

City University of New York (CUNY)

CUNY Academic Works

Open Educational Resources

Baruch College

2020

Zero Textbook Cost syllabus for POL 1101 (American Government: Practices and Values)

David Jones

CUNY Bernard M Baruch College

[How does access to this work benefit you? Let us know!](#)

More information about this work at: https://academicworks.cuny.edu/bb_oers/34

Discover additional works at: <https://academicworks.cuny.edu>

This work is made publicly available by the City University of New York (CUNY).

Contact: AcademicWorks@cuny.edu

Political Science 1101—American Government: Practices and Values¹

Section CTRA: online, asynchronous

Fall 2020

Professor: [David R. Jones](#)
Office: Blackboard Collaborate Course Room
Office hours: Thurs 12:00-1:00pm or by appointment
Email:



Class meetings: None (fully asynchronous)
Class location: Blackboard (online)

Course Description

In this course we will analyze the ideas and values that shaped the drafting of the United States Constitution, the institutional framework it established, the ways in which the American public affects the functioning of these institutions, and how these institutions, in turn, affect the lives of the American public.

Course Learning Goals

The successful student will learn to:

- Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.
- Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.
- Identify and apply fundamental concepts and methods of political science.
- Analyze and explain changes in the scope of federal government from more than one perspective.
- Evaluate how slavery played a role in the development of the United States government.
- Identify and differentiate among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government and analyze their influence on the development of U.S. democracy.
- Analyze and discuss public opinion and voting behavior in the United States, and how they are influenced by age, race, ethnicity, class, gender, and other forms of social differentiation.

Course Materials

All course materials are available on our course Blackboard site.

- **Textbook:** This is a *Zero Textbook Cost* course. You are not required to *buy* anything in order to complete the work for this class. There are **required readings** from a textbook that is available to you online, both in web view and as a PDF for *free*. You can also choose to purchase on

¹ This syllabus is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. The specific terms under which you may share it are listed here: <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

iBooks or get a print version from OpenStax on Amazon.com. You can use whichever formats you want. Web view is recommended – it works on any device.

American Government from OpenStax, Print ISBN 1947172654, Digital ISBN 1947172662, <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-2e>

- **Lectures:** You are **required to view online lectures**. These will be primarily in the format of PowerPoint slides that are narrated by me. Links to each week’s lectures will be posted on Blackboard by 5 pm on Monday of that week. *It is very important to take good notes on these lectures.*
- **Supplemental videos:** For each course topic, I have posted links to supplemental educational videos. Almost all of these are from the series, *Crash Course in American Government*, produced by PBS Digital Studios. These are highly recommended, but not required.
- **Other supplemental materials:** An assortment of other supplementary recommended readings, videos, and website links will also be posted. These are recommended, not required.

Course Website on Blackboard

The course has a website posted on Blackboard, the college’s on-line course management system that will play a central role in the course. To access Blackboard, you must login via the [BCTC Blackboard website](#) (this page also contains user guides). If at any point during the semester you experience any trouble with Blackboard, contact the [Baruch Helpdesk](#) at 646-312-1010.

Our Blackboard site is the location for *all materials and activity* in this class. In order to succeed in the class, you should check Blackboard (and your *Baruch* e-mail account) at least two times a week, especially for “Announcements” on the opening page.

A partial list of what you will find on our Blackboard site includes:

- Links to all course materials listed in the previous section.
- A current copy of the course syllabus (“Syllabus”)
- Any updates regarding the course schedule and relevant due dates (“Announcements”)
- Advice for note-taking and studying for this class (“General Class Info”)
- Tips for how to meet me for Office Hours in the online Course Room (“General Class Info”)
- Recommended news sources for current events information (“General Class Info”)
- Links to the weekly readings, lectures, and other materials (“Weekly Materials”)
- Links to all Quizzes, Surveys, and Exams (discussed in the next section) (“Weekly Materials”)
- Grades posted after each assignment is completed (“My Grades”)

Assignments and Grading

In order to successfully complete this class, you will need to complete assignments **every week** (except week 16). These assignments follow a specific schedule, found at the end of this syllabus. Details about each type of assignment are included below.

Your course grade will be based on the following:

- Quizzes & surveys (weekly) 25%
- Exam 1 (10/1) 25%
- Exam 2 (11/5) 25%
- Exam 3 (12/17) 25%

These are the only assignments. *No “extra credit” assignments will be available.*

Quizzes

Each week in which you have required readings and lectures, you must complete a quiz on Blackboard. There will be 13 quizzes total for the semester. The schedule of these quizzes and the point value of each are listed on the course schedule at the end of this syllabus.

Quizzes test that you have *carefully reviewed* these materials. If you have done so, the quizzes will be relatively easy. The quizzes will be available for almost a full week, starting on Monday by 5:00 pm and due by 11:59 pm on Sunday (New York time). However, once you start a quiz, you will only have a specified period (usually 10 minutes or less) to complete it (I will post specific instructions for each quiz). You cannot pause a quiz and come back to it later. It must be completed in one sitting. Because you have a full week in which to choose when to do each quiz, **no late quizzes, no makeup quizzes, and no retaking of quizzes are allowed.** If you miss the quiz deadline, or fail to follow the instructions, you will receive a zero.

After completing each quiz, you will receive feedback on whether each answer is correct or not, but you will not be provided with the answer. If you answer a question incorrectly, it is *your* responsibility to go back to the materials to find the correct answer. If you cannot figure out the answer after going back, you should discuss it with me during office hours. (I will not discuss quiz results over email.) After each quiz deadline, Blackboard will record the score for each quiz as well as a combined average for all your quizzes.

Surveys

I have planned 2 surveys for the semester, which you will complete on Blackboard. The schedule of these surveys and the point value of each are listed on the course schedule at the end of this syllabus.

A survey is different from a quiz. The purpose of each survey is for me to be able to learn about the *average* opinions and background knowledge of the class. The content of your specific answers will be anonymous to me (not connected to your name), so you should just answer honestly and not worry about right or wrong answers. I will only be able to know if you completed all of the questions or not. You will receive credit simply for fully completing each survey by the assigned due date. After each survey is completed by all students, I will discuss the *average* responses in a subsequent lecture in class.

In the weeks that I assign surveys (see schedule at the end of the syllabus), surveys will be due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, unless I specifically state otherwise. I may not post the survey until part-way through the week, but you will always have at least three full days (or more) during which you can start it at any time. Once you start a survey, you will usually have a specified period of 20 minutes or less to complete it (I will post specific instructions for each survey). You cannot pause a survey and come back to it later. It must be completed in one sitting. **No late surveys and no makeup surveys are allowed.** If you miss the survey deadline, or fail to follow the instructions, you will receive a zero.

Exams

There are 3 exams, which you will take on Blackboard. The exams will test your *understanding* of the topics covered by the required readings and lectures. The format will consist of several short essay questions that require you to synthesize and apply the information from the assigned materials (more instructions will be provided later).

- Exam 1 covers materials from weeks 2-6 only, and will take place on **Thursday, October 1**
- Exam 2 covers materials from weeks 7-11 only, and will take place on **Thursday, November 5**
- Exam 3 covers materials from weeks 12-16 only, and will take place on **Thursday, December 17**

These are the only exams. There is no “comprehensive final”.

You must take each exam on its single assigned day. The exam will be available all day on that day, from 12:00 am to 11:59 pm (New York time). You can choose any time during that day to take the exam. However, once you start the exam, you will only have the next 75 minutes to complete it. You cannot pause an exam and come back to it later. **No late exams or makeup exams will be accepted, unless approved *in advance*.**

I will have your exams graded as quickly as possible, but it may take up to 10 days to complete all of them. As soon as all students have a grade for an exam, these grades will be posted on Blackboard. If you would like me to explain your grade, you will need to make an appointment to see me during office hours. (I will *not* discuss exam grades over email.)

General Instructions for Taking Exams/Quizzes on Blackboard

Carefully read and follow all instructions below.

- Use a laptop or desktop computer, if possible (not a phone or tablet).
- Access the test using a wired internet connection, unless your wireless connection is very strong and reliable.
- If you must use WiFi, try to reduce the number of devices accessing the same WiFi network simultaneously. For example, put your phone in airplane mode while taking a test or quiz on your laptop computer.
- Close all other programs prior to taking the test.
- Open only one browser (Firefox is recommended) with only one window open.
- Disable pop-up blockers.
- Do not use the *browser's* “back” arrow or “refresh” button. Only use the designated buttons inside the test program.
- Do not navigate away from the test window to another page.
- Do not open a new browser window.
- Avoid clicking the buttons more than once (e.g., after clicking the “Submit” button, it may take a few moments to submit).
- Wait for each page to load completely. If you begin selecting answers before the page fully loads, you may lose work.
- Save your test answers frequently.

- Don't forget to submit your test when finished. Read all of the submission instructions on the screen carefully. You haven't turned in your test until you have received a confirmation.
- If any errors occur during a quiz or exam, take a screenshot or photo of the entire screen, and contact me *immediately*.

Policy Regarding Missed or Incomplete Assignments & Exams

All due dates are firm. No “late” work will be accepted. If you know now that you have an inflexible commitment that will prevent you from taking an exam at *any time* on its specified date, *do not take this class*. If an unexpected conflict arises *after* the class starts, you must notify me before the exam to see if accommodations are possible.

In the event that something goes wrong for you *during* the process of taking an exam (e.g., you are locked out of the online exam due to failure to follow instructions, or because you are trying to take the exam using an unreliable Wi-Fi connection), you will not be allowed to restart that online exam at a later date. Instead, *if* I allow you to complete the exam, you will only be allowed to do so as a live, oral examination by me, with different questions. No exceptions.

No makeup exams will be given, unless approved *before* the exam. If you miss an exam and do not give prior notice, or do not have a valid excuse, you will forfeit your right to a makeup exam and you will receive a zero for that exam. If I approve a makeup exam and you miss that, there will be no further makeups, and you will receive a zero.

I will not agree to give any student a grade of “incomplete” in this class.

Students with Disabilities

It is Baruch College’s policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. However, *students* are responsible for registering with the Disability Services Office. In addition, if you will be making requests for accommodations, you must also inform *me* at least two weeks before the assignment due date, so that appropriate arrangements can be made. For more information, contact the [Disability Services Office](mailto:disability.services@baruch.cuny.edu) at disability.services@baruch.cuny.edu .

Academic Honesty

Baruch College’s policy on Academic Honesty is rigorously enforced in this class. The basic principle is that everything you turn in must be your own work. Any form of cheating or plagiarism will absolutely not be tolerated. Assisting someone else in cheating will absolutely not be tolerated. For details on what constitutes academic dishonesty—including cheating and plagiarism—see [Baruch’s Academic Honesty website](#). If questions remain, ask me. *Ignorance is not an acceptable excuse*.

My policy is zero tolerance. I reserve the right to give you a *failing grade for the entire course* if you plagiarize or cheat or assist cheating on *any* exam or assignment. In addition, I am required by Baruch College to submit a report of suspected academic dishonesty to the Dean of Students office. This report becomes part of your permanent file, and you may be expelled from Baruch.

The Writing Center and Tutoring Services

Students who want or need to improve their writing skills should take advantage of the free services that the Baruch College Writing Center offers. For more information about how to make an appointment and how to prepare for a session with one of the Center's writing consultants, see the [Writing Center website](#).

Students may also benefit from the *free* one-to-one and group tutoring services provided by both peers and professionals through the Student Academic Consulting Center (SACC). SACC also provides instructional support materials such as videos, software, reference books, and handouts that will help you with course content, study skills, and learning strategies. For more information, see the [SACC website](#).

Communicating with Me

I welcome all of your questions related to the class, and to American politics in general. Here are my policies regarding your communications with me.

Ways to Contact Me

There two ways you can get in touch with me:

- *E-mail*: You can email me anytime at david.jones@baruch.cuny.edu. I strive to respond within 48 hours.
- *Office hours*: I hold real-time, online office hours every week (except Thanksgiving), on Thursday from 12:00-1:00 pm. No appointment is necessary during this hour. If you cannot meet during that hour, you can send me an email requesting an appointment for another specific time on any day. Office hours will take place virtually (online) using **Blackboard Collaborate Course Room**. Inside our course Blackboard site, on the left-hand menu, select *Blackboard Collaborate*. In the screen that appears in the middle, click *Course Room*. Before meeting for Office Hours, please review my instructions, posted in the "General Course Information" folder on Blackboard.

E-mail Etiquette

When you e-mail me, use the following instructions. Failure to do so may cause delay in my response to your e-mail:

- *Subject line*: The subject line of the e-mail must begin with "POL 1101 Student" (and can then reference the specific subject that you are e-mailing me about).
- *Salutation*: Please address me as "Professor Jones." Do not begin your email with "hey".
- *Sign your full name*: At the bottom of the e-mail, please include your full name, as listed in Blackboard (so I can find your records for this class).

Student Responsibility to Reach Out

I want everyone to succeed in this class. However, I have many students and—especially in an online course—it can be difficult for me to identify those students who might want or need a little extra help or accommodation. If you are having trouble in the course for *any reason*—either academic or personal—and would like assistance, please contact me as soon as possible. Don't wait to reach out until it is too late. I'm here to help.

Course Schedule

(see following pages)

Course Schedule

Please refer to the schedule below for the timing of all required readings, lectures, assignments, and exams. While I do not anticipate any changes, all dates *are* potentially subject to change. Any changes will be announced on Blackboard. Any textbook sections that are not listed in the schedule are not required, and you will not be tested on them. Besides the required readings listed here, additional recommended readings videos, and other websites for each course topic can be found on Blackboard. For each topic, please complete all readings *before* viewing the lecture. Complete both the assigned readings and lectures before taking any quiz.

Legend: L = Lecture; Q = Quiz; S = Survey; E = Exam

Part 1: Foundations						
Week	Dates	Topics	Required Readings	Lecture	Assignment	Grade %
1	8/26-8/30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Course introduction 	<i>Syllabus (all)</i>	L1	Q1	1%
2	8/31-9/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Why government? Founding of American government 	<i>ch 1 (only: intro, 1.1, 1.2)</i> <i>ch 2 (only: intro, 2.1, 2.2) & Declaration of Indep.</i>	L2 L3	S1 Q2	1% 2%
3	9/7-9/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A stronger US Constitution Protecting against tyranny 	<i>ch 2 (only: 2.3, 2.4) & US Const. (only: Articles I-VII)</i> <i>Federalist 10 & 51</i>	L4 L5	Q3	2%
4	9/14-9/20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Federalism Civil liberties 	<i>ch 3 (all)</i> <i>ch 4 (all) & US Const. (only: Amendments 1-10, 14)</i>	L6 L7	Q4	2%
5	9/21-9/27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equal rights 	<i>ch 5 (all) & US Const. (only: Amendments 14, 15)</i>	L8	Q5	1%
6	9/28-10/4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam review EXAM 1 -- MUST TAKE ON TH 10/1 		L9	E1 S2	25% 1%

(continued on next page)

Part 2: Citizens & Politics						
Week	Dates	Topics	Required Readings	Lecture	Assignment	Grade %
7	10/5-10/11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public opinion The media 	<i>ch 6 (all)</i> <i>ch 8 (all)</i>	L10 L11	Q6	2%
8	10/12-10/18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political participation Political parties in the electorate 	<i>ch 7 (only: 7.1, 7.2)</i> <i>ch 9 (only: intro, 9.1, 9.2)</i>	L12 L13	Q7	2%
9	10/19-10/25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Political party organizations Elections—rules of the game 	<i>ch 9 (only: 9.3) & ch 7 (only: 7.3)</i> <i>ch 11 (only: 11.1) & ch 12 (only: 12.2)</i>	L14 L15	Q8	2%
10	10/26-11/1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elections—campaigns & voters Interest groups 	<i>ch 7 (only: 7.4) & ch 11 (only: 11.2)</i> <i>ch 10 (all)</i>	L16 L17	Q9	2%
11	11/2-11/8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam review EXAM 2 -- MUST TAKE ON TH 11/5 		L18	E2	25%
Part 3: Institutions & Governance						
Week	Dates	Topics	Required Readings	Lecture	Assignment	Grade %
12	11/9-11/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Congress—organization Congress—lawmaking 	<i>ch 11 (only: 11.4)</i> <i>ch 11 (only: 11.3, 11.5) & ch 9 (only: 9.4)</i>	L19 L20	Q10	2%
13	11/16-11/22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive branch— the president Executive branch—the bureaucracy 	<i>ch 12 (all, except 12.2)</i> <i>ch 15 (all)</i>	L21 L22	Q11	2%
14	11/23-11/29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The courts 	<i>ch 13 (all)</i>	L23	Q12	1%
15	11/30-12/6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic policy Social welfare policy 	<i>ch 16 (only: 16.1, 16.2, 16.5)</i> <i>ch 16 (only: 16.3)</i>	L24 L25	Q13	2%
16	12/7-12/13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam review 		L26	(none)	
17	12/14-12/17	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> EXAM 3 -- MUST TAKE ON TH 12/17 			E3	25%