

# Political Science 2051:

## AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

### FALL 2020

*Instructor: Alvarez Hertzock III, MPA JD*

*Class: 120 A.P. Tureaud Hall*

*Time: Tuesday 4:00 PM –7:00 PM*

*Email: ahertzock1@lsu.edu*

*Office: 120 A.P. Tureaud Hall*

*Office Hours: 7:00 pm-8:00 pm,*

*or by appointment.*

#### Overview & Purpose

The purpose of this course is to provide you with an overview of American government. Discussion will center on how the American system of government came to exist and the various forces that have shaped its subsequent development. Thus, much of our focus will be on the structure of our government including executive, judiciary, legislative, and electoral institutions, among others. Throughout the course I will contrast the American system with other systems around the world. Additionally, I will be attempting to integrate discussions about how the phenomena discussed in theories of rational choice and collective action may influence or constrain the way our government was formulated and the way it works. As a general education elective in the social sciences, this course is designed to prepare students to meet the following competency requirements: “LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global independence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic differences.”

#### Required Texts:

1. *We the People* - pub: W.W. Norton 978-0393639988 (paperback with digital product)

#### Course Rules and Requirements

1. Students should read the selected text for the class prior to the class meeting so that they can participate and engage with the course material. These readings are provided in this syllabus.
2. The lectures given during our class meetings are intended to prepare you for the exams, and information may be presented during the lecture that is not in the textbook and will be on the exam.
3. Students should come to class prepared and be attentive and responsive during the lecture. Students are expected to attend class regularly, punctually, and for the duration of the class meeting. I reserve the right to penalize students who engage in disruptive behavior, such as using electronic devices, or those who arrive late or leave class early without informing the instructor. (More information on disruptive behavior and recourse can be located in the Academic Honesty section of this syllabus)
4. Throughout the semester there will be a series of comprehensive quizzes, which will be taken in-class or emailed via Moodle. There are absolutely no makeups for missed quizzes; however, if you miss one, extra credit will make up for those lost points, if you choose to do so.
5. There will also be (2) short writing assignments in which you will choose from a selection of the readings given in class that have been assigned up to that point. For these assignments, you will read your selection and in 2-pages (Front & Back), briefly summarize it and, more importantly, critically analyze it. So for these writing assignments, I want to see that you did the reading, followed by you essentially telling me what you thought of it; what you liked/didn't like/agreed/disagreed with, but most importantly, you must explain why.
6. The course consists of (9) quizzes, (2) writing assignments and a final exam. The quizzes will not be cumulative and could consist of a mix of multiple choice, short answer, and short essay questions. The dates of all of these are provided in the "Important Dates" section of the syllabus, as well as on the reading calendar. I will make it abundantly clear that short of a real conflict (familial or personal harm), there are absolutely no makeups for exams. If you do end up having an emergency and miss an exam, you will be required to provide a doctor's note, funeral notice, or some form of documentation pertaining to an emergency.

## Extra Credit

You will be given at least (2) chances for extra credit throughout the semester. This will likely come in the form of attendance at a lecture or presentation of my choosing outside of class hours. You will check in with me if I'm there or if I'm not, you will write a single-page response regarding what you took from it. You will need to notify me prior to your intent to complete one of the given extra credit opportunities. Each one of these will be rewarded with extra credit in the form of 5% of your final grade, equivalent to a quiz grade.

Given Extra Credit Opportunities:

1. Watch a 2020 presidential debate and provide an analysis of the candidates' positions, as well as an analysis of what you learned from the exchange of ideas.
2. Observe and summarize a public court case on any matter for at least (1) full hearing. Provide a procedural analysis of the proceedings, as well as an analysis of what you learned from the experience.
3. Observe and summarize at least (1) State Legislature session from either the House or the Senate. Provide a procedural analysis of the sessions, as well as an analysis of what you learned from the experience.
4. Attend any 2020 presidential candidate's campaign event. Provide a summary of the candidate's top 5 political issues, as well as an analysis of why you support or no longer support that candidate.
5. Observe and summarize at least (1) School Board Meeting, OR (1) City Council Meeting. Provide a procedural analysis of the meeting, as well as an analysis of what you learned from the experience.

## Attendance Policy

*In order to receive a passable grade, students are required to attend class. I will conduct attendance checks regularly throughout the semester and if you're present, you will receive full credit but if you are not... you don't. Only university-excused absences will be honored, but you must provide documentation. Examples of excused absences, which will not endanger your grade, are familial emergencies and duties (e.g. a sudden death, attending a wedding, etc.), university-sponsored events (athletic, club-affiliated, etc.) and severe illness.*

## Important Dates

*Course Intro, Student Survey #1 . . . . . August 25, 2020*

*Chapter 1 Quiz . . . . . September 01, 2020*

*Chapter 2 Quiz . . . . . September 08, 2020*

*Chapter 3 Quiz . . . . . September 15, 2020*

*Chapter 4 & 5 Writing Assignment #1 . . . . . September 22, 2020*

*Chapter 6 & 7 Quiz . . . . . September 29, 2020*

*Chapter 8 Quiz . . . . . October 06, 2020*

<i>Chapter 9 &amp; 10 Writing Assignment #2 . . . . .</i>	<i>October 13, 2020</i>
<i>Chapter 11 &amp; 12 Quiz . . . . .</i>	<i>October 20, 2020</i>
<i>Chapter 13 &amp; 14 Quiz . . . . .</i>	<i>October 27, 2020</i>
<i>Chapter 15 &amp; 16 Quiz . . . . .</i>	<i>November 03, 2020</i>
<i>Chapter 17 &amp; 18 Quiz. . . . .</i>	<i>November 10, 2020</i>
<i>Final Exam . . . . .</i>	<i>December 08, 2020 (8:00 PM-10:00 PM)</i>

### Grading Policy

Participation . . . . .	10%
Quizzes . . . . .	40%
Writing Assignments . . . . .	25%
Final Exam . . . . .	25%

### Grading Scale

<i>A . . . . .</i>	<i>89.99–99.99</i>
<i>B . . . . .</i>	<i>79.99–89.98</i>
<i>C . . . . .</i>	<i>69.99–79.98</i>
<i>D . . . . .</i>	<i>59.99–69.98</i>
<i>F . . . . .</i>	<i>0–59.98</i>

### Academic Honesty

Academic misconduct is defined by the Code of Student Conduct. You are encouraged to familiarize yourself with the LSU policy on academic misconduct, particularly regarding plagiarism. The LSU Code of Student Conduct can be found on the web site for the LSU Dean of Students:

<http://www.lsu.edu/students/deanofstudents/files/lsu-code-of-conduct.pdf>

Academic misconduct is a serious violation of university policy. This can come in the form of plagiarism, cheating, collusion, classroom disruptions, or improper use of technology. Academic misconduct will in no way be tolerated in this course and charges of such will be turned over to the Dean of Students for appropriate disciplinary action. This class has a zero tolerance policy about plagiarism, i.e. no “second chances.” In order to avoid this, please make sure to cite accurately and appropriately your sources. If a student is unsure of the proper ways to do this, they should contact me rather than taking the risk.

## Reading Schedule and Special Guest Itinerary

<i>Course Intro, Student Survey #1 . . . . .</i>	<i>August 25, 2020</i>
<i>Chapter 1 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>September 01, 2020</i>
<i>Chapter 2 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>September 08, 2020</i>
<i>Chapter 3 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>September 15, 2020 - <b>Chief of Police</b></i>
<i>Chapters 4 &amp; 5 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>September 22, 2020</i>
<i>Chapters 6 &amp; 7 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>September 29, 2020 - <b>News Reporter</b></i>
<i>Chapter 8 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>October 06, 2020</i>
<i>Chapters 9 &amp; 10 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>October 13, 2020 - <b>Mayor of Baton Rouge</b></i>
<i>Chapters 11 &amp; 12 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>October 20, 2020</i>
<i>Chapters 13 &amp; 14 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>October 27, 2020</i>
<i>Chapters 15 &amp; 16 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>November 07, 2020</i>
<i>Chapters 17 &amp; 18 Due . . . . .</i>	<i>November 14, 2020</i>

*Final Exam . . . . . December 08, 2020 (8:00 PM - 10:00 PM)*

“NEVER LET ANYONE TELL YOU HOW TO THINK,  
NEVER ALLOW ANYONE TO TELL YOU WHAT TO SAY.

OWN YOUR TRUTH,  
THAT’S REAL POWER.”

Prof. ALVAREZ J. HERTZOCK III, MPA JD