



## Waubonsee Community College - Summer 2008

**Political Science 100.910:** Introduction to American Government Telecourse

**Instructor:** Richard J. Kiefer

**Office Hours:** By Appointment

**Office:** 273 APC

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**Timeline:** To have a grade posted on your summer transcript, you must complete your final on or before **August 14, 2008.**

**Computer Access:** To use campus computers for homework in this class, contact the help desk at 466-7900 ext. 4357.

**Class Meets:** This class is a “telecourse”

**Course Description:** The basic concepts of political science with major emphasis on the origin, organization, and nature of the American federal system of government and politics in the United States

### Course Objectives:

1. Describe the Constitutional framework of American government.
2. Explain the functions of the various levels of American government: national, state, and local.
3. Be able to describe the key ideas found in the basic documents of American government: the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the Constitution (including the Bill of Rights).
4. Define the key ideas involved in polling, measuring public opinion, political parties, and running elections.
5. Explain the key differences between conservative, liberal, and radical approaches towards social reform.
6. Explain the rights and obligations of American citizens.
7. Describe the policymakers in the American system of government, and identify some of the issues that they address.

**Required Texts:** Cummings & Wise, Democracy Under Pressure: An Introduction to the American Political System, Tenth Edition 2006.

Lynch, Telecourse Guide – Voices in Democracy.

**Course Expectations:** Political Science 100 is an introductory course to American government and politics. There will be four essay tests, which must be taken at the Assessment Office on Waubonsee’s Sugar Grove or Aurora campus. In addition, each student will write an issue paper that deals with some aspect of American Government. This paper assignment will be described in detail during the course of the class.

**Outline:** Introduction to Course

**READ**  
**Textbook:**

**VIEW**  
**Videos:**

Part One: The American Democracy  
Government & People  
The Constitutional Framework  
The Federal System  
Civil Liberties & Citizenship  
The Struggle for Equal Rights

Chapter 1  
Chapter 2  
Chapter 3  
Chapter 4  
Chapter 5

Lesson 1  
Lessons 2 & 3  
Lesson 4  
Lesson 25  
Lesson 26

**First Exam** – Covering Chapters 1 through 5

Part Two: Politics and People  
Public Opinion  
Interest Groups  
The Media & Politics  
Political Parties  
Political Campaign & Candidates  
Voting Behavior & Elections

Chapter 6  
Chapter 7  
Chapter 8  
Chapter 9  
Chapter 10  
Chapter 11

Lesson 6  
Lesson 9  
Lessons 8 & 11  
Lesson 10  
Lessons 12 & 13  
Lesson 7

**Second Exam** - Covering Chapters 6 through 11

Part Three: The Policymakers  
The Congress  
The President  
The Bureaucracy  
Justice

Chapter 12  
Chapter 13  
Chapter 14  
Chapter 15

Lessons 14, 15, & 16  
Lesson 17  
Lesson 18  
Lessons 22 & 23

**Third Exam** – Covering Chapters 12 through 15

Part Four: Government in Operation  
Foreign Policy & National Security  
Government & the Economy  
Promoting the General Welfare  
State & Local Government

Chapter 16  
Chapter 17  
Chapter 18  
Chapter 19

Lessons 20 & 21  
No Video Lesson  
Lessons 5 & 19  
No Video Lesson

**Fourth Exam** – Covering Chapters 16 through 19

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**Grading:**

Paper	20%
1st Exam	20%
2nd Exam	20%
3rd Exam	20%
<u>4th Exam</u>	<u>20%</u>
Total	100%

A = 90 – 100%  
B = 80 – 89%  
C = 70 – 79%  
D = 60 – 69%  
F = 0 – 59%

### ***Other Things to Consider***

- ☞ Anyone caught cheating will be given a zero (0) on the test or assignment. ☞
- ☞ Voice your opinion(s), but respect the view of others! ☞
- ☞ Become an informed and active citizen. ☞
- ☞ Contact me (stop by my office, call, or e-mail) anytime that you have questions about this course or your progress in it. ☞

### **How to Succeed:**

For many of you, this will be the first time you have taken an independent study course. This course was designed to allow you to earn college credit by fitting the course into your schedule.

The video lessons have been designed to illustrate and enrich concepts that you are reading about in the textbooks. You will learn the most from the videos by completing the assigned reading, working in the study guide prior to viewing, and by taking notes while observing the videos.

Students must complete the course by [August 14th](#) unless other arrangements are agreed upon.

***IMPORTANT:*** If, for any reason, you are unable to meet the above deadlines and/or require an extension, please contact me in writing (please date your letter) and we may be able to work out an alternative.

Complete sets of DVDs are available for borrowing through the Distance Learning Office. The Distance Learning Office is located on the Sugar Grove campus in Collins Hall room 145. There is no fee to borrow a set of telecourse DVDS. If you are unable to come to the Sugar Grove campus to pick up a set, please call to explore your options. The phone number is 630-466-2402.

**Political Science 100**  
**Summer 2008**  
**Issue Paper**

As a requirement for this course you must write a paper dealing with a political issue. This paper must be based on a topic that is related to our course, and should be about 3 to 5 typed pages in length. Focus on the following components:

**Part One:** Summarize or explain the issue that you are studying.

**Part Two:** Explain how your topic relates to our class. Specifically, what is your topic's relationship to our study of American Government and our political system?

**Part Three:** Explain your own opinion about the issue. Are there solutions available to this problem? Why did you study it? Why is it relevant?

**\*\*\*Do not forget to document and cite your sources – Make sure to reference statistics, quotes, or information within your paper. Also, all papers should include a “works cited” page that lists all sources that were used in your research and writing!!! Do not plagiarize!!!\*\*\***

This paper is due **1 week before the end of the semester**. If you would like to use campus computers to type your paper and need assistance, please contact the help desk at 630-466-7900 ext. 4357. Please turn your finished paper into my mailbox at the Academic Professional Center on the Sugar Grove campus, email, or mail it to me at:

Waubonsee Community College  
C/O Richard Kiefer, Academic Professional Center  
Rt. 47 at Waubonsee Drive  
Sugar Grove IL 60554

If you have any questions about this paper, or concerns about a suitable topic for it, please feel free to contact me at 466-7900 ext. 2329, or e-mail me at [rkiefer@waubonsee.edu](mailto:rkiefer@waubonsee.edu)

Hints:

- 🌐 You may want to deal with a particular issue, event, or individual that is involved with your topic.
- 🌐 You may want to use a recent article from a magazine or journal as the basis for your paper.
- 🌐 Make sure to use the college's Library, particularly the Infotrac system, Newsbank, or Internet.
- 🌐 You may want to examine an issue that is currently a topic of debate by our government at the federal, state, or local level.
- 🌐 **Make sure that you document your sources! Plagiarism is a serious offense that may result in you receiving an “F” (zero points) on the assignment.**
- 🌐 Again, see me if you have any questions about this assignment.