Course Description and Objectives:

The United States of America’s federal government and politics affect our day-to-day lives in more ways than we often realize. From the taxes we pay to the quality of schools we attend; the ever-present influence of government and politics is impossible to escape. For these simple reasons, it is important to develop a basic understanding of the U.S. political system. Therefore, the purpose of this course is to introduce you to the institutions, processes, and actors that comprise the political system at the national level. The course will be divided into four main sections. Each of these sections will explore a different facet U.S. politics. The topics covered in this course are diverse and range from the foundations of our governing structure to the linkage mechanisms that connect us to our government.

Required Text:


There may be additional readings, which will be available for free online.

Students should complete required readings PRIOR to watching pre-recorded videos on the associated topics and/or completing assignments/quizzes.

Because current political events will have relevance for this course, students are expected to keep themselves informed about what is happening in U.S. government and politics.

Online Course Delivery and Organization:

This section of POLSC 115 will be offered online during the Fall 2022 semester. The fact that this course is delivered online has several implications. There will be no face-to-face interaction with me in a classroom setting. All course-related video lectures, assignments, and quizzes are available online on the course website (Canvas).

I will organize each week of the course using modules on the main page of the course website. Each topic module includes:

- Weekly instructions
- Readings (other than textbook chapters)
- Recorded lectures and videos
- Assignments (if any)
- Quizzes

You may access these materials at your leisure throughout the week; however, pay attention to due dates as late work will result in a grade deduction.

**Technology:**

K-State has technology recommendations, including a computer buying guide for success in online learning. You can also visit the K-State Global Campus website to make sure your technology is up to date.

Canvas will work best in the Google Chrome browser. If you choose to use another browser, please make sure your course materials function within that system. You may need to confirm that your browser, java, flash, and pdf reader are all updated to the latest version.

**Technical Difficulties:**

The K-State IT Help Desk is there to assist you with questions regarding the technology used for your course.

- Phone: 785-532-7722
- Toll-free: 1-800-865-6143
- Email: helpdesk@k-state.edu

If you have issues with your technology, please contact them first, they are the technology experts. If you miss a deadline due to technical difficulties, make sure it is documented through communication with the IT Help Desk, then exceptions may be made on a case-by-case basis.

**K-State E-mail Account:**

All students are required to have an active KSU e-mail account. You may forward incoming e-mails to a different account (like your school/work account or a Gmail account), but your instructor will send emails to your KSU e-mail address. Do NOT forward your K-State email to a Hotmail account. This frequently creates problems as the KSU server rejects both incoming and outgoing e-mails to Hotmail accounts. During this course, it is your responsibility to check your KSU e-mail account frequently.

**Other Technology Resources:**

- [Office 365 Help and Support](#)
- [Zoom](#)
- [Media Center](#)
- [K-State Libraries](#)
- [Canvas Help](#)
Course Requirements:

**Quizzes:** We will have a total of 13 quizzes, each counting the same (approximately 1 per week). The quizzes will take place online and are timed. The students will receive 90 seconds per question. The quizzes will consist of multiple choice and true/false questions.

These quizzes are open-book and open-note; however, they are not collaborative. Students are to complete them by themselves without the help of others. Each quiz will test your knowledge of the material covered in the textbooks and/or video lectures for that module.

Quiz grades will be posted on the course website. If you think there is an error in your grade or you do not see a grade for a quiz, you must notify me within 48 hours of taking the quiz.

**I will drop the 3 lowest quiz grades from your final grade.**

Makeup quizzes will only be given under the following circumstances:

1. You contact me prior to the quiz and I approve of the make-up or
2. You have a University-excused reason for the needed make-up quiz.

Regardless of the situation, you must notify me by 11:59 pm on the day the quiz is due if you wish to schedule a makeup for a later date. When notifying me of a need for an extension, please provide me with your contact information (email address).

Makeup quizzes must be completed within a reasonable amount of time (within 1 week of the missed quiz under most circumstances). I reserve the right to slightly change the content of makeup quizzes should I deem it appropriate.

I will also deduct 10% of your quiz grade for each week (starting immediately after the quiz is due) the quiz is late without a documented, University-excused reason for missing the original due date.

**Assignments:** There will be a total of 4 assignments over the course of the semester. Details regarding each assignment will be posted online in the “Assignments” folder and appropriate Module of the course website at least one week prior to the due date. These assignments will take the form of short essay reports (1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced) and/or online projects/activities. They will be submitted online.

Assignment deadlines are enforced, and late assignments lose 10% each week the assignment is late starting immediately after the due date.

While I generally expect to stick to the topic outline on the syllabus, the order in which we cover topics may change slightly throughout the semester.
Grading:

Your grade for this course will be calculated as follows:

- Quizzes 80% 80% (total for all for all quizzes, lowest 3 quiz grades dropped)
- Assignments 20% (total for all four assignments)

I will use the following scale to determine the final course grade:

- A  90-100%
- B  80-89.99%
- C  70-79.99%
- D  60-69.99%
- F  59.99% and below

Please note that I do not adjust grades at the end of the semester. I do, however, round to the nearest whole number (for example, an 83.5 becomes an 84) and that grade becomes your final grade. I will not increase any person’s grade solely to change their letter grade. This means that if you got an 89.49, you will receive a B, not an A.

General Expectations

What you can expect of your instructor:

I will communicate with you primarily through the tools within this Canvas course. If you have a personal concern or question you would like to talk about, please send me an email directly. Email is the best way to communicate with me. During the workweek, I will respond to emails within 24-48 hours between 8:00 am and 5:00 pm. I may review communication over the weekend, but I will respond on Monday in most situations.

I will post grades in a timely fashion to Canvas.

What I expect of you:

I prefer to be called Dr. or Professor Heidbreder (pronounced “Hide Bread Er”) and my gender pronouns are she/her/hers. Who you are is not defined by records or bureaucracies so if you prefer a name or a pronoun other than the one listed/suggested on the class roster, please let me know.

Because this course will be offered remotely, I ask that you log in to Canvas frequently/daily. It is important to log in early in the week so that you understand what is expected and have time to ask questions. I expect you to ask questions if something is unclear.

The default in this class is that ALL work will be accomplished individually, UNLESS my permission is given in advance of an assignment/quiz/exam/take-home exam/final. If you are in doubt, please ask.
Academic Honesty

Kansas State University has an Honor and Integrity System based on personal integrity, which is presumed to be sufficient assurance that, in academic matters, one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance. Undergraduate and graduate students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honor and Integrity System. The policies and procedures of the Honor and Integrity System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, and via distance learning. A component vital to the Honor and Integrity System is the inclusion of the Honor Pledge which applies to all assignments, examinations, or other course work undertaken by students. The Honor Pledge is implied, whether or not it is stated: "On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work." A grade of XF can result from a breach of academic honesty. The F indicates failure in the course; the X indicates the reason is an Honor Pledge violation.

Students with Disabilities

At K-State it is important that every student has access to course content and the means to demonstrate course mastery. Students with disabilities may benefit from services including accommodations provided by the Student Access Center. Disabilities can include physical, learning, executive functions, and mental health. You may register at the Student Access Center (k-state.edu/accesscenter) or to learn more contact:

Manhattan/Olathe/Global Campus – Student Access Center
accesscenter@k-state.edu
785-532-6441

K-State Salina Campus – Julie Rowe; Student Success Coordinator
jarowe@k-state.edu
785-820-7908

Students already registered with the Student Access Center please request your Letters of Accommodation early in the semester to provide adequate time to arrange your approved academic accommodations. Once SAC approves your Letter of Accommodation it will be e-mailed to you, and your instructor(s) for this course. Please follow up with your instructor to discuss how best to implement the approved accommodations.

Classroom Conduct

All student activities in the University, including this course, are governed by the Student Judicial Conduct Code as outlined in the Student Governing Association By Laws, Article V, Section 3, number 2. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment may be asked to leave the class.
Mutual Respect and Inclusion in K-State Teaching and Learning Spaces

At K-State, faculty and staff are committed to creating and maintaining an inclusive and supportive learning environment for students from diverse backgrounds and perspectives. K-State courses, labs, and other virtual and physical learning spaces promote equitable opportunity to learn, participate, contribute, and succeed, regardless of age, race, color, ethnicity, nationality, genetic information, ancestry, disability, socioeconomic status, military or veteran status, immigration status, Indigenous identity, gender identity, gender expression, sexuality, religion, culture, as well as other social identities.

Faculty and staff are committed to promoting equity and believe the success of an inclusive learning environment relies on the participation, support, and understanding of all students. Students are encouraged to share their views and lived experiences as they relate to the course or their course experience, while recognizing they are doing so in a learning environment in which all are expected to engage with respect to honor the rights, safety, and dignity of others in keeping with the K-State Principles of Community https://www.k-state.edu/about/values/community/.

If you feel uncomfortable because of comments or behavior encountered in this class, you may bring it to the attention of your instructor, advisors, and/or mentors. If you have questions about how to proceed with a confidential process to resolve concerns, please contact the Student Ombudsperson Office. Violations of the student code of conduct can be reported here https://www.k-state.edu/sga/judicial/student-code-of-conduct.html. If you experience bias or discrimination, it can be reported here https://www.k-state.edu/report/discrimination/.

Wearing of Face Masks

Kansas State University strongly encourages, but does not require, that everyone wear masks while indoors on university property, including while attending in-person classes. For additional information and the latest on K-State’s face covering policy, see https://www.k-state.edu/covid-19/guidance/health/face-covering.html.

Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Harassment

Kansas State University is committed to maintaining academic, housing, and work environments that are free of discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment. Instructors support the University’s commitment by creating a safe learning environment during this course, free of conduct that would interfere with your academic opportunities. Instructors also have a duty to report any behavior they become aware of that potentially violates the University’s policy prohibiting discrimination, harassment, and sexual harassment (PPM 3010).

If a student is subjected to discrimination, harassment, or sexual harassment, they are encouraged to make a non-confidential report to the University’s Office for Institutional Equity (OIE) using the online reporting form. Incident disclosure is not required to receive resources at K-State. Reports that include domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, or stalking, should be considered for reporting by the complainant to the Kansas State University Police Department or the Riley County Police Department. Reports made to law enforcement are separate from reports made to
OIE. A complainant can choose to report to one or both entities. Confidential support and advocacy can be found with the K-State Center for Advocacy, Response, and Education (CARE). Confidential mental health services can be found with Lafene Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS). Academic support can be found with the Office of Student Life (OSL). OSL is a non-confidential resource. A comprehensive list of resources is available here. If you have questions about non-confidential and confidential resources, please contact OIE at equity@ksu.edu or (785) 532–6220.

Academic Freedom

Kansas State University is a community of students, faculty, and staff who work together to discover new knowledge, create new ideas, and share the results of their scholarly inquiry with the wider public. Although new ideas or research results may be controversial or challenge established views, the health and growth of any society requires frank intellectual exchange. Academic freedom protects this type of free exchange and is thus essential to any university's mission.

Moreover, academic freedom supports collaborative work in the pursuit of truth and the dissemination of knowledge in an environment of inquiry, respectful debate, and professionalism. Academic freedom is not limited to the classroom or to scientific and scholarly research, but extends to the life of the university as well as to larger social and political questions. It is the right and responsibility of the university community to engage with such issues.

Principles of Community

Kansas State University is a land-grant, public research University committed to teaching and learning, research, and service to the people of Kansas, the nation, and the world. We believe our collective mission is best accomplished when every member of the University community acknowledges and practices the following principles:

*We* affirm the inherent dignity and value of every person and strive to maintain an atmosphere of justice based on respect for each other.

We affirm the value of human diversity and inclusion for community. We stand united against all forms of discrimination.

*We* affirm the right of each person to freely express thoughts and opinions in a spirit of civility and decency. We believe that diversity of views enriches our learning environment, and we promote open expression within a climate of courtesy, sensitivity, and mutual respect. For more information, please see the University's Statement on Free Speech and Expression and the University's Statement on Academic Freedom.

*We* affirm the value of honesty and integrity, and will act accordingly in all professional endeavors and expect the same from our colleagues.

*We* acknowledge that we are a part of multiple communities, and we have a responsibility to be
engaged in a positive way with our civic partners.

_We_ recognize our individual responsibilities to the University community and to the principles that sustain it. We will each strive to contribute to a positive spirit that affirms learning and growth for all members of the community.

**Mental Health**

Your mental health and good relationships are vital to your overall well-being. Symptoms of mental health issues may include excessive sadness or worry, thoughts of death or self-harm, inability to concentrate, lack of motivation, or substance abuse. Although problems can occur anytime for anyone, you should pay extra attention to your mental health if you are feeling academic or financial stress, discrimination, or have experienced a traumatic event, such as loss of a friend or family member, sexual assault or other physical or emotional abuse.

If you are struggling with these issues, do not wait to seek assistance.

- Kansas State University Counseling Services ([k-state.edu/counseling/](http://k-state.edu/counseling/)) offers free and confidential services to assist you to meet these challenges.
- Lafene Health Center ([https://www.k-state.edu/lafene](https://www.k-state.edu/lafene)) has specialized nurse practitioners to assist with mental health.
- The Office of Student Life ([k-state.edu/studentlife](http://k-state.edu/studentlife)) can direct you to additional resources.
- K-State Family Center offers individual, couple, and family counseling services on a sliding fee scale ([https://www.hhs.k-state.edu/familycenter/](https://www.hhs.k-state.edu/familycenter/)).
- Center for Advocacy, Response, and Education (CARE) provides free and confidential assistance for those in our K-State community who have been victimized by violence ([https://www.k-state.edu/care/](https://www.k-state.edu/care/)).

**K-State Campus Resources for Students**

K-State has many resources to help contribute to student success. These resources include accommodations for academics, paying for college, student life, health and safety, and others found at [www.k-state.edu/onestop](http://www.k-state.edu/onestop)

Some of these resources include:

**K-State Office of Student Life**, 785-532-6432

The Office of Student Life provides direct support and services to students and advocates for students in a variety of settings. They can connect you with accurate referrals for academic and personal problems.

**K-State Counseling Services**, 785-532-6927

As a student, you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning. These might include strained relationships, abuse, high levels of stress and anxiety, addiction, feeling down, or loss of motivation. Counseling Services provides mental health services on campus.
**K-State Academic Achievement Center**, 785-532-6492
The AAC is a free resource for all K-State students. The AAC offers free small group, one-on-one, and online tutoring through the Holtz Hall Tutoring Center, Supplemental Instruction to complement your large-lecture courses, Academic Coaching to develop strategies to maximize your personal strengths and conquer difficult classes, and Student Success Courses to learn the skills and strategies needed to be successful at K-State.

**K-State Writing Center**, 785-532-0842
The Writing Center provides feedback at any stage of the writing process to enable students to gain awareness of writing strategies; improve writing assignments or non-academic writing; and increase their sense of competence, confidence, and ownership in writing.

**Diversity and Multicultural Student Affairs**, 785-532-6276
The office provides leadership in building an inclusive campus climate that fosters mutual understanding among diverse groups.

**K-State LGBT Resource Center**, 785-532-5352
The LGBT Resource Center at Kansas State University is dedicated to helping the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) students, staff, and faculty and allied members of our campus and surrounding communities to be more secure, educated, and productive in their personal and professional surroundings.

**K-State Center for Advocacy, Response, and Education (CARE)**, 785-532-6444
The Center for Advocacy, Response and Education (CARE) provides confidential, free, and voluntary services and advocacy for survivors of sexual violence, dating violence, stalking and sexual harassment. CARE Survivor Advocates are available to assist survivors in understanding and navigating university policies and procedures and helps promote the academic success and personal wellness of survivors.

**Cats’ Cupboard**: The K-State Food Pantry, 785-532-0366
Cats’ Cupboard is open to all K-State students. Students are encouraged to take food, hygiene, and cooking equipment that correspond with their personal needs, and may utilize the pantry as often as they see fit.

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Copyright 2022 (Heidbreder) as to this syllabus and all lectures. During this course students are prohibited from selling notes to or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the express written permission of the professor teaching this course. In addition, students in this class are not authorized to provide class notes or other class-related materials to any other person or entity, other than sharing them directly with another student taking the class for purposes of studying, without prior written permission from the professor teaching this course.
Course Outline (subject to change as needed):

Intro Module: August 22

Readings: Course Syllabus

Videos: “Course Introduction” video

EC Quiz: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, August 28.

I have posted an extra credit (EC) quiz on Canvas that is worth up to 3 points, which will be added to your overall quiz grade. The quiz will include questions related to the syllabus and course introduction video. There will be 6 questions. This quiz is optional, you are not required to take it.

Module 1: August 29

Topic(s): Introduction to Politics and Government

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 1

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Quiz 1: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 4.

Module 2: September 5

Topic(s): The Founding and Constitutional Convention

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 2

The Declaration of Independence (found in Bianco & Canon appendix)

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Assignment: Your first assignment is due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 11.

Quiz 2: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 11.

Module 3: September 12

Topic(s): The Constitution

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 3

The Constitution of the United States (found in Bianco & Canon appendix)
Federalist 10 and 51 (found in Bianco & Canon appendix)

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Quiz 3: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 18.

Module 4: September 19

Topic(s): Federalism

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 3

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Quiz 4: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, September 25.

Module 5: September 26

Topic(s): Civil Liberties

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 4

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Quiz 5: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 2.

Module 6: October 3

Topic(s): Public Opinion

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 6

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Quiz 6: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 9.

Module 7: October 10

Topic(s): The Media

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 7

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Assignment: Your second assignment is due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 16.
Quiz 7: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 16.

Module 8: October 17

Topic(s): Political Parties

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 8

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Quiz 8: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 23.

Module 9: October 24

Topic(s): Elections

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 9

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Assignment: Your third assignment is due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 30.

Quiz 9: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, October 30.

Module 10: October 31

Topic(s): Interest Groups

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 10

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Assignment: Your third assignment is due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, November 1.

Quiz 10: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, November 7.

Module 11: November 7 and November 14

Topic(s): Congress

Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 11

Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas

Quiz 11: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, November 20.
STUDENT HOLIDAY – No new material from November 21 – November 27

Module 12: November 28

  Topic(s): Presidency
  Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapters 12
  Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas
  Assignment: Your fourth assignment is due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, December 4.
  Quiz 12: Due by 11:59 pm on Sunday, December 4.

Module 13: December 5

  Topic(s): Courts
  Reading(s): Bianco & Canon, Chapter 14
  Videos: Recorded lectures and videos found on Canvas
  Quiz 13: Due by 5:00 pm on Friday, December 16.