

COURSE OUTLINE		
TERM: Fall 2025	COURSE NO: POL 210	
INSTRUCTOR:	COURSE TITLE: Politics of the United States	
OFFICE: LOCAL: E-MAIL: @capilanou.ca	SECTION NO(S):	CREDITS: 3.0
OFFICE HOURS:		
COURSE WEBSITE:		

Capilano University acknowledges with respect the Lil'wat7úl (Lil'wat), xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), shíshálh (Sechelt), Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and Səlílwətaʔ/Selilwitulh (Tseil-Waututh) people on whose territories our campuses are located.

COURSE FORMAT

Three hours of class time, plus an additional hour delivered through on-line or other activities for a 15-week semester, which includes two weeks for final exams.

COURSE PREREQUISITES/CO-REQUISITES

None

CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course offers a comprehensive examination of the central institutions and processes of American politics. It begins with an examination of the historical and theoretical foundations and evolution of American Republic. Major themes covered include the constitution, federalism, congress, the presidency, the judiciary, civil rights, and foreign policy. Contemporary challenges facing American politics are also discussed, such as the rise of populism, the polarization of American political culture, the persistence of racial exclusion and inequality, Native American politics and Tribal sovereignty, the influence of money and corporate power on politics, and the changing nature of American power on the global stage.

COURSE NOTE

POL 210 is an approved Self and Society course for Cap Core requirements.

REQUIRED TEXTS AND/OR RESOURCES

Brooks, Stephen, Donald E. Abelson, and Melissa Haussman. *Understanding American Politics*. 3rd Ed. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2024.

*Choice of textbook and/or readings is ultimately at the discretion of the instructor.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to do the following:

- Define key concepts such as politics, government, state, nation, and power;
- Explain the formative relationship between forces of American culture and American political and state institutions;
- Analyze, from a variety of theoretical perspectives, the role of federalism, the executive, congress, the judiciary, elections, political parties, and the constitution in American political life;
- Critically evaluate scholarly arguments concerning the intended purposes and responsiveness of central American political institutions using principles like democracy, liberty, justice, fairness, and equality;
- Explain connections between news articles and scholarly commentary on the appropriate nature and function of American political institutions.

Students who complete this Self and Society course will be able to do the following:

- Identify potential root causes of local/global problems and how they affect local/global cultures, economies, politics, and policies.
- Assess and evaluate individual and collective responsibilities within a diverse and interconnected global society.
- Synthesize a range of differing community perspectives on ethics and justice and explain how these perspectives can inform structural change.
- Explain how contexts (e.g., cultural, historical, colonial, economic, technological) shape identity formation and social structures.

COURSE CONTENT

*The course content will be determined by the instructor and may include but is not limited to the following topics:

Week	Topic
1	Course Introduction
2	The American Republic: Ideas and Foundations
3	The Constitution
4	Congress
5	The Presidency
6	The Judiciary
7	Midterm
8	Campaigns and Elections

Week	Topic
9	Political Parties
10	Civil Liberties
11	Civil Rights
12	Foreign Policy
13	Critical Perspectives on US Politics
14-15	Final Exam Period

EVALUATION PROFILE

The evaluation profile will be determined by the instructor and may include but are not limited to the following items:

Participation	10%
Quizzes	10%
Midterm	25%
Term Paper	25%
Final Exam	30%
TOTAL	100%

Participation

Participation grades are distributed on the basis of each student's ability to demonstrate through class discussions and activities a sustained and reflective engagement with course readings. In other words, it is not enough to simply show up for class. Coming to class without doing the readings will not result in a good participation grade. Students are expected to have completed all readings and engage with them thoughtfully.

GRADING PROFILE

A+ = 90-100	B+ = 77-79	C+ = 67-69	D = 50-59
A = 85-89	B = 73-76	C = 63-66	F = 0-49
A- = 80-84	B- = 70-72	C- = 60-62	

Incomplete Grades

Grades of Incomplete "I" are assigned only in exceptional circumstances when a student requests extra time to complete their coursework. Such agreements are made only at the request of the student, who is responsible to determine from the instructor the outstanding requirements of the course.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the due date listed, unless otherwise determined by the instructor. If you anticipate handing in an assignment late, please consult with your instructor beforehand. Assignments will be penalized at -5% per day (including weekends).

Missed Exams, Quizzes/Labs, etc.

Some missed activities may not be able to be accommodated. Please consult with your instructor. Make-up exams are given at the discretion of the instructor, and generally given only because of medical emergencies or severe personal crises. Accommodations can be made to honour community needs and traditional practices.

Attendance

Students are expected to attend all classes unless they are sick. If you are sick, please email your instructor prior to the beginning of class in order to provide notification of your intended absence. Please do not come to class if you are sick or symptomatic.

English Usage

Students are expected to proofread all written work for any grammatical, spelling and stylistic errors. Instructors may deduct marks for incorrect grammar and spelling in written assignments.

Electronic Devices

Students may use electronic devices during class for note-taking only.

On-line Communication

Outside of the classroom, instructors will (if necessary) communicate with students using either their official Capilano University email or eLearn; please check both regularly. Official communication between Capilano University and students is delivered to students' Capilano University email addresses only.

UNIVERSITY OPERATIONAL DETAILS**Tools for Success**

Many services are available to support student success for Capilano University students. A central navigation point for all services can be found at: <https://www.capilanou.ca/student-services/>

Capilano University Security: download the [CapU Mobile Safety App](#)

Policy Statement (S2009-06)

Capilano University has policies on Academic Appeals (including appeal of final grade), Student Conduct, Academic Integrity, Academic Probation and other educational issues. These and other policies are available on the University website.

Academic Integrity (S2017-05)

Any instance of academic dishonesty or breach of the standards of academic integrity is serious and students will be held accountable for their actions, whether acting alone or in a group. See policy and procedures S2017-05 Academic Integrity for more information:

<https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>

Violations of academic integrity, including dishonesty in assignments, examinations, or other academic performances, are prohibited and will be handled in accordance with the Student Academic Integrity Procedures.

Academic dishonesty is any act that breaches one or more of the principles of academic integrity. Acts of academic dishonesty may include but are not limited to the following types:

Cheating: Using or providing unauthorized aids, assistance or materials while preparing or completing assessments, or when completing practical work (in clinical, practicum, or lab settings), including but not limited to the following:

- Copying or attempting to copy the work of another during an assessment;
- Communicating work to another student during an examination;
- Using unauthorized aids, notes, or electronic devices or means during an examination;
- Unauthorized possession of an assessment or answer key; and/or,
- Submitting of a substantially similar assessment by two or more students, except in the case where such submission is specifically authorized by the instructor.

Fraud: Creation or use of falsified documents.

Misuse or misrepresentation of sources: Presenting source material in such a way as to distort its original purpose or implication(s); misattributing words, ideas, etc. to someone other than the original source; misrepresenting or manipulating research findings or data; and/or suppressing aspects of findings or data in order to present conclusions in a light other than the research, taken as a whole, would support.

Plagiarism: Presenting or submitting, as one's own work, the research, words, ideas, artistic imagery, arguments, calculations, illustrations, or diagrams of another person or persons without explicit or accurate citation or credit.

Self-Plagiarism: Submitting one's own work for credit in more than one course without the permission of the instructors, or re-submitting work, in whole or in part, for which credit has already been granted without permission of the instructors.

Prohibited Conduct: The following are examples of other conduct specifically prohibited:

- Taking unauthorized possession of the work of another student (for example, intercepting and removing such work from a photocopier or printer, or collecting the graded work of another student from a stack of papers);
- Falsifying one's own and/or other students' attendance in a course;
- Impersonating or allowing the impersonation of an individual;
- Modifying a graded assessment then submitting it for re-grading; or,
- Assisting or attempting to assist another person to commit any breach of academic integrity.

Sexual Violence and Misconduct

All Members of the University Community have the right to work, teach and study in an environment that is free from all forms of sexual violence and misconduct. Policy B401 defines sexual assault as follows:

Sexual assault is any form of sexual contact that occurs without ongoing and freely given consent, including the threat of sexual contact without consent. Sexual assault can be committed by a stranger, someone known to the survivor or an intimate partner.

Safety and security at the University are a priority and any form of sexual violence and misconduct will not be tolerated or condoned. The University expects all Students and Members of the University Community to abide by all laws and University policies, including B.401 Sexual Violence and Misconduct Policy and B.401.1 Sexual Violence and Misconduct Procedure (found on Policy page <https://www.capilanou.ca/about-capu/governance/policies/>)

Emergencies: Students are expected to familiarise themselves with the emergency policies where appropriate and the emergency procedures posted on the wall of the classroom.