</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15198/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15198/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Articles of Confederation</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15199/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15199/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Development of the Constitution</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15200/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15200/overview</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 3</b> <b>Feb 10<sup>th</sup></b>	Federalism	<b>Quiz #1 Monday</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15203/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15203/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Division of Powers</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15204/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15204/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Advantages and disadvantages of federalism</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15208/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15208/overview</a></li> </ul>
<b>WEEK 4</b> <b>Feb 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Federalism	(You are still responsible for the weekly readings) <i>No Class (President's Day)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15203/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15203/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Division of Powers</b> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15204/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15204/overview</a></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Advantages and disadvantages of federalism</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15208/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15208/overview</a>
<b>WEEK 5 Feb 24<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Civil Liberties</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Quiz #2 Monday</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15209/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15209/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>What are civil liberties</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15210/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15210/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Interpreting the Bill of Rights</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15213/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15213/overview</a>
<b>WEEK 6 March 2nd</b>	<b>Congress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15247/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15247/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Design of Congress</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15248/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15248/overview</a>
<b>WEEK 7 March 9th</b>	<b>Congress</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>House/Senate Organization</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15251/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15251/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Legislative Process</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15252/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15252/overview</a>
<b>WEEK 8 March 16<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>Congress</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mid- term 25 points (03/16)</b></p> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15249/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15249/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Congressional representation</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15250/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15250/overview</a>
<b>WEEK 9 March 23rd</b>	<b>Presidency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Group course project due Course Project – 03/23 (10 points) Topic area to be provided separately</b></li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15253/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15253/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Design of the Presidency</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15254/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15254/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presidential election process</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15255/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15255/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Public Presidency</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15257/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15257/overview</a>
<b>WEEK 10 March 30th</b>	<b>Presidency</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Organizing to govern</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15256/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15256/overview</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Presidential governance</b></li> </ul> <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15258/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15258/overview</a>

<p><b>WEEK 11</b>  <b>April 6th</b>  .</p>	<p>Federal Courts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Introduction</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15259/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15259/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Dual Court System</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15261/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15261/overview</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>WEEK 12</b>  <b>April 13th</b>  * Spring Break!  No classes  April 8th – 16th</p>	<p>Federal Courts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Federal Court System</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15262/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15262/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Supreme Court</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15263/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15263/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Judicial decision making</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15264/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15264/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Individual rights and the constitution</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15260/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15260/overview</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>WEEK 13</b>  <b>April 20<sup>th</sup></b></p>	<p>Political Parties</p>	<p><b>SOLVE CLIMATE BY 2030</b>  <b>Group Reflection Assignment on climate change due (details to be provided separately in class)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What are political parties</i>  <a href="https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/9-1-what-are-parties-and-how-did-they-form">https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/9-1-what-are-parties-and-how-did-they-form</a></li> <li>• <i>Two tier party system</i>  <a href="https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/9-2-the-two-party-system">https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/9-2-the-two-party-system</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>WEEK 14</b>  <b>April 27th</b></p>	<p>Campaigns &amp; Elections</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Policy makers</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15280/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15280/overview</a></li> <li>• <b>Policy arenas</b>  <a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15279/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15279/overview</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>WEEK 15</b>  <b>May 4th</b></p>	<p>Government &amp; the Economy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Defining public policy</b>  <a href="https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-1-what-is-public-policy">https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-1-what-is-public-policy</a></li> <li>• <b>Categorizing public policy</b>  <a href="https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-2-categorizing-public-policy">https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-2-categorizing-public-policy</a></li> <li>• <b>Policy Arenas</b></li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-3-policy-arenas">https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-3-policy-arenas</a></li> <li>• <b><i>Budgeting and tax policy</i></b></li> </ul> <p><a href="https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-5-budgeting-and-tax-policy">https://openstax.org/books/american-government-2e/pages/16-5-budgeting-and-tax-policy</a></p>
<b>WEEK 16 May 11th</b>	Foreign Policy & Democracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Defining foreign policy</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15283/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15283/overview</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• foreign policy instruments</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15284/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15284/overview</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• approaches to foreign policy</li> </ul> <p><a href="https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15286/overview">https://www.oercommons.org/courseware/module/15286/overview</a></p>
<b>Week 17 May 16<sup>th</sup>- 22nd</b>	FINALS WEEK (Exam day TBD)	