

# American Government (POLS 100, 3 credits) Spring 2009

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

Students are strongly encouraged to visit with me about any concerns with the course. I am here to help you with learning the material and approaches used by political scientists. On some technical issues, I will direct you to our highly-qualified staff.

Please use Desire2Learn's internal email feature for all communication whenever possible. In terms of course mechanics, students must read and consult this syllabus throughout the semester. It is imperative that students complete and submit assigned work on time. Those who submit work late lose one whole letter grade for each day it is submitted late. In the real world, deadlines are not extended for casual reasons. Students who believe they have a valid excuse to miss a deadline must consult with the instructor **as soon as possible PRIOR to the deadline**.

### Academic Freedom

*"Institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole. The common good depends upon the free search for truth and its free exposition.*

*"Academic freedom is essential to these purposes and applies to both teaching and research. Freedom in research is fundamental to the advancement of truth. Academic freedom in its teaching aspect is fundamental for the protection of the rights of the teacher in teaching and of the student to freedom in learning. It carries with it duties correlative with rights.*

*"Teachers are entitled to full freedom in research and in the publication of the results, subject to the adequate performance of their other academic duties ... Teachers are entitled to freedom in the classroom in discussing their subject, but they should be careful not to introduce into their teaching controversial matter which has no relation to their subject"* (AAUP Redbook, <http://www.aaup.org/AAUP/pubsres/policydocs/1940statement.htm>)

**Freedom in teaching.** Academic freedom is the freedom of faculty to teach the knowledge encompassed by their academic disciplines. Academic freedom is vital to successful education, and thus must be defended. As stated in the *South Dakota Higher Education Agreement*, "academic freedom ... includes the freedom to perform one's professional duties and to present differing and sometimes controversial points of view, free from reprisal." This academic freedom must be shielded against harassment and limitation in accordance with the words and spirit of the *Higher Education Agreement* ([http://www.sdbor.edu/administration/policy\\_planning/agreements/COHE\\_Agree/documents/agreement.pdf](http://www.sdbor.edu/administration/policy_planning/agreements/COHE_Agree/documents/agreement.pdf))

Furthermore, students bear the responsibility to become informed on the subject matter of the course and base their comments on a *coherent understanding of these materials*. This understanding **must** form the basis of any "reasoned exception" to course data or views. The mastery of these materials will constitute the basis for judgments of academic achievement and performance in this course.

The freedom to learn is an important and precious right, one that is not enjoyed equally around the world. Freedom to learn also involves taking responsibility. A good learner always critically examines the information that is presented in a classroom setting or in assigned materials. A good learner seeks to master the materials, for without mastery no proper assessment can take place. A good learner grants respect where respect is due—to the instructors, the fellow learners, and all others who support and make possible the learning community. A good learner practices self-reflection, and is willing to examine and if need be reject old views when appropriate. The freedom to learn requires the free exchange of ideas, not only among students, but also among professors. When this freedom is curtailed, society as a whole suffers.

“Students are responsible for maintaining standards of academic performance established for each course in which they are enrolled.” (Board of Regents, Policy 1:11 “Academic Freedom and Responsibility” Section 2. c.)

As required by the BOR:

**“Freedom in learning.** *Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should first contact the instructor of the course to initiate a review of the evaluation. If the student remains unsatisfied, the student may contact the department head and/or dean of the college which offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation”* (SDSU, Office of Academic Affairs, Revised 2007).

#### Cheating and Dishonesty Policy

*“The consequences of academic cheating and dishonesty range from any and all plagiarized or compromised assignments, tests, and other forms of evaluations being given zero credit as per offense to a student being given a failing grade for the class in which the offense took place. There is also the possibility that any student who has committed a cheating offense may face disciplinary probation or expulsion from the University. The full policies are found in Chapter 1 of the Student Code (01: 10:23:01-1: 10:23:04) of the SDSU Student Policies Manual”* (SDSU, College of Arts & Science). See <http://www3.sdsu.edu/StudentLife/JudicialAffairs/StudentCode/> .

#### Desire2Learn

Students will be required to use Desire2Learn during the semester. Desire2Learn (d2l) is SDSU’s Web course delivery system. **After successfully logging into the course, students must immediately forward their d2l email messages to an external email account (e.g., your student “jacks” or Hotmail address). Please see the Tour Guide in d2l for further instructions.**

#### Snow Days and Instructor’s Absence

During inclement weather, I adhere to SDSU’s policy on class cancellations. If winter weather suggests that the administration might declare a “snow day,” please check your SDSU’s jacks email account or the SDSU Website. If SDSU has not announced the cancellation of classes, I will be holding class. If the administration cancels classes, I cancel my classes. I understand that some students must travel over less-than-ideal roads to get to class, but following SDSU’s policy seems to be the fairest course of action. Those students who travel far distances must judge acceptable safety risks for themselves. If I am ill or otherwise unable to be present, I will try to e-mail class members as soon as I know I will be unable to attend. On the other hand, if I am a few minutes late and you do not see a posted sign, please wait for me.