

Welcome to POSC 110, American National Government. This class balances understanding the history of politics and government in the U.S. with an attention to how it matters *for today*. As someone studying and/or living in the U.S., you are affected by American government everyday – you should know how it works! It is a challenge to cover the entire American political system in 8 weeks, but I think we're up for it!

I am excited to be your instructor. I've been a Political Science professor at Marist for 14 years (time flies when you're having fun!). I specialize in American politics and public policy, with a focus in Environmental Policy. I am especially interested in how average people and citizen groups can make a difference in politics.

I've organized the course so that each week this summer is divided into two parts. Material for the entire week will be released on Brightspace each Monday morning, but you will have two due dates for the week (the end of the day on Wednesday for Part I materials, and the end of the day on Sunday for Part II materials). Typically, Part I materials will consist of reading a chapter in our textbook and taking a short quiz. Part II of the week will ask you to further ponder this material by reading additional article(s), viewing a short online video (often a TED talk), and then writing a brief (2-3 page) reflection piece.

I view the textbook material and quizzes as providing the foundation of knowledge that allows you to go further in your reflection pieces each week. To this end, the supplementary readings and videos in Part II of each week will go deeper into some specific aspect of that week's topic, challenging you to think intensely about some issue related to American politics today.

For your final project, you will create your own, short, TED-style video on a topic of your choosing related to American politics and government. You might dig into less well-understood aspect of American government (what the heck are executive orders, anyway?), explore the implications of an important Supreme Court case, analyze a key actor or group in American politics, or something else. Whatever topic you choose, you will think about how to communicate it clearly, provide information that is not common knowledge, and deliver it in a way that will hold an audience's interest.

Here is information on our textbook and associated digital resources. If you purchase the e-book, you will have access for 180 days. When you purchase the book, you will receive a registration code for the digital resources; be sure to make note of this code!

- *We the People*, by Benjamin Ginsberg et al. (14th Essentials Edition), Ebook & Learning Tools (\$43.95). ISBN: 978-1-324-03489-6. Available for purchase at: <https://digital.wwnorton.com/wethepeople14ess>

As part of the book's digital resources, we will be using a tool called Inquizitive. This is an adaptive quiz tool that allows you to earn points for answering questions correctly; the value of the points depends on how confident you feel about your answer. You receive feedback on your answers, including where in the textbook you can find more information. For each assessment, you can stop when you answer the minimum number of required questions or continue answering questions until you achieve a perfect score.

I strongly suggest that you log into our Brightspace course site everyday; that is how I will communicate with you about any important news or changes. If you ever have any questions about class materials or assignments, how to access and use different tools in Brightspace, or any other concerns, don't hesitate to get in touch (jessica.boscarino@marist.edu).

I'm looking forward to meeting you all online soon!

-Dr. Boscarino