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GOV 1101: American Government, Fall 2020

Peter Parides

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GOV 1101: American Government, Section OL36 (Zero Textbook Cost) Fall 2020

**Professor Peter Parides, Department of Social Science
New York City College of Technology
The City University of New York**

Course Description:

An overview of the structure and characteristics of the American political system. Topics include the branches of government, the Constitution and civil liberties, political parties, interest groups, citizen participation, and the relationship between the national and state governments.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this class you will be able to:

1. Identify and differentiate among the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of government and analyze their influence on the development of U.S. democracy.
2. Analyze and discuss common institutions or patterns of life in contemporary U.S. society and how they influence, or are influenced, by race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation, or other forms of social differentiation.

Contact information:

e-mail: pparides@citytech.cuny.edu

Office Hours:

I will hold live office hours/review sessions via Zoom once or twice a week.

Asynchronous Use of Blackboard:

With the exception of live Zoom office hours, all course work will be done asynchronously using Blackboard. This means that you may complete your assignments whenever is most convenient for you within a specific time frame. Please see the “Schedule of assignments” at the end of this syllabus for assignments and their due dates.

Required Textbook:

Timothy O. Lenz and Mirya Holman, *American Government*, Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2013. This is a free textbook that you can read online in a web browser or download as a PDF. I strongly recommend that you download a copy of the textbook.

Additional Materials:

In addition to the textbook you will be required to watch one short video almost every week, and you will be required to read two short articles over the course of the semester. I will post links to the videos, which were produced by the [Khan Academy](#) and the [Council on Foreign Relations](#); and the articles, which are available online from the [City Tech Library](#). You will be able to access

all of these materials for free. You can now access Library resources using your CUNYfirst login.

Required Class Assignments:

<u>Type of assignment</u>	<u>Total number</u>	<u>How much each assignment is worth</u>	<u>Percentage of final course grade</u>
Exams	4	15%	60%
Quizzes	12	2.5%	30%
Response Papers	2	5%	10%
Total			100%

City Tech Grade Scale:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Numerical Grade</u>
A	93-100
A-	90-92.9
B+	87-89.9
B	83-86.9
B-	80-82.9
C+	77-79.9
C	70-76.9
D	60-69.9
F	0-59.9

Logging into Blackboard:

You can log into Blackboard through the [CUNYfirst login website](#) using your CUNYfirst username followed by @login.cuny.edu and your CUNYfirst password. You can also log into Blackboard from [CUNY's home page](#), [City Tech's home page](#), or by using [CUNY's direct Blackboard link](#).

If you do not have a CUNYfirst account you can set up an account [here](#). If you have forgotten your CUNYfirst password, please click [here](#) to set a new one.

Getting Help with Blackboard:

Blackboard student manuals are available on the Instructional Technology [Student Blackboard website](#). If you need technical assistance, please email the [Technology Services Help Desk](#).

Navigating our Blackboard course site:

Here are descriptions of the course links in our Blackboard site:

- **ANNOUNCEMENTS:** This is where I will post reminders about assignments and due dates for your work, as well as other information. Please check for new announcements every few days.
- **SYLLABUS & CONTACT INFO.:** A copy of the syllabus and my email address are posted here.
- **TEXTBOOK:** A link to the textbook is posted here.
- **VIDEO LECTURES:** Video lectures that you can watch online or download to watch offline are posted here
- **POWERPOINT SLIDES:** The Powerpoint slides that I used to produce my video lectures.
- **KHAN ACADEMY/CFR VIDEOS:** The Khan Academy and Council on Foreign Relations videos that you will watch on a weekly basis are posted here.
- **QUIZZES:** Your (almost) weekly quizzes are posted here. You will complete the quizzes in Blackboard. I will announce when they are available for you to complete.
- **EXAMS:** Your four exams are posted here. You will complete the exams in Blackboard. I will announce when they are available for you to complete.
- **RESPONSE PAPERS:** Your two response paper assignments are posted here. The due dates for these papers are listed in the schedule of assignments at the end of this syllabus.
- **EXAM REVIEW SHEETS:** Exam review sheets will be posted here. I will announce when I have posted a review sheet.
- **TOOLS:** This area contains tools you can use for sending e-mails, checking your grades, etc.
- **CITY TECH LIBRARY:** This area contains a link to City Tech's Library.
- **HELP:** This area contains links for finding additional help for using Blackboard.

Using City Tech e-mail:

You must use your college e-mail to communicate in this course. If you are having trouble with your student email, please contact the [Technology Services Help Desk](#), or click [here](#) for more information.

Student Technology Requirements:

Because this class is fully online you must have consistent access to a computer with internet access. You should also be familiar with how to use Blackboard and how to do simple word processing. To attend Zoom office hours/review sessions you need to have a Zoom account which is available for free. To sign up and download a free copy of the Zoom application, click [here](#).

Encountering Technical Difficulties:

Computer or internet problems are not valid excuses for late submissions of assignments; nor are they valid excuses for failure to take an exam on time. All class requirements will be available at

least three days in advance of the due date. Do not wait until the last minute to complete your assignments. **MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A BACKUP PLAN IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY (i.e., HAVING ACCESS TO ANOTHER COMPUTER WITH INTERNET CAPABILITY AND SAVING BACKUP COPIES OF YOUR DOCUMENTS).**

Netiquette:

Please keep in mind that communicating in an online environment can be challenging. Messages are received in the absence of visual cues (e.g., facial expressions) and auditory cues (e.g., tone of voice). It is important to communicate in a respectful manner at all times. You do not have to agree with everything that is stated; but your responses must be given in a sensitive and supportive manner. Keep in mind that humor may appear to be sarcastic in an online environment. **THE USE OF ALL CAPITALS MAY SEEM LIKE SOMEONE IS SCREAMING AT YOU**, so review before you hit send.

Here are some other student guidelines for the class (taken from Mintu-Wimsatt, A., Kernek, C., & Lozada, H.R. (2010). "Netiquette: Make it a part of your syllabus." *Journal of Online Teaching and Learning*, 6, 264-267):

- Do not dominate any discussion.
- Do not use offensive language.
- Never make fun of someone's contribution.
- Use standard English.
- Use correct grammar and spelling.
- Share tips with other students.
- Keep an open mind and be willing to express your opinion.
- Be aware of CUNY's Policy on Academic Integrity.
- Think before you push the send button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- When in doubt, check with your professor for clarification.

Attendance:

If you do not complete any required activity for a unit, you will be marked as absent for the unit. If you complete at least one of the unit's required activities, you will be marked as present.

Being marked absent will not reduce your grade because of the absent mark alone, but not completing a graded assignment will obviously hurt your grade. If you do not complete any assignments by Tuesday, September 15 you will receive a WN grade and you will be dropped from the class roster. If you stop completing assignments and you do not withdraw from the class before the semester ends you will receive a grade of WU (unofficial withdrawal).

If extenuating circumstances arise (e.g., medical and/or family emergencies) you must inform me as soon as possible. Documentation pertaining to the emergency may be required.

Student Accessibility:

City Tech is committed to supporting the educational goals of enrolled students with disabilities in the areas of enrollment, academic advisement, tutoring, assistive technologies, and testing accommodations. If you have or think you may have a disability, you may be eligible for reasonable accommodations or academic adjustments as provided under applicable federal, state, and/or city laws. You may also request services for temporary conditions or medical issues under certain circumstances. If you have questions about your eligibility and/or would like to seek accommodation services and/or academic adjustments, please email the [Student Accessibility Center](#).

Academic Integrity Policy:

Students and all others who work with information, ideas, texts, images, music, inventions, and other intellectual property owe their audience and sources accuracy and honesty in using, crediting, and citing sources. As a community of intellectual and professional workers, the College recognizes its responsibility for providing instruction in information literacy and academic integrity, offering models of good practice, and responding vigilantly and appropriately to infractions of academic integrity. Accordingly, academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York and at New York City College of Technology and is punishable by penalties, including failing grades, suspension, and expulsion.

What is academic dishonesty?

Academic dishonesty occurs when individuals plagiarize or cheat in the course of their academic work.

Plagiarism is the presenting of someone else's ideas without proper credit or attribution. These ideas could come from:

1. Information obtained from books, journals or other printed sources.
2. The work of other students or of professors.
3. Information on the Internet.
4. Software programs or other electronic material.
5. Designs produced by other students or faculty.

Cheating is the unauthorized use or attempted use of material, information, notes, study aids, devices or communication during an academic exercise. Examples of cheating include:

1. Copying from another student during an examination or allowing another students to copy your work.
2. Unauthorized collaboration on a take-home assignment or examination.
3. Using notes during a closed-book examination.
4. Taking an examination for another student, or asking or allowing another student to take an examination for you.
5. Changing a graded exam and returning it for more credit.
6. Submitting substantial portions of the same paper to more than one course without consulting each instructor.

7. Preparing answers or writing notes in an exam manual before an examination.
8. Allowing others to research and write assigned papers or do assigned projects, including the use of commercial term paper services.
9. Giving assistance to acts of academic misconduct/dishonesty.
10. Fabricating data (in whole or in part).
11. Falsifying data (in whole or in part).
12. Unauthorized use during an examination of electronic or wireless handheld devices, including computers or other technologies to retrieve or send information during an exam.

Schedule of assignments:

Unit One (Wednesday, August 26 to Friday, September 4)

Why Government? Why Politics? (Textbook: Chapter 1)

1. Read Chapter 1, "Why Government? Why Politics?," in [*American Government*](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #1, "[Why Government? Why Politics?](#)"
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #1, "[Democratic Ideals of US government](#)"
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz #1-"Democratic Ideals of US government"

Unit Two (Tuesday, September 8-Monday, September 14)

The U.S. System of Constitutional Government (Textbook: Chapter 2)

1. Read Chapter 2, "The U.S. System of Constitutional Government," in [*American Government*](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #2, "[The U.S. System of Constitutional Government](#)"
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #2, "[The Preamble to the Constitution](#)"
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz #2-"The Preamble to the Constitution"

Unit Three (Tuesday, September 15-Thursday, September 24)

Federalism (Textbook: Chapter 6)

1. Read Chapter 6, "Federalism," in [*American Government*](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #3, "[Federalism](#)"
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #3, "[Federalism in the United States](#)"
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz #3-"Federalism in the United States"

Unit Four (Friday, September 25-Sunday, September 27)

Complete Blackboard Exam #1 (Units 1-3)

Unit Five (Tuesday, September 29-Monday, October 5)

Congress (Textbook: Chapter 3)

1. Read Chapter 3, "Congress," in [*American Government*](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #4, "[Congress](#)"
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #4 "[Article I of the Constitution](#)"
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz #4-"Article I of the Constitution"

Unit Six (Tuesday, October 6-Wednesday, October 14)

The Presidency (Textbook: Chapter 4)

1. Read Chapter 4, “The Presidency,” in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #5, “[The Presidency](#)”
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #5, “[Article II of the Constitution](#)”
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz #5-“Article II of the Constitution”
5. Read “[The Pros and Cons of the Electoral College](#),” by Steve Cohen et al. (*Congressional Digest*, June 2020, pp. 18-28). You can download this article from the City Tech Library using the above link. A response paper for this article is due on October 28. The instruction sheet for this assignment is posted on Blackboard.

Unit Seven (Thursday, October 15-Thursday, October 22)

The Judiciary (Textbook: Chapter 5)

1. Read Chapter 5, “The Judiciary,” in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #6, “[The Judiciary](#)”
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #6 “[Article III of the Constitution](#)”
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz # 6-“Article III of the Constitution”

Unit Eight (Friday, October 23-Sunday, October 25)

Complete Blackboard Exam #2 (Units 5-7)

Unit Nine (Monday, October 26-Sunday, November 1)

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Textbook: Chapter 18)

1. Read Chapter 18, “Civil Liberties and Civil Rights” in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #7, “[Civil Liberties and Civil Rights](#)”
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #7 “[The First Amendment](#)”
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz # 7-“The First Amendment”

Unit Ten (Monday, November 2-Sunday, November 8)

Public Opinion (Textbook: Chapter 8)

1. Read Chapter 8, “Public Opinion” in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #8, “[Public Opinion](#)”
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #8 “[Measuring public opinion](#)”
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz # 8-“Measuring public opinion”

Unit Eleven (Monday, November 9-Sunday, November 15)

Political Ideology (Textbook: Chapter 9)

1. Read Chapter 9, “Political Ideology” in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #9, “[Political Ideology](#)”
3. Watch Khan Academy video #9, “[Ideologies of political parties in the United States](#)”
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz # 9-“Ideologies of political parties in the United States”

Unit Twelve (Monday, November 16-Wednesday, November 18)

Complete Blackboard Exam #3 (Units 9-11)

Unit Thirteen (Thursday, November 19-Wednesday, November 25)

Crime Policy (Textbook: Chapter 16)

1. Read Chapter 16, "Crime Policy" in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #10, "[Crime Policy](#)"
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #10 "[The Fourth Amendment](#)"
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz # 10-"The Fourth Amendment"
5. Read "[Policing and the "War on Black Bodies"](#)," by Chenjerai Kumanyika. (*College Literature*, Winter 2016, pp. 252-258). You can download this article from the City Tech Library using the above link. A response paper for this article is due on December 13. The instruction sheet for this assignment is posted on Blackboard.

Unit Fourteen (Monday, November 30-Sunday, December 6)

The Media, Government, and Politics (Textbook: Chapter 7)

1. Read Chapter 7, "The Media, Government, and Politics" in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #11 "[The Media, Government, and Politics](#)"
3. Watch Khan Academy Video #11 "[Impact of media evolution on politics](#)"
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz #11-"Impact of media evolution on politics"

Unit Fifteen (Monday, December 7-Sunday, December 13)

Global Affairs (Chapter 17)

1. Read Chapter 17, "Global Affairs" in [American Government](#)
2. Watch Instructor Video Lecture #12, "[Global Affairs](#)"
3. Watch Council on Foreign Relations Video #12 "[The Role of Congress and the President in Foreign Policy](#)"
4. Complete Blackboard Quiz # 12-"The Role of Congress and the President in Foreign Policy"

Unit Sixteen (Monday, December 14-Sunday, December 20)

Complete Blackboard Exam #4 (Units 13-15)