

POL 1560 - American Government

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 06, CRN 43229,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

Adam Fuller

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Adam Fuller

Instructor Professional Qualifications:

Ph.D., Political Science, Claremont Graduate University

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Course Description

1560. American Government. The foundations of American democratic government with an emphasis on the responsibilities of citizenship, civil rights, and civil liberties, parties and elections, and American political institutions. Students are encouraged to understand and discuss issues of social justice, equality and freedom, and majoritarianism. Topics include the civil rights movement, campaign finance reform, federalism, and affirmative action. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	Declaration of Independence		
Required	U.S. Constitution and Bill of Rights		
Required	Federalist #10, #51, #63, #68, and #78	Publius	
Required	Letter to James Madison on the Constitution	Thomas Jefferson	
Required	Second Treatise of Government (selections)	John Locke	
Required	The Wealth of Nations (selection)	Adam Smith	
Required	Democracy in America (selections)	Alexis de Tocqueville	
Required	Dred Scott Speech in Springfield	Abraham Lincoln	
Required	"A Declaration of Sentiments": Speech at Seneca Falls	Elizabeth Cady Stanton	
Required	"The New Nationalism": Speech at Osawatomie	Theodore Roosevelt	
Required	"The Myth of Rugged American Individualism"	Charles Beard	
Required	"Experiments in Government and the Essentials of the Constitution"	Elihu Root	
	Fireside Chat #3: "On the National Recovery Administration"	Franklin D. Roosevelt	



	"Let America Be America Again"	Langston Hughes
Required	"Extremism in the Defense of Liberty": Speech at 1964 Republican National Convention	Barry Goldwater
Required	"Letter from the Birmingham Jail"	Martin Luther King
Required	"I Have a Dream" speech	Martin Luther King
Required	"What's Wrong with Equal Rights for Women?"	Phyllis Schlafley
Required	"Program for Economic Recovery": 1981 Address Before Joint Session of Congress	Ronald Reagan
Required	"A Time for Choosing": Keynote Address at 1964 Republican National Convention	Ronald Reagan
Required	"The Constitution's Bicentennial: Commemorating the Wrong Document?"	Thurgood Marshall
Required	"Why the Rich Get Richer and the Poor, Poorer" (from "The Work of Nations")	Robert Reich
Required	"The Laffer Curve: Past, Present, and Future"	Art Laffer
Required	"Constitutional Interpretation the Old-Fashioned Way"	Antonin Scalia
Required	"Corporate Greed": 2010 Filibuster in the US Senate (selection)	Bernie Sanders
Required	"The Buffet Rule": 2012 State of the Union Address	Barack Obama
Required	"Back in the Center of the American Heartland": 2017 Rally Speech in Youngstown	Donald Trump

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Syllabus and Curriculum Outline	Defining concepts: What is "government"? What are "politics"?	Assignments
8/31	Declaration of Independence Federalists #10 Federalists #51 John Locke, "Second Treatise of Government" (selection)	The American Founding: Theoretical Principles of Freedom and Democracy	Assignments
9/7	Same as week 8/31	Same subject continued from week 8/31	Assignments
9/14	The U.S. Constitution Bill of Rights Alexis de Tocqueville, "On the Federal System"	The Constitution, Federalism, and the Bill of Rights: State's Rights and Civil Liberties	Assignments
9/21	Same as week 9/14	Same subject continued from week 9/14	Assignments



9/28	Abraham Lincoln Theodore Roosevelt Charles Beard Elihu Root	Debating the Founding: Conserve It or Reform It?	Exam 1 Assignments
10/5	Same as week 9/28	Same subject continued from week 9/28	Assignments
10/12	Alexis de Tocqueville, "On Voting," Langston Hughes Elizabeth Cady Stanton Phyllis Shlafley Martin Luther King (both pieces)	Voting, Political Participation, and Representation	Assignments
10/19	Alexis de Tocqueville, selections on the presidency Federalists #63 Federalists #68	American Institutions: Congress and the President	Assignments
10/26	Same readings as week 10/19	Same subject continued from 10/28	Assignments Exam 2
11/2	Federalist #78 Alexis de Tocqueville, selections on the judiciary Thurgood Marshall Antonin Scalia	American Institutions: The Judiciary	Assignments
11/9	Same as week 11/2	Same subject continued from week 11/9	Assignments
11/16	Adam Smith Franklin Roosevelt Barry Goldwater Ronald Reagan (both pieces) Robert Reich Art Laffer Bernie Sanders Barack Obama Donald Trump	Public Policy & Decision-Making	Assignments
11/23	Same readings as week 11/16	Same subject continued from week 11/16	Assignments
11/30	Same readings as week 11/16	Same subject continued from week 11/16	Assignments
12/7	No reading	Final Exam Week	Exam 3

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