IDS 2338: Democratic Engagement and Public Leadership
Fall 2024

This is an Online course.

Instructor:
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Office hours will be held virtually or in person on Wednesdays from 2-3:30 PM and Thursdays from 10 – 11:30 AM. To access office hours, you may sign up through Calendly and select a Zoom or in person option. If office hours do not fit into your schedule, please contact me through Canvas to schedule an appointment.

Course Texts:
There are no required or assigned textbooks or books for this course. Readings will consist of scholarly articles, current news articles, policy papers, online resources, and other selected materials. 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 Description: This course is designed to introduce students to the key themes, principles, and terminology that govern U.S. civic participation. Students will engage in both qualitative and quantitative analysis of data surrounding civic participation in a democracy, along with the opportunity to engage in meaningful and effective communication to better analyze societal and individual decisions and actions within a healthy democracy. Students will develop a better understanding and deeper appreciations for the workings of the American political system. This course is a General Education Social and Behavioral Sciences course.

Course Goals:

- Provide the context for understanding the individuals' role within a democratic republic.
- Through critical thinking, online discussion, analysis, and evaluation, develop the skills to engage in productive civil discourse.
- Create a Public Policy Civic Action Plan to support a public policy stance that addresses a pressing community issue using basic academic research practices.
- Reflect upon and evaluate methods of civic engagement and citizen participation.

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 everyone must meet for a functioning and healthy democracy. Citizenship is not a passive notion, but a dynamic active experience. To fulfill the role of citizen, requires you 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 act when it comes to advocating for those issues or policies we are concerned about the most. This course **attempts to change that assumption by** providing you with 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 which functions from the local to the national level.

Government is all around us. Policies are implemented every day at our local (city or county), state, and national levels that impact our lives. **As citizens, we have a duty to be active in expressing our informed opinions and beliefs to have an impact that benefits our communities.** While political discussions tend to focus on Washington, D.C., there are avenues of action in your city or county and Florida 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 like an in-person course, where all work is assigned at the beginning of the Module and expected to be completed by the end of the Module, except the Public Policy Civic Action Plan. Deadlines are announced in Canvas, and you should contact me if you have any questions.

Assignments:

Module Video Quizzes: these short lecture 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 each Module, you will take a short multiple-choice quiz on the background video and selected readings and other media. This is worth 10% of your grade.

Perusall Reading Discussions: You will read and annotate the scholarly readings on the syllabus via Perusall. Perusall is an interactive software that allows you to read and annotate a text along with your peers. You can highlight, ask questions, and respond to your classmates' comments and questions. You will have between two and four Perusall Readings each Module. This is worth 20% of your grade.

Civic Action Assignments: Within each Module, you will have the chance to work on interactive assignments and exercise your civic engagement responsibilities. Specific assignments will include Discussion Forums where you will synthesize readings, background videos, and additional resources to address and discuss specific questions with your classmates; attend or view local election candidate forums; craft a candidate or local issue profile; participate in Unify America; attend a local government meeting; and more. Each Module has a variety of assignments from which you can choose. You are expected to complete (2) action assignments each Module, except Module 1, which only has (1) action assignment. You MUST complete Module 1's action assignment. This is worth 25% of your grade.

Public Policy Civic Action Plan: The Public Policy Civic Action Plan is a semester long assignment where you will choose an issue you are passionate about and develop a policy solution to that issue. You will take a proactive position and conduct research on the topic, identifying the need for your proposal, and construct a strategy on how you would implement the solution. The assignment is graded through a scaffolded model, whereby steps are reviewed throughout the semester and evaluated on the quality of your work and construction and defense of the policy proposal. This is worth 45% of your grade – 15% for the steps (each step is worth 3%) and 30% for the final submission.

Assignment Overview:
Module Video Quizzes (10%)
Perusall Reading Discussions (20%)
Civic Action Assignments (25%):
Public Policy Civic Action Plan (45%)

Grading Policy/Conduct/Evaluation:
I adhere to the University letter-to-grade conversion chart for all assignments and final grades. Grades ending in 0.5 or higher are rounded up to the nearest whole percentage point. **Note that a minimum grade of C is required for general education credit**. Further information is available here:
https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/

93 or above=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=E (failing)

Assignments are expected to be turned in on the due date. One letter grade per day (not class days) 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 family emergency. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you have some type of special circumstance, but you must do so before the due date unless it is an emergency. Communication is key. Class participation, 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 many current issues. As we will discuss 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. Personal attacks will not be tolerated. Being an engaged citizen means understanding civil discourse, and this class is grounded in treating one another with mutual respect.

The easiest way to reach me is during office hours (in person or Zoom). If office hours are not convenient, please 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 and your experience a success.

Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodation should connect with the Disability Resource Center by visiting https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

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:
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: Each Module will open at the beginning of the semester with assignments and supporting materials opening as needed. Due dates are specified in the syllabus and can be referenced in Canvas.

By August 28 (class begins August 22)

- 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 questions.
- Post your introduction to Canvas.

Module 1. August 22 – September 3: Introduction and Fundamentals – The American Political System

- Topics:
    - Welcome to IDS2338; Federalism and the basics of the U.S. Political System
- Readings:
    - The Declaration of Independence
    - Greg Goelhzhauser and David M. Konisky. (2020). "The State of American Federalism 2019-2020: Polarized and Punitive Intergovernmental Relations" *Publius* 50(3): 311-343. (Canvas)
    - Graham, B., & Hand, C. (2016). America, the owner's manual: You Can Fight City Hall—and Win. CQ Press. - Chapter 1 (Canvas)
- Videos:
    - Module 1 Lecture Video: Founding Principles
    - Daniel Robert "Bob" Graham: A Lifetime of Service
    - Marijuana & Federalism: Who's in Charge?
- Assignments:
    - Quiz 1
    - Civic Action Assignment – National Conference of State Legislatures
    - Public Policy Civic Action Plan Step 1 – due Tuesday, September 3

Module 2. September 4 – September 24: Civic Participation, what's your role in democracy?

- Topics: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties; Political Participation and Civic Engagement
- Readings:
    - FIRE. (2024). "College Free Speech Rankings." Check <u>FIRE 2024 College Rankings.</u> Explore UF's data.
    - Freedom Forum. <u>Free Speech on College Campuses: The Ultimate Guide.</u> Read and explore the links.
    - Vasilopoulos, P., Mcavay, H., Brouard, S., & Foucault, M. (2022). Emotions, governmental trust and support for the restriction of civil liberties during the covid-19 pandemic. European Journal of Political Research, 62(2), 422–442. (Canvas)
    - Gillion, D. Q., Ladd, J. M., & Meredith, M. (2018). Party polarization, ideological sorting and the emergence of the US partisan gender gap. British Journal of Political Science, 50(4), 1217–1243. (Canvas)
    - Deckman, M., & McDonald, J. (2022). Uninspired by old white guys: the mobilizing factor of younger, more diverse candidates for Gen Z women. Politics & Gender, 19(1), 195–219. (Canvas)
    - Graham, B., & Hand, C. (2016). America, the owner's manual: You Can Fight City Hall—and Win. CQ Press. - Chapter 2 (Canvas)
- Videos:
    - Module 2 Lecture Video
    - <u>BBC News Political Polarization</u>
    - Others to be announced.
- Assignments:
    - Quiz 2
    - Civic Action Assignments: Select two from the list on Canvas
    - Public Policy Civic Action Plan Step 2 – due Tuesday, September 24

Module 3. September 25 – October 11: The Policymaking Process

- Topics: Congress and Legislative Power; the Presidency; SCOTUS; and Political Parties
- Readings:
    - *Parties, platforms, conventions, and the Constitution*. (2020, September 3). National Constitution Center – constitutioncenter.org. ***Note: this is a We the People Podcast.***
    - 43rd Republican National Convention. <u>The 2024 Republican Platform</u>.
    - 2024 Democratic National Convention. The 2024 Democratic Platform (TBA)
    - Thrower, S. (2022). Between two fires: the institutional and public constraints to unilateral policy change. Political Research Quarterly, 76(1), 14–28. (Canvas)
    - Curry, J. M., & Roberts, J. M. (2022). Interpersonal relationships and legislative collaboration in Congress. Legislative Studies Quarterly, 48(2), 333–369. (Canvas)
    - Graham, B., & Hand, C. (2016). America, the owner's manual: You Can Fight City Hall—and Win. CQ Press. - excerpts from Chapter 3 (Canvas)
- Videos:
    - Module 3 Lecture Video
    - Center for Governmental Responsibility Supreme Court Program (TBA)
    - Others to be announced.
- Assignments:
    - Quiz 3

- o Civic Action Assignments: Oyez.org and choose one other from the list on Canvas
- o Public Policy Civic Action Plan Step 3 – due Friday, October 11

Module 4. October 14 – November 12: Importance of Issues

- Topics: The role of the Media; Campaigns and Elections
- Readings:
  - o Guess, A. M., Malhotra, N., Pan, J., Barberá, P., Allcott, H., Brown, T., Crespo-Tenorio, A., Dimmery, D., Freelon, D., Gentzkow, M., González-Bailón, S., Kennedy, E., Kim, Y. M., Lazer, D., Moehler, D., Nyhan, B., Rivera, C. V., Settle, J., Thomas, D. R., . . . Tucker, J. A. (2023). How do social media feed algorithms affect attitudes and behavior in an election campaign? Science, 381(6656), 398–404. (Canvas)
  - o Hutchens, M. J., Romanova, E., & Shaughnessy, B. (2023). The Good, the bad, and the evil media: Influence of online comments on media trust. Journalism Studies, 24(11), 1440–1457. (Canvas)
  - o Wagner, S. (2024, February 12). How UF is Combating AI Misinformation in Elections. UF College of Journalism and Communications.
  - o Hunt, E. (2018, February 9). What is fake news? How to spot it and what you can do to stop it. The Guardian.
  - o Wang, Luxuan, Lipka, Michael, Matsa, Katerina Eva, St. Aubin, Christopher, and Shearer, Elisa (2024, July 29). How Americans get local political news. Pew Research Center.
  - o Graham, B., & Hand, C. (2016). America, the owner's manual: You Can Fight City Hall— and Win. CQ Press. - excerpts from Chapters 5 and 7 (Canvas)
- Videos:
  - o Module Lecture 4
  - o TEDx Talks. (2022, February 1). How Curiosity Will Save Us | Mónica Guzmán | TEDxSeattle [Video]. YouTube.
  - o Others to be announced.
- Assignments:
  - o Quiz 4
  - o Civic Action Assignments: Select two from the list on Canvas
  - o Public Policy Civic Action Plan Step 4 – due Friday, November 8

Module 5. Reflection & Course Wrap-Up: November 13 – December 4

- Topics: Reflections on Civic Engagement and your role in democracy
- Readings:
  - o What Killed the "Civic Culture"? (n.d.). Stanford University Press Blog.
  - o Hope, Elan C. (2022) Rethinking Civic Engagement. Brennan Center for Justice. (Canvas)
  - o Civic engagement: Taking work with residents to the next level | @BloombergCities. (n.d.). Bloomberg Cities.
  - o Graham, B., & Hand, C. (2016). America, the owner's manual: You Can Fight City Hall— and Win. CQ Press. - excerpts from Chapter 10 (Canvas)
- Videos:
  - o Module Lecture 5
  - o Library of Congress. (2023, July 21). How America came together a century ago and how we can do it again [Video]. YouTube.

- o Former Senator Bob Graham on America: [The Owner's Manual](). (2016, December 14). [Video]. C-SPAN.org.
- Assignments:
    - o Quiz 5
    - o Civic Action Assignments: Select two from the list on Canvas
    - o Public Policy Civic Action Plan Peer Review (more details to come) - due December 4
    - o Public Policy Civic Action Plan Step 5 – due Friday, November 22

Final Public Policy Civic Action Plan due 11:59 PM on Monday, December 9.