

POL S 560  
↳ add 460

1. Full catalog information for each course to be dual-listed, including the course numbers (or proposed course numbers), title, credits, semester offering (if applicable), prerequisites, and description. Dual-listed courses bear common numbers, e.g., 580 (480).

POL S 560 (460) American Political Institutions (3-0) Cr. 3.

*Prereq: 6 credits in American government*

Examination of policy-making and governance in a separation of powers system. Interaction between the chief executive, the legislature, administrative agencies, and the public. How political and legal forces affect policy makers and are reflected in public policies and programs.

2. Graduate faculty status of the proposed instructor.

David Peterson is a full professor and member of the Graduate Faculty.

3. Number of the dual-listed course credits the department will permit to be used to meet the requirements for an advanced degree. This limit includes dual-listed courses taken in all departments.

Our department does not set a cap other than whatever is deemed appropriate by the POS committee.

4. The differential expectations for graduate students and undergraduates. What additional work will be required for graduate students enrolled in the course? Please describe this work, not in abstract terms (such as "more in-depth participation") but in terms of concrete measurable outcomes or other tangible evidence. Welcome inclusions: specific examples of the additional assignments with details about paper length; the number of additional readings; the length and frequency of oral presentations; portfolio expectations; indications of how these graduate requirements are weighted in the course grade (ex. 40% of final grade); comparisons with undergraduate expectations.

This course covers the institutions of American politics. We offer other undergraduate courses that treat the institutions (presidency, Congress, etc.) in isolation, but this course emphasizes the synthesis of research on each of these. Graduate students are expected to write a longer research paper, do additional readings, write an additional essay as part of each exam, and lead discussions.

Here are the course requirements for the undergraduate and graduate courses:

#### **460 Course requirements**

- 1) Class participation, including the submission of weekly discussion points (25%)
- 2) A midterm (25%)
- 3) A Final Exam (25%)
- 4) A literature synthesis paper (25%)

#### **560 Course Requirement**

- 1) Class participation including the submission of weekly discussion points (20%)
- 2) A midterm (with an additional essay) (20%)
- 3) Lead discussion twice during the semester (20%)
- 4) A Final Exam (with an additional essay) (20%)
- 5) A literature review and research design paper (20%)

The readings each week will be a mix of a book and articles. Graduate students will be assigned 2-3 additional articles for each topic. The graduate term paper is significantly longer and contains the development of an original hypothesis and an original research design. The graduate students are supposed to do extra reading each week, and will work to lead discussion twice each semester. The number of discussions lead may depend on size of the course to make this work logistically. Each of the exams will take home exams that will require students to choose from a list of questions. Graduate students will have to answer an additional question from the list.

5. Reason(s) the course is considered sufficiently rigorous and of such an advanced nature as to challenge graduate students.

The readings will be exclusively original research published in top journals and presses. The leading of discussion will require the students to better master the material. The research design paper will be invaluable for students as they develop their own theses.

6. Academic advantages and disadvantages accruing to graduate students taking this course with undergraduates.

The main advantage for graduate students is that the presence of additional students, who will have done less reading, will force the graduate students to be able to comprehend the material well enough to present it to the undergraduates. Additionally, Having additional students in the course make the discussions work better. Our current enrollments in 560 are small enough that the class sessions become a little stilted. Opening enrollments to advanced undergraduates will help with this.

The

7. The place of the course in a graduate student's program of study and why it is not considered a "remedial" undertaking intended to overcome deficiencies in the student's preparation for graduate work.

This could be a core course for a student with an American emphasis or an elective for other students. It is not a remedial course nor is it a prerequisite for any other course.

8. The role of the course in an undergraduate's degree program and the academic qualifications undergraduates must have to take this course.

The course can serve as an upper level course for political science majors. It will be attractive to the best of our students who are looking for more advanced challenges and a broader introduction to primary research in American politics. The prerequisite is at least 6 credits in American politics.

9. The name of the person writing the proposal.

David Peterson

**American Political Institutions (Pol S 560)**  
**Spring 2016**  
**Thursdays 2:10-5pm, 518 Ross Hall**

Professor Tessa Ditonto

[tditonto@iastate.edu](mailto:tditonto@iastate.edu)

Office: 517 Ross Hall

Office Hours: Mondays and Fridays 10-12, or by appointment

**Introduction**

This class is designed to provide you with an introduction to the study of American political institutions. While we will not be able to cover even a fraction of the large amount of important and interesting work in this area, we will touch on a variety of topics and debates that are central to the subfield. In particular, we will spend time reading and discussing works related to the nature of power and democracy, political representation, the formal institutions of government (like Congress, the presidency, the courts, and elections) and informal institutions (such as the media, political parties, and interest groups). Readings are chosen because they are considered to be among the most important in a given area (and/or are perhaps what I find to be most interesting) and will help to give students a solid foundation for further graduate study and thesis writing in American Politics.

**Required Readings**

The following texts are required and will be read in their entirety, unless otherwise noted. Other readings will be available on the course Blackboard site. All assigned readings must be completed before coming to class on the day they are to be discussed.

Frymer, Paul. 1999. *Uneasy Alliances: Race and Party Competition in America*. Princeton.

Gaventa, John. 1982. *Power and Powerlessness: Quiescence and Rebellion in an Appalachian Valley*. Clarendon.

Redlawsk, David, et al. 2011. *Why Iowa? How Caucuses and Sequential Elections Improve the Presidential Nominating Process*. Chicago.

Rosenberg, Gerald. 1991. *The Hollow Hope: Can Courts Bring About Social Change?* Chicago.

Mayhew, David R. *Congress: The Electoral Connection*. Yale.

Epstein, Lee and Jack Knight. *The Choices Justices Make*. CQ.

Lublin, David. *The Paradox of Representation: Racial Gerrymandering and Minority Interests in Congress*. Princeton

Lawless, Jennifer and Richard Fox. *It Still Takes a Candidate: Why Women Don't Run for Office*. Cambridge.

Noel, Hans. *Political Ideologies and Political Parties in America*. Cambridge.

Canes-Wrone, Brandice. *Who Leads Whom? Presidents, Policy and the Public*. Chicago.

### **Attendance and Participation**

This is a graduate level course and, therefore, relies heavily on student engagement and participation. Attendance is mandatory. Repeated absences, tardiness, early departures, etc., will result in a failing grade. Active participation in class is also mandatory and will comprise a large portion of your final grade. Because this is a seminar class, you must arrive in class having completed the week's readings and prepared to contribute to an in-depth discussion of those readings.

### **Talking Points**

In order to help you to organize your thoughts before class, each student will be required to submit three talking points on each week's readings. These are due by email (send them to [tditonto@iastate.edu](mailto:tditonto@iastate.edu)) each Wednesday by noon. These talking points will help to shape the seminar discussions, so they should be the most interesting questions or arguments that arose for you while reading the week's text(s). They should be submitted in the form of three short paragraphs outlining each question or argument. Students should submit exactly three talking points each week. Each talking point should refer to one or more specific sections of the weekly readings (with appropriate page references) and should address a central piece of the reading's argument (don't react to throw-away lines in the introduction, e.g.). As the semester progresses, talking points can (and should!) draw on readings from previous weeks in order to make connections across topic areas. Talking points that do not engage with the readings in a meaningful way, or that arrive late, will not be accepted.

### **Exams**

There will be a midterm and a final exam for this course. They will both be comprehensive, essay-based and in a take-home format. They are open-book and open-note, but must be completed on your own, without help from other students or faculty. The mid-term will be distributed at the end of class on Thursday, March 3rd and will be due by 9pm on Thursday, March 10<sup>th</sup>. The final exam will be distributed at the end of class on Thursday, April 28th and will be due by Wednesday, May 4<sup>th</sup> and 9pm. Exams should be submitted electronically via the course Blackboard site.

## Grading

Talking Points:	15%
In-Class Participation:	15%
Mid-term Exam	30%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

### Grade scale:

93%-100%	A
90%-92%	A-
87% -89%	B+
83%-86%	B
80%-82%	B-
77%-79%	C+
73%-76%	C
70%-72%	C-
67%-69%	D+
63%-66%	D
60%-62%	D-
<60%	F

## Academic Dishonesty

All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own, done exclusively for this course. Cheating or plagiarism will not be tolerated. The 2013-2014 Iowa State University Catalog states: "Academic dishonesty occurs when a student uses or attempts to use unauthorized information in the taking of an exam; or submits as his or her own work themes, reports, drawings, laboratory notes, or other products prepared by another person; or knowingly assists another student in such acts of plagiarism." If you have any questions as to what constitutes either of these situations, please ask. **Plagiarism or Academic Dishonesty will result in a failing grade in this class and could result in further sanctions by the University.**

## Students with Disabilities

Please address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. Those seeking accommodations based on disabilities should obtain a Student Academic Accommodation Request (SAAR) form from the Disability Resources (DR) office (phone 515-294-7220). DR is located on the main floor of the Student Services Building, Room 1076.

## **Class Schedule**

### **Week 1: Thursday, January 14 – Introduction to Course**

### **Week 2: Thursday, January 21 – Campaigns and Elections**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

*Why Iowa?* Redlawsk, Tolbert, and Donovan

### **Week 3: Thursday, January 28 – Democracy, Pluralism and Power**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

*Power and Powerlessness* Gaventa

### **Week 4: Thursday, February 4 – Representation**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

Selections from *The Concept of Representation* Pitkin and “Rethinking Representation” Mansbridge (Blackboard)

### **Week 5: Thursday, February 11 – Representation 2 – Gender and Elections**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

Lawless and Fox *It Still Takes a Candidate*

### **Week 6: Thursday, February 18 – Congress 1**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

Mayhew *The Electoral Connection*

### **Week 7: Thursday, February 25 – Congress 2 – Race and Redistricting**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

Lublin *The Paradox of Representation*

### **Week 8: Thursday, March 3 – The Presidency 1**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

Selections from *Presidential Power and Modern Presidents* Neustadt and *The Politics Presidents Make* Skowronek (Blackboard)

### **Week 9: Thursday, 3/10 – MIDTERM TAKE-HOME EXAM (no class meeting)**

### **Week 10: Spring Break**

### **Week 11: Thursday, March 24 – The Presidency 2**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

Canes-Wrone *Who Leads Whom?*

### **Week 12: Thursday, March 31 – Courts 1**

#### **Assigned Reading:**

Epstein and Knight *The Choices Justices Make*

**Week 13: Thursday, April 7 – Courts 2**

**Assigned Reading:**

Rosenberg *The Hollow Hope*

**Week 14: Thursday, April 14 – Political Parties 1**

**Assigned Reading:**

Noel *Political Ideologies and Political Parties*

**Week 15: Thursday, April 21 – Political Parties 2**

**Assigned Reading:**

Frymer *Uneasy Alliances*

**Week 16: Thursday, April 28 – Interest Groups and the Media**

**Assigned Reading:**

Various articles and excerpts TBA (on Blackboard)

**Week of Monday May 2: FINAL TAKE-HOME EXAM (no class meeting)**