

PLS - 121S – 801US

American National Government

3 CREDIT HOURS Section 801S Summer 2026

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Education: The Ohio State University, Masters, History/Pol. Sci Education, 2002

Course Description:

PLS 121 is a survey of the basic principles relating to the structure, operation, and policy-making processes at the state and local levels of government. Impact of the political environment, culture, tradition, levels of economic development, and the effects of political forces on state and local government are also examined.

Required Course Materials - Buy only the online digital edition with inquisitive code from the Edison bookstore.

Bianco, William and David Canon, American Politics Today Election Update: Eighth Essentials Edition(Inquisitive), Norton, 2025. ISBN 9781324088660. **With inquisitive code.**

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS, ACTIVITIES, ASSIGNMENTS

Discussion Board Answers due Friday Inquisitive/Tutorials/Quizzes due Sundays

Wk	Dates	Topics for Class	Reading	Assignments
1	June 8-14	Getting Started Understanding American Politics	Chapter 1	How to use Inquisitive, Inquisitive chapter 1 Chapter 1 Test, Introductory Discussion Board
2	June 15-21	The Constitution and Federalism	Chapters 2 & 3	Complete Inquisitive Chapters 2 & 3 Complete Chapters 2 and 3 Test Complete Political Compass/sidewith Discussion Board
3	June 22-28	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights	Chapters 4 & 5	Complete Inquisitive Chapters 4 & 5 Complete Chapters 4 and 5 Test. Complete Civil Liberties/Civil Rights Assignment.

4	June 29- July 5	Public Opinion, Media and Political Parties	Chapter 6 & 7	Complete Inquizitive Chapters 6 & 7 Complete Chapters 6 and 7 Test. Complete Media Bia Discussion Board
5	July 6- 12	Elections and Interest Groups	Chapters 8 & 9	Complete Inquizitives 8 & 9. Complete Chapters 8 & 9 Test. Complete Super PAC Research Activity
6	July 13-19	Congress and The Presidency	Chapters 10 & 11	Complete Inquizitives 10 and 11 Complete Chapter 10 and 11 Test. Complete Federal Legislation Presentation (group project)
7	July 20-26	The Bureaucracy and The Courts	Chapters 12 & 13	Complete Inquizitives,12 and 13 Chapters 12 and 13 Test. Complete Supreme Court Case Summary (2)
8	July 27- Aug 2	Economic and Social Policy and Foreign Policy	Chapter s 14 & 15	Complete Inquizatives, 14 and 15 Complete Chapters 14 and 15 Test

Required Technology:

- **High speed internet/Firefox is recommended.** Although these are not required, they may make your experience better and faster. Students should have 2 browsers in case one moves slow. It is the student's responsibility to have access to a reliable computer.

- **Email:** Check your ESCC e-mail account frequently for communications about this course. Once a day, Monday through Friday, is the best policy. Emails sent through Blackboard will be located in your Edison email (***all students, faculty, and staff are required to use their Edison email account for ALL college communication***). Email from personal accounts will not be responded to.

Technical Support:

For Blackboard issues, the Teacher should be the first point of contact

TECHNICAL SUPPORT SERVICES

For Blackboard Assignment issues, the Instructor should be the first point of contact

For Log-in or other technology issues:

There are several steps you can follow if you have issues logging in to Blackboard or Office.

During business hours:

- Password reset: Log onto office.com with your Edison email and follow the “forgot password” prompts.
- Reach out for help during regular business hours (9-5 Monday-Thursday, 9-4 Friday)
 - o email to support@edisonohio.edu
 - o call 937-778-8600 and ask for IT Help Desk

After hours:

- Password reset: Log onto office.com with your Edison email and follow the “forgot password” prompts
- Go to www.edisonohio.edu into the Resources tab and click "IT Help Desk" then click "Chat".
- Call 937-778-7957 and talk to the off-campus Blackboard company to get help

COMMUNICATION

Please contact me at any time during the semester, with any questions or concerns – I am here to help and typically respond within 24 hours but am allowed up to 48 hours. All students, faculty, and staff are required to use their Edison email account for ALL college communication). Students have **48 hours** to respond to faculty emails per school code. Do not call the instructor as the instructor is only on campus a few days a week and therefore your response time can be many days.

EMAIL ETIQUETTE

This is REQUIRED for all emails as this is a professional environment:

- Subject line... State the course and subject “PLS 121S Inquisitive question.”
 - o (if you use the “email instructor” through blackboard, just put the subject as the class is automatically added. This method of email is recommended)
- Salutation. Address the recipient by name: “Dear [name]” or “Hello [name]”
- Body text. Explain the main message of the **email**. ...
- Signature. Your **email** closing should be formal, not informal. (Put your name on it)

Think before you write. Unlike a traditional class where we can see and speak to each other, an online course does not allow us to use nonverbal cues (facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures). Remarks that might be humorous when spoken can easily be misconstrued when written. Choose your words with care to lessen the chance that you will be misunderstood or misinterpreted.

EVALUATION METHODS

INQUIZITIVES:

Students will complete inquisitive assignments online each week over the chapters. Each assignment has a target goal to be met. Students can work to a 100% score on each assignment. To complete them, student must read the chapters first. Then, go through the questions and answer them. The book can be used as the assignment is completed. Information on how up and complete these assignments is in the Getting Started Folder.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Civil Liberties/Civil Rights Paper- Students will draft a position paper on a current civil liberties or civil rights issue of your choice using current constitutional justification.

SuperPAC Research Activity – Students will research soft money and its influence on campaigns.

Federal Legislation Presentation- Students will join small groups and research federal legislation that has impacted the States and our daily lives.

Supreme Court Case Summaries – Students will research and summarize landmark Supreme Court cases from the last 70 years.

CHAPTER TESTS

These will be multiple choice, true and false, and/or matching over the chapter and are closed book. Each test (except the first test) covers two chapters. You have two opportunities to take the test and the gradebook will record the highest of the two attempts. You will have 60 minutes to take each test (45 minutes on test 1). The exam will automatically submit once you hit the time limit.

DISCUSSION BOARDS

With each forum, you are expected to respond to the initial questions as well as interact with classmates in a discussion. When you click on the week's list of assignments, the discussion board questions will be listed. This is a post-first forum. You must write your response first and post it before you can see your classmate's posts. Once you post, then you can respond to other posts.

Click the title of the discussion board to go to it then click 'add thread' to post your work. These require you to really think about the topic and explain your ideas so that everyone reading them can fully understand your ideas. This means if you are only posting a few sentences, you are not fully discussing the topic. Each discussion board has a required word count length.

HOW TO DO COMMENTS: When commenting on others, although "good job" is great to hear, it is not discussing the topic.

When doing comments, you must:

1. First identify the point the other student made that they will address and summarize their point briefly. (figure 1-2 sentences.) "You stated that the African Americans did not get to fight much in the war because of the racism that existed in that area during the time."
2. Then, what is your take of their points (2 sentences). "I agree with this. One of the most interesting things with this is how the generals seemed to think the color of a person's skin would affect their fighting ability. You'd think the desire to survive would outweigh race."
3. As a question to continue the conversation. (1 sentence) "Do you think that it would have been different if he were fighting in Virginia rather than Georgia?"
4. *A comment must be 50+ words in length*

The initial posting of the answers must be done by FRIDAY at 11:59pm. The forum for the week closes on SUNDAY at 11:59pm. Students will not be allowed to comment if they do not do the initial answers. **The subject should always say your name.**

No quotes of any kind are allowed on any assignments - The goal is to learn to interpret and explain.

FINAL GRADE STANDARDS

The final grade for the course will represent your instructor's assessment of the overall quality with which you met all the requirements of the course.

Chapter Inquizitives (16)	160	22%		90-100%	A
Chapter Tests (8)	230	30%		80-89%	B
Civil Liberties/Rights Paper	100	13%		70-79%	C
Discussion Boards (3)	75	10%		60-69%	D
Federal Legislation Presentation	100	13%		Below 60%	F
SuperPAC Research Activity	50	7%			
Supreme Court Case Summary	40	5%			
Total	755	100%			

POLICY STATEMENTS

COMPLETING THE MODULES

Weekly folders will close Sunday at 11:59pm on the due date. If students choose to work ahead, given they must complete the modules in order or they will receive a 25% penalty on any assignment done out of order.

SUBMITTING YOUR PAPERS

To submit papers, click the link "View/Complete Assignment," at the bottom of the assignment. Follow the directions for attaching your paper. When you are ready to submit your work, you must click the "submit" button. Be careful that you do not click on "submit" until you're ready for your paper to be sent. This is an irrevocable step: once you have clicked "submit" you cannot get back the submission.

1. Look at what it uploaded. If it is the right assignment, click SUBMIT

No late work will be accepted due for not following this guideline and checking to ensure they completed the full process. It is the student's responsibility to double-check all

submissions and be sure they are at a reliable computer with reliable internet. If there is no assignment or submission of the receipt, the assignment will be a zero.

No emailed work will be accepted!! All assignments must be submitted through blackboard. Anyone who emails the assignment will not receive credit for not following directions. If help is needed, the student must email the teacher. Please review the response time required as waiting till the last minute may cause severe damage to your grade.

LATE WORK POLICY

This is a professional classroom; therefore, everyone will be treated like responsible adults with the capability of meeting deadlines. Each week requires 9 hours of class time for regular activities as stated in the course catalog. That means, students have 168 hours to complete 9 hours of class time work. Students must plan ahead as this is plenty of time to complete the course work.

Therefore, no late work is accepted except for extreme circumstances, which is based on a case-by-case evaluation. It is very important to stay in touch with the professor and discuss issues the moment they arise. This means back and forth conversation is required prior to the due date. This is only for legitimate reasons and may require documentation.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Because engaging in dishonest practices undermines the trust that is essential in any social relationship, honesty is expected in all matters. Academic honesty requires that you never submit another's work as your own. You will not plagiarize from a printed source, an electronic source, or another student's work, nor will you have someone else do your work. You are plagiarizing if you:

- Submit someone else's work as your own.
- Buy a paper from a papermill, website, AI, or other source.
- Copy sentences, phrases, paragraphs, or ideas from someone else's work, published or unpublished, without giving the original author credit. (put in quotation marks and cited to the quote's exact location in a footnote and include a work citation page)
- Replace select words from a passage without giving the original author credit. (changing a few words does not make it your idea)
- Copy any type of multimedia (graphics, audio, video, internet streams), computer programs, music compositions, graphs, or charts from someone else's work without giving the original author credit.
- Piece together phrases, ideas, and sentences from a variety of sources to write an essay.
- Build on someone else's idea or phrase to write your paper without

giving the original author credit.

- Submit your own paper in more than one course.

Quotes require footnotes and full work citation pages. If you quote and don't have those, you are plagiarizing and will get a zero. Please follow rules and put everything in this class completely in your own words. Anyone who uses quotes (properly with " " marks, Chicago style citations, and a work cited page") will still receive a penalty for not following the rules.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

Failure to attend class does not constitute an official withdrawal. The responsibility for withdrawal prior to the published withdrawal deadline always lies with the students. Students are financially responsible for costs associated with classes that they have withdrawn from after the published Add/Drop date. *New federal mandates for students receiving financial aid state that attendance is to be calculated based on "academic-engagement," which means that coming unprepared for class just to be present and not doing any homework will not equal attendance*

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

MISCONCEPTIONS

****Distance-learning courses are easy.***

Distance-learning courses are different from traditional courses, but not easier. Distance-learning courses "will have the same quality and academic integrity as traditional on-campus courses conducted in the classroom." In fact, distance-learning courses require a special discipline and persistence and perhaps greater self-reliance than traditional classroom courses. The work load is no less, and may be more, since you have to make up for the three hours you will not spend in direct instruction in a classroom. The time required varies depending on the type of assignments you have in a given week and—this is important!—varies with your reading speed and comprehension and your writing and typing skills. For each week, start with the required time listed in the catalog (see page 2 of the syllabus). You can adjust up or down as you gain familiarity with the requirements of the course.

****In distance-learning courses the work is self-paced.***

Although you will not meet in a classroom twice a week, this course is no more self-paced than a traditional class. You have assignments to read and write; there are quizzes and exams to take: this work has to be completed within a specific time. Assignments will be posted for several weeks rather than just one. Procrastination is not a good idea.

****The distance-learning course, the Internet, and e-mail are available twenty-four hours a day: my instructor must be available, too.***

Your instructor is here to help you, **but not twenty-four hours a day**, every day. Your instructor has other responsibilities and has a life. See the section on communication for

information about getting in touch with your instructor. Plan your work so that there is adequate time for communication when you need help. There is no distance-learning EMS. Students need to respect that the world does not revolve around them and that if they wait till the day an assignment is due and have issues, the professor may not respond to the email. ***The response time of an online class is 48 hours.*** Your instructor will try to answer emails as soon as possible; however, it could be the next day.

SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED by the COLLEGE

For all support services see blackboard College Policies & Student Resources

TESTING YOUR FAITH ACT POLICY

Edison State Community College is committed to providing an environment respectful of students' beliefs. Students are permitted to be absent for up to 3 days each semester based on their faith, religion, or spiritual belief system with no academic penalty. Students must complete the Testing Your Faith Act Accommodations Form, <https://www.edisonohio.edu/services-support/registration-records>, located in "Forms" and provide a copy to their individual faculty within 14 days from the start of the course. The entire policy can be found in the student handbook at <https://www.edisonohio.edu/services-support/student-resources>.