Faculty of Arts and Sciences - Department of Political Science

POL386H1 S

U.S. Government and Politics

Winter 2024 Syllabus

Course Meetings

POL386H1 S

Section	Day & Time	Delivery Mode & Location
LEC0101	Wednesday, 9:00 AM - 11:00 AM	In Person:

Refer to ACORN for the most up-to-date information about the location of the course meetings.

Please communicate with the instructor through email (ryan.hurl@utoronto.ca) NOT throught Quercus.

Course Contacts

Instructor: Dr. Ryan Hurl
Email: ryan.hurl@utoronto.ca
Phone: 647 466 0054
Office Hours and Location: Wednesday, 11am-12 noon Sidney Smithy 6024
Additional Notes: Please include course code when emailing... ALWAYS EMAIL DIRECTLY NEVER USE QUERCUS!!!!

Course Overview

Who rules the United State of America? This course will investigate this question by examining how power is attained and how power is exercised in American elections, the legislative process, the bureaucracy, and the federal courts. Particular attention will be paid to the role of national interest groups, regional economic interests, and new modes of political mobilization.

This course will focus on three interrelated themes in American politics. First, we will investigate why the relative power and influence of the legislative branch of the American federal government—Congress—has been supplanted by Presidential government and the administrative-bureaucratic state. We will try to confront the main challenges to Congressional government—that the American legislative process is dominated by organized interests, that it is not responsive to public opinion, and that it is simply incapable of directing public policy. Secondly, we will consider how American institutions shape public policy through a comparison of immigration policy in Canada and the United States. Finally, we will address the question of the sources and consequence of political polarization amongst the American public and political elites.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will have had an opportunity to develp their understanding of how to explain and conduct research on American politics, particularly in relation to the study of Congress, the policy-making process and political polarization.

Prerequisites: 1.0 credit in POL/ JPA/ JPF/ JPI/ JPR/ JPS/ JRA courses
Corequisites: None
Exclusions: POL203Y1/ POL203Y5/ POL386Y1/ POLC92H3/ POLC93H3
Recommended Preparation: POL214H1/ POL224H1/ POL200Y1 and/or a course in U.S. history
Credit Value: 0.5

It probably will help if you have taken POL 347 before taking this course, but it is by no means necessary.

Course Materials

Eric Kaufmann, *Whiteshift: Populism, Immigration, and the Future of White Majorities*. New York, 2019: Abrams Press. (recommended only) Available on-line through U of T library.

Phillip Wallach, *Why Congress?* New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2023 (available on-line through U of T library)

Antje Ellerman, *The Comparative Politics of Immigration: Policy Choices in Germany, Canada, Switzerland, and the United States*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2023 (available on-line through U of T library)

Nolan McCarthy, *Polarization: What Everyone Needs to Know*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2019 (available through Amazon; kindle version is only $11.00 https://www.amazon.ca/Polarization-What-Everyone-Needs-KnowRG/dp/0190867779

Marking Scheme

Assessment	Percent	Details	Due Date
Attendance and Participation	5%	There will be a variety of ways to demonstrate participation in the course—your grade will not ONLY be based upon attendance/speaking in class. In other words—do not worry if you are uncomfortable speaking in class, there will be other ways to participate	No Specific Date
Research Outline	10%		2024-01-24

Assessment	Percent	Details	Due Date
Rough Draft	10%		2024-02-28
Final Draft	35%		2024-04-03
In-Person Final Exam	40%		Final Exam Period

Late Assessment Submissions Policy

1/3 of a letter grade per day, up to 1 whole grade.

Policies & Statements

Late/Missed Assignments

This item is listed here to remind you to include your late/missed assignment policy; if you have late penalties, you are required to publish them in your syllabus. Please see the A&S Academic Handbook (https://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/faculty-staff/teaching/academic-handbook) sections on missed term work (Section 4.7), late term work and extensions (section 4.8), and missed term tests (Section 5.3) for more information.

Plagiarism Detection Tool

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University's plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool's reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq).

Late POlicy

1/3 of a letter grade per day late, up to one letter grade.