



C O M M U N I C A T I O N

AMERICAN POLITICS

Political Science 101

Fall 2014

Dr. Ann V. Collins

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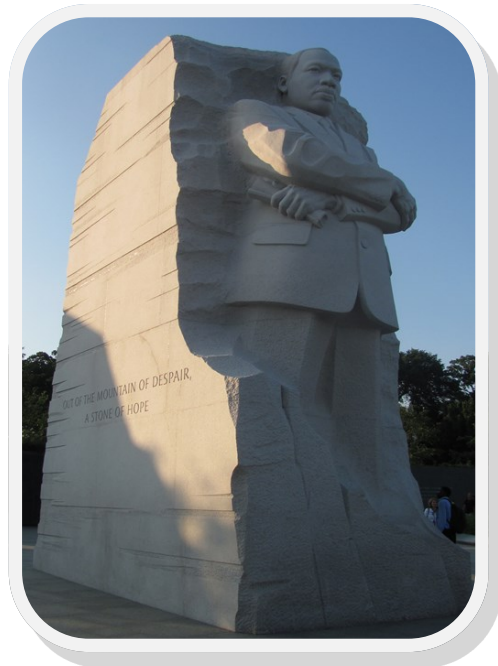
Office Hours: M 9:00-10:00 a.m.,

T 12:30-1:30 p.m., F 12:00-1:00 p.m.,

**or feel free to drop by my office or set
up an appointment**

COURSE DESCRIPTION

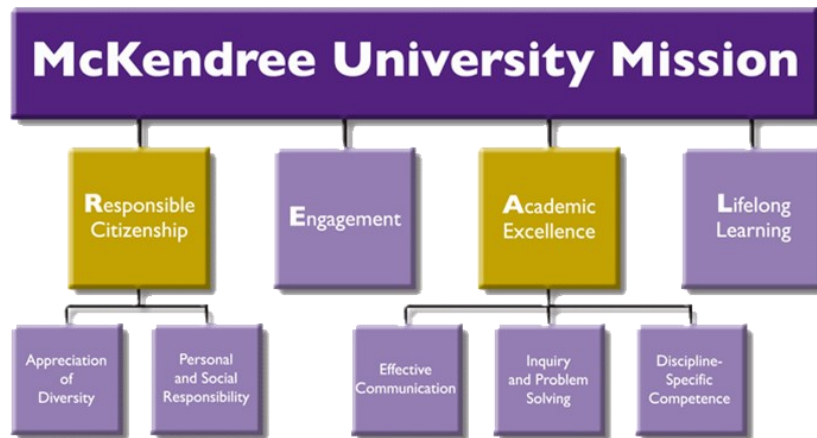
This course provides an opportunity to examine the theories of American politics in light of historical and contemporary issues and personalities. We will explore a variety of topics of concern in American politics, including America's political foundations, federalism, participation, ideology and opinion, parties, the media, elections, interest groups, civil rights, civil liberties, Congress, the Presidency, and the Supreme Court.



*Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial,
Washington, D.C.*



AMERICAN POLITICS



DR. COLLINS' GOALS FOR PSI 101:

R

To introduce you to the study of American government and politics.

E

To deepen your knowledge of how you are affected by politics and the government in the United States.

A

To develop your skills in analyzing American politics—that is, articulating intelligent questions and drawing conclusions about the theoretical and empirical puzzles evident in American politics.

L

To encourage you to take an active long-term interest in the political world and how it relates to your life.



AMERICAN POLITICS



Washington, D.C.



“Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.”

— Abraham Lincoln

“Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters.”

— Abraham Lincoln



Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C.

Required Reading Material

Beals, Melba Pattillo. *Warriors Don't Cry*. Simon Pulse, 2007.

Goodwin, Doris Kearns. *Team of Rivals: The Political Genius of Abraham Lincoln*. Simon & Schuster, 2005.

Jordan, Terry L. *The U.S. Constitution and Fascinating Facts About It*. Oak Hill, 2012.

Matthews, Chris. *Tip and the Gipper: When Politics Worked*. Simon & Schuster, 2014.

The daily political news.

Grading Scale:

A	>94
A-	93-90
B+	89-87
B	86-84
B-	83-80
C+	79-77
C	76-74
C-	73-70
D	69-60
F	<59



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Course Requirements

Class Attendance and Participation: (50 points) You may miss up to three days without penalty. Any additional, unexcused absences will count against you. I also expect you to read the assigned material before coming to class and to be prepared to discuss it. Each student will take a turn submitting a political question or news story of the day and leading part of the class discussion.

Weekly Homework: (200 points) Each week you will be given homework assignments on topics that we are discussing in class. You must complete the assignments on time to be eligible for full credit.

Book Quizzes: (100 points each—300 total) Quizzes on the Beals, Goodwin, and Matthews books will include various types of questions. Start reading these books early.

Exam One: (150 points) The first exam includes all material read and discussed in class up to this point. The questions will be in the form of multiple choice, short answers, and essays.

Exam Two: (150 points) The second exam includes all material read and discussed in class since the first exam. The questions will be in the form of multiple choice, short answers, and essays.

Exam Three: (150 points) The third exam includes all material read and discussed in class since the second exam. The questions will be in the form of multiple choice, short answers, and essays.



AMERICAN POLITICS

Our Semester

Foundations of American Government: The Political Landscape, The Constitution, Federalism, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights

- Week 1: Course Overview and Goals
The Political Landscape
Reading: The Declaration of Independence
- Week 2: The Constitution
Reading: The Constitution
- Week 3: Federalism

BOOK QUIZ 1: *Warriors Don't Cry*

- Week 4: Civil Liberties
Week 5: Civil Rights

EXAM 1

Institutions: Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, and the Judiciary

- Week 6: Congress
Week 7: Congress
- Week 8: The Presidency/The Bureaucracy
Week 9: The Judiciary
Week 10: Catch Up

BOOK QUIZ 2: *Team of Rivals*

EXAM 2

Politics and the People: Public Opinion, the Media, Interest Groups, Political Parties, and Voting and Elections

- Week 11: Public Opinion and Political Socialization
Week 12: The Media
Week 13: Interest Groups

BOOK QUIZ 3: *Tip and the Gipper*

- Week 14: Political Parties
Week 15: Voting and Elections

EXAM 3—Monday, December 8, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

In this section of the course, you will identify the foundations of American government and their effects on today's political landscape.

In this section of the course, you will describe and compare the qualifications, functions, and impacts of the three branches of the federal government.

In this section of the course, you will explain the various ways that individuals can participate in the United States political system.



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Any student detected cheating or engaging in plagiarism—or participating in any other form of academic dishonesty—will receive the appropriate sanctions, which can include a failing grade (“F”) for the course. Please visit with me regarding any questions. In cases of serious violations, additional sanctions (such as academic probation or suspension) are possible.

Classes start promptly at the designated time. Be ready to start. Late arrivals disrupt the class and should be avoided. If you arrive late, please get to your seat discreetly.

Cell phones should be turned off completely or switched to vibrate. Do not text message during class. I reserve the right to confiscate your cell phone or any other electronic device if I see you using it in class. In such a case, you will have to meet with the Academic Dean and me to get it back.

Please note that the information in this syllabus, particularly the schedule, may change slightly. Any such change will be announced in class. It is your responsibility, however, to learn about all announcements and assignments that occur in class. Every student is issued a McKendree email account. You are responsible for checking your McKendree email account regularly. Failure to read university communications sent to your McKendree account does not absolve you from knowing and complying with the content of these communications.

Make-up Exams and Book Quizzes will be given only on Monday, December 1, at 1:00 p.m. in my office, PAC 203. The make-ups will be all essay. A documented, legitimate excuse must be provided in order to qualify. You may only make up one exam and one quiz. If you miss two of the first exams and/or book quizzes you cannot pass this class.



AMERICAN POLITICS

Hints on How to Do Well in This Class

Be in class regularly.

Read the political news daily.

Get your homework done on time.

Start reading the books for the book quizzes early—they cannot be read in one night.

Take good notes in class, making sure the essential ideas and facts are tied together. Remember, you must rely on them for the exams.

Ask questions if clarification is needed, and please visit me during my office hours or set up an appointment.

Available Resources at McKendree University

McKendree Academic Support Center, 509 Stanton Street, ext. 6850
<http://www.mckendree.edu/offices/academic-support-center/index.php>

Writing Resource Center, 509 Stanton Street, ext. 6510
<http://www.mckendree.edu/offices/writing-center/index.php>

Counseling

Ms. Amy Champion Stahlman—305 Stanton Street, ext. 6416, acchampionstahlman@mckendree.edu
<http://www.mckendree.edu/offices/counseling-services/index.php>



AMERICAN POLITICS

Official McKendree University Policies

Student Absences for Official University Functions: Students shall be excused without penalty from class to participate in official University sanctioned student activities, including intercollegiate athletic competitions, debate meets, band and choir performances, University field trips, and other events approved by the Provost. Students are not to be excused from class to attend practices. In addition, students must give satisfactory notice to their instructors prior to scheduled absences.

Students are responsible for all content and assignments missed while absent from class to attend University sanctioned student activities. Any deviation from this policy must be approved by the Provost.

VA Policy on Class Attendance: According to the “Veterans Education and Employment Assistance Act of 1976,” veterans who are absent from a class for an excessive amount of time must be reported for non-attendance to the Veterans Administration. The veteran’s last date of attendance is determined by the instructor’s roll book. A veteran or eligible person will receive no benefits for a course audited.

ADA Policy: A student requiring assistance with the technical portions of the course should contact the Instructor or the Academic Support Center. Services for Students with disabilities are provided through the McKendree Academic Support Center (MASC) in order to help the student integrate into the entire university experience. MASC provides coordination and implementation of special accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Challenges to Academic Decisions: Students who think that their work has been improperly evaluated or who think that they have been unfairly treated in any academic decision may use the grievance procedures found in the catalog.

Course Deletions/Additions: Students may drop or add courses according to the schedules posted by the Office of Academic Records for each semester. Drops and adds are not effective until recorded by the Registrar. A course may not be added after one week from the first class meeting.

Severe Weather Policy: Under severe weather conditions, university officials will announce whether the university is open, closed, or on a snow schedule. Announcements for the Lebanon Campus will be posted on the McKendree web site, KMOX radio (1120 AM), and KMOV television (Ch. 4). Snow schedule – Lebanon Classes beginning at 8:00 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. are cancelled; 9:30 a.m. classes will begin at 10:00 a.m. Normal class schedule resumes beginning with 10:00 a.m. classes. All offices open at 10:00 a.m.

