

## **IDS 2338: Democratic Engagement and Public Leadership Fall 2020**

This is an online course.

### **Instructor:**

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Office Hours:

Mondays, 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM [via Zoom](#)

Thursdays, 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM [via Zoom](#)

### **Course Texts:**

There are no required or assigned textbooks or books for this course.

Texts will consist of scholarly articles, current news articles, policy papers, and online resources. These will appear in the online Canvas course shell. Scholarly articles are listed in the course schedule below, under the weeks for which they are assigned. All scholarly articles can be accessed through the [UF Libraries website](#), if you need help navigating the library website, [tutorials are available here](#). From your computer, you will need to be on the [UF VPN Network](#).

### **Course Goals:**

- Provide the background in U.S. History and Government for the context of understanding the individuals' role within a democratic republic.
- Through critical thinking, analysis and evaluation, develop the skills to engage in productive civil discourse.
- Construct and defend a policy stance concerning a current social, political, or economic issue through the use of basic academic research practices.
- Reflect upon and evaluate methods of civic activism.

### **Course Objectives:**

Beyond being a member of a nation or state, Merriam-Webster defines 'citizenship' as "the qualities that a person is expected to have as a responsible member of a community." What does citizenship mean to you within a democratic republic like the U.S.? Being a citizen conveys responsibilities each individual must meet in order to keep any democracy healthy and functioning. Citizenship is not a passive notion, but a dynamic active experience. **To fulfill one's role as a citizen, it requires an individual to be both informed and engaged.**

While it may not be unusual to have a pessimistic view of politics, it is no excuse for lack of participation. Often, we are left to feel powerless or unsure of how to take action when it comes to advocating for those issues or policies we are concerned about the most. **This course changes all of that by providing you the tools, skills, and perspective on how to get informed**

**and be active in public life.** The U.S. system of federalism provides opportunities to be involved in a multi-layered system of government that functions from the local to the national level.

Government is all around us, and that is not a bad thing. Policies are implemented every day at our local (city or county), state, or national levels that have impact on our lives. We as citizens have a duty to be vigilant and active in expressing our opinions and beliefs so as to have an impact that benefits our communities. While political discussions tend to focus on Washington, D.C., there are avenues of action right here in your city or county that you can play a role in changing. This course gives you the competencies to know how to be a productive citizen.

**Modules will function similar to an in-person course, where all work is assigned at the beginning of the Module (Tuesdays) and is expected to be completed by the end of the Module week (Mondays), with the exceptions of the Public Policy Case Study and the Civic Action Plan. Specific due dates are in Canvas and below in the week by week syllabus outline.**

**Assignments:**

**Background Videos:** these short (<15 min) videos provide in-depth background information on the selected topic of the Module. The videos offer insight into historical and contemporary policy debates, institutions, and democratic values and norms that support citizenship in the U.S. During 10 selected weeks (see the course schedule), you will take a short 10 question multiple-choice quiz on the topic of the week following each Background Video. The top 8 scores out of 10 quizzes will count toward your final grade. Percent of total grade: 15%

**Class Discussion Forums:** the forums will be central to the course, where you will provide analysis and discussion of the Module topic by synthesizing the readings, Background Video information, and any additional resources provided, by addressing and discussing a specific question with your classmates. You must offer an original response to the discussion question, as well as comment on your classmates' responses during the Module. Class Discussions will be alternated with the Weekly Module Challenge Assignments. Percent of total grade: 20%

**Module Challenge Assignments:** Non-Class Discussion Modules will have an assignment to reinforce the ideas and information presented in the Module. The assignment specifics will be provided in Canvas and will focus on the topic of that week. Each of these assignments offers a virtual experiential learning opportunity by asking you to conduct research or interact with small groups of individuals in order to complete the assignment. It will also require you to reflect on how the assignment provided additional insight into making an impact in public or civic life. Percent of total grade: 20%

**Public Policy Case Study Paper:** This short essay (2 pages) will consist of a brief analysis on a specific public policy issue chosen from a list provided in Canvas. You will research one specific aspect of the issue, including finding resources, providing analysis, and making a policy recommendation. This brief paper will offer a summary, background and analysis of this policy, as well as offer reflection on whether you believe the policy to be sufficient in solving the issue.

This paper will be completed in the first half of the semester. **Further details will be provided on Canvas during the first week of class.** Percent of total grade: 20%

**The Civic Action Plan:** This final project will challenge you to take a proactive position on an issue facing our local community, state, or country. After choosing your issue area, you'll research the issue, develop a policy solution for it, and construct a strategy for how you would seek to implement your proposed solution. The Civic Action Plan will be graded according to the quality of your research, your analysis of the policy issue, and your written defense of a policy proposal for the issue. **Further details will be provided on Canvas during the first week of class.** Percent of total grade: 25%

Background Videos	15%
Class Discussion Forums	20%
Weekly Assignments	20%
Public Policy Case Study	20%
Civic Action Plan	25%

Grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

- A = 93+
- A- = 90-92
- B+ = 87-89
- B = 83-86
- B- = 80-82
- C+ = 77-79
- C = 73-76
- C- = 70-72
- D+ = 67-69
- D = 63-66
- D- = 60-62
- E < 60 (failing)

**Grading Policy/Conduct/Evaluation:**

Assignments are expected to be turned in on the due date set in Canvas. One letter grade per day will be taken off for late assignments unless you have obtained prior approval for a different date due to special circumstances or have a documented illness or emergency. Please do not hesitate to let me know (before the due date) if you have a special circumstance. Communication is key. Assignments and make-up work will adhere to UF policies and standards, available here

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>.

This course offers a constructive environment in which students are free to offer their opinions and perspectives on a host of current issues. As we will be discussing controversial issues, about which many people have strong opinions and beliefs, mutual respect is critical. It is fine to challenge someone's ideas/positions, but not the individual, and must be appropriately sourced. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Being an engaged citizen means understanding civil discourse, and this class is grounded in treating every student with mutual respect. Additional guidelines for conduct over email, discussion posts, and Zoom office hours is available here on Canvas- <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/407559/pages/expectations-for-communications-and-interactions-a-netiquette-guide>

The easiest way to reach me is to stop by during virtual office hours or email me. If office hours are not convenient, I am always happy to set a time to meet. Please do not hesitate to contact me for a scheduled appointment. If you have any special needs, please let me know so that we can work together to make this class a success.

**Students with Disabilities:** If you have special needs, you must register with the Disability Resource Center, <https://disability.ufl.edu/>, so that you can be provided the necessary accommodations to ensure your success. You must inform me at the beginning of the semester and provide me with a copy of your letter. I will work with you to be successful in this course.

**Honor Code of Conduct:** UF students are expected to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty. Requirements, expectations, and violations can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/1617/advising/info/student-honor-code.aspx>. It is your responsibility to know UF policies and procedures, and you should hold yourself to the highest standards.

**Helpful Links:**

E-Learning: To support your move to online learning, please visit the E-Learning Student Help page - <https://elearning.ufl.edu/keep-learning/>. You can find [Canvas Quick Start Guides](#) and more to support your experience.

UF Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>

UF Writing Center: <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

**Course Evaluation:** Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### **Course Schedule:**

Please note: The module for each week will open on Tuesdays by 9:00 AM. In some instances it will open earlier. Any assignments from the week prior will be due by Tuesday at 8:00 AM unless otherwise noted. Additional due dates are specified in the syllabus.

### **Prior to Week 1. (class begins September 1)**

- Log on to Canvas and tour the course site, including the syllabus and grading policy.
- View the Course Introduction Video
- Review the Syllabus and contact me if you have any initial questions

### **Week 1. September 1 – September 7: The Founding of American Government**

***UF is closed on September 7 for Labor Day.***

Texts: *The Declaration of Independence*

Dennis Mahoney. (1986). "The Declaration of Independence." *Society* 24(1), 46-48.

<https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2FBF02695936.pdf>

David Armitage. (2001). "The Declaration of Independence and international law." *The William and Mary Quarterly* 59(1), 39-64.

- Background Video lecture: Founding Principles
- Week 1 Discussion Forum: The Declaration of Independence and the Ideals of American Civic Life

### **Week 2. September 8 – September 14: The Constitution**

Texts: *The Constitution of the United States*

Robert Post. (2017). "The Classic First Amendment Tradition Under Stress: Freedom of Speech and the University." Public Research Paper No. 619, Yale Law School.

[https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3044434](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3044434)

- Background Video lecture: The Constitution
  - Video Quiz
- Module Challenge Assignment: Freedom of Speech on Campus (short essay analyzing if there are limits to campus free speech)
- Assign Public Policy Case Study Paper and Open Discussion Board for topics

### **Week 3. September 15 – September 21: Federalism**

***September 22 is National Voter Registration Day – Sign up at [TurboVote](#)***

Texts: *The Federalist Papers*, excerpts

*The Anti-federalist Papers*, excerpts

Arceneaux, K. (2005). Does federalism weaken democratic representation in the United States? *Publius* 35(2), 297-311.

- Background Video lecture: Federalism
  - Video Quiz
- Week 3 Discussion Forum: The Federal System and where to target action

#### **Week 4. September 22 – September 28: Separation of Powers**

Text: Tom Clark, (1974). "Separation of Powers." *Willamette Law Journal* 11(1), 1-9.

Scott Keeter, Cliff Zukin, Molly Andolina, Krista Jenkins. (2002). [\*The Civic and Political Health of a Nation\*](#) from CIRCLE at Tufts University.

- Background Video Lecture: Separation of Powers
  - Video Quiz
- Module Challenge Assignment: Generational Survey (you will survey 10 members across multiple generational groups and produce a short paper noting how common life experiences of different generations account for impacts on our public and political lives)

#### **Week 5. September 29 – October 5: Checks and Balances**

Text: James Madison, Federalist No. 51. Feb. 8, 1788.

Matthew McCubbins and Thomas Schwartz. (1984). "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols Versus Fire Alarms." *American Journal of Political Science* 28(1), 165-179.

EJ Dionne Jr., Thomas Mann, and Norm Ornstein (2017). "How Trump is helping to save our democracy." *Washington Post* (op-ed). <http://wapo.st/2hfsZCJ>

- Background Video Lecture: Checks and Balances
  - Video Quiz
- Week 5 Discussion Forum: Does oversight exist anymore, or are the checks checking and the balances balancing?

#### **Week 6. October 6 – October 12: Congress**

Texts: Lawrence Dodd. (2012). "Congress as Public Mirror," Chapter 1 in *Thinking About Congress*

Garrett Hardin. (1968). "The Tragedy of the Commons." *Science* 162(3859), 1243-1248.

- Background Video Lecture: Congress
  - Video Quiz
- Week 6 Discussion Forum: Collective action problems and Congress as representational

#### **Week 7. October 13 – October 19: The Presidency**

Texts: George Edwards III (2009). "The Study of Presidential Leadership," *Oxford Handbook Online*.

James Pfiffner. (2011). "Federalist No. 70: Is the president too powerful?" *Public Administration Review*, Vol. 71, 112-117.

Fred Greenstein, *The Presidential Difference*, Chapter 1.

- Background Video Lecture: The Presidency
  - Video Quiz

- Module Challenge Assignment: Presidential Profile (write a short profile on one of our 45 presidents that provides background information and how/why they were or were not an effective public leader)

### **Week 8. October 20 – October 26: The Legislative Process**

Text: Barbara Sinclair. (2017). "How the Legislative Process Has Changed," Chapter 1 in *Unorthodox Lawmaking*, 1-9.

Robert Katzman. (1989). "The American Legislative Process as a Signal." *Journal of Public Policy* 9(3), 287-306.

- Background Video Lecture: The Legislative Process
  - Video Quiz
- Week 8 Discussion Forum: Competing interests and influence in lawmaking
- **Public Policy Case Study Paper DUE Tuesday, October 27 at 8AM via Canvas**

### **Week 9. October 27– November 2: The Supreme Court**

Text: Robert Dahl. (1957), "Decision-Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as a National Policy-Maker," in *Journal of Public Law* 6(1), 279-295.

Katy Harriger. (2011). "Judicial Supremacy or Judicial Defense? The Supreme Court and the Separation of Powers." *Political Science Quarterly* 126(2), 201-221

- Complete Background Video Video: The Supreme Court
  - Video Quiz
- Module Challenge Assignment: Supreme Court Case Study (you will offer analysis on an historical Supreme Court case/decision)
- Assign Civic Action Plan and Open Discussion Board

### **Week 10. November 3 – November 9: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties**

***Election Day is November 3.***

Texts: James Gibson. (2008). "Intolerance and Political Repression in the United States: A Half Century after McCarthyism." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(1), 96-10.

Video: *Lest We Forget: The Birther Lie* from Bill Moyers.

- Background Video Lecture: Civil Rights, Civil Liberties
  - Video Quiz
- Module Challenge Assignment: Complete Power Profile (you will profile a prominent non-elected/social public leader on what makes them effective)

### **Week 11. November 10 – November 16: The Media**

***UF is closed November 11 for the holiday.***

Texts: Leticia Bode (2016). "Political News in the News Feed: Learning Politics from Social Media." *Mass Communication and Society* 19:1, 24-48.

Gordon Pennycook and David Rand, "Crowdsourcing judgments of news source quality." [https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=3118471](https://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=3118471)

Elle Hunt, "What is fake news? How to spot it and what you can do to stop it." *The Guardian*, Dec. 17, 2016. <https://www.theguardian.com/media/2016/dec/18/what-is-fake-news-pizzagate>

- Background Video Lecture: The Media
- Week 10 Discussion Forum: The Media, “fake news” and how we make sense of where we get our information
- Civic Action Plan Outline Due

### **Week 12. November 17 - 23: Campaigns and Elections**

Texts: Pippa Norris (2001) “Do Campaign Communications Matter for Civic Engagement? American Elections from Eisenhower to G.W. Bush.”

<https://sites.hks.harvard.edu/fs/pnorris/Acrobat/Farrell&Schmitt-Beck%20Chapter%209.pdf>

Anthony Downs (1957) “An Economic Theory of Political Action in a Democracy,” *Journal of Political Economy* 65(2), 135-150.

- Background Video Lecture: Campaigns & Elections
- Module Challenge Assignment: Campaign interactions and the electorate (brief essay examining if campaigns are impactful and influence public decision-making. Included will be campaign finance issues).

### **Week 13. November 24 – November 30: Political Parties**

***UF is closed November 25 – November 27 for the holiday.***

Texts: Sean Theriault and David W. Rohde (2011) “The Gingrich Senators and Party Polarization in the U.S. Senate” *The Journal of Politics* 73(4), 1011-1024.

Stephen Nicholson and Gary Sugura. (2012). Who's the party of the people? Economic populism and the U.S. public's beliefs about political parties. *Political Behavior* 34(2), 369-389.

- Background Video Lecture: Political Parties
  - Video Quiz
- Week 13 Discussion Forum: Political Parties and how partisanship has come to dominate public discourse
- **Look to the Week Ahead: open Module 14 and review the Module Challenge Assignment. It will take a bit longer to complete than some others.**

### **Week 14. December 1 – December 7: Political Participation**

Texts: Ronald La Due Lake & Robert Huckfelt (1998), “Social Capital, Social Networks, and Political Participation” *Political Psychology* 19(3), 567-584.

William A. Galston (2004), “Civic Education and Political Participation,” *PS: Political Science and Politics* 37(2), 263-266.

- Complete Background Video: Political Participation
- Module Challenge Assignment: Is the Information Free? (you will research an issue and file a Freedom of Information Act request to demonstrate your understanding of citizen oversight)

### **Week 15. December 8 – December 14: Final Reflections**

Final reflections: The student will critique established institutions and challenge assumptions about public life.

Texts: Theda Skocpol (1997) “The Tocqueville Problem: Civic Engagement in American Democracy,” *Social Science History* 21(4), 455-479.

Rodney Hero (2003) "Social Capital and Racial Inequality in America" *Perspectives on Politics* 1(1), 113-122.

- Week 15 Discussion Forum: How do you better understand your role within public society?
- **Civic Action Plan DUE Monday, December 14 at 8 AM via Canvas.**