

**The Political Cycle**  
**Honors Seminar**  
Spring 2023 - IDH 3035 (U03)

**Class Meeting:** M/W 11 am

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This interdisciplinary course focuses on the pieces that make-up our constant political cycle, including: politics, government, communication, government funding, data analysis (specifically voter targeting, social media, and polling), and advocacy (how individuals, businesses, and associations lobby government for their interests). We will focus on how decisions are made; how individuals can make a difference; how the political process works; how to communicate your thoughts and opinions; and how other fields interact with the political process (including the health industry, business, finance, etc.).

During the course we will discuss the U.S. federal system at all levels, politics, how individuals make an impact on politics and the country, and how important data, effective communication, and media are to the process.

**Course Goals:**

- To assist students in understanding the political system, including how both campaigns and governing work.
- To improve student knowledge and awareness of local, state and national politics.
- To help students acquire knowledge that will advance their understanding of the practical, and theoretical foundations of politics and governance.
- For students to understand, identify, and apply key skills required in the political process.
- How to effectively research and communicate your thoughts and opinions in the political process.
- To help students understand how their field of interest is impacted by the political process at all levels.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will develop the key skills listed below.

- Be able to evaluate and assess their commitment and aptitude in politics, American

government and the political cycle.

- Develop their interest and skills in service, leadership, communication, analysis and, organization.
- Develop essential learning elements and strategies for time management, preparation, writing, research, and other needed skills for success in professional schools and careers.
- Be able to apply their knowledge to solve problems that require logical reasoning.
- Have acquired habits of thought that will prepare them for politically active lives and careers.
- Understand the basic history, structure and impact of the political system and the American Government and its impact on all sectors and areas of society.
- Have developed skills to work collaboratively and in an interdisciplinary manner.

### **GL Learning Outcomes for IDH 3034-5**

**Global Awareness:** Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of the interrelatedness of local, global, international, and intercultural issues, trends, and systems.

*Course Learning Outcome:* Students will demonstrate knowledge of the interrelated global dynamics (social-cultural, political, economic, etc.) that shape aesthetics, values, and authority in diverse cultural contexts.

**Global Perspectives:** Students will be able to develop a multi-perspective analysis of local, global, international, and intercultural problems.

*Course Learning Outcome:* Students will be able to analyze the multiple global forces that shape their understanding of aesthetics, values, and authority – economic, political, sociological, technological, cultural, etc.

**Global Engagement:** Students will be able to demonstrate a willingness to engage in local, global, international, and intercultural problem solving.

*Course Learning Outcome:* Students will be able to develop solutions to local, global, international, and/or intercultural problems related to aesthetics, values, and authority

**Course Communication and Canvas:** Highly recommended to check Canvas daily and read your e-mail regularly.

## **Honors College Policies and Requirements**

### **Academic Misconduct Procedures and Policies**

In The Honors College, the term “honor” refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Academic Misconduct Procedures available at <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/academic-integrity/index.php> . Please refer to the following documents for additional information:

FIU Student Handbook: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php>

### **Student Portfolios**

The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students’ learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what “artifacts” or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience. Portfolios provide a rich context for students to show what they have learned and to explain their learning process. Because the Honors curriculum is meant to be thought-provoking and reflective, student self-assessment through portfolios will facilitate learning and provide in-depth assessment. Each Honors College course includes at least one assignment that could potentially fit portfolio requirements. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/portfolio/>

### **Honors Education in the Arts (HEARTS)**

The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to “explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/hearts/>

### **Resources:**

#### **Panthers Care & Counseling & Psychological Services**

If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate’s well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU’s Panthers Care website.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Learn more about CAPS at [caps.fiu.edu](http://caps.fiu.edu). Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don’t wait to call 305-348-2277 to set up a time to

talk or visit the online self-help portal.

**Course Materials:**

- All course materials will be posted on Canvas.
- You are responsible for the assigned readings, videos, etc. for each week.
- 1-2 movies and/or tv show episodes will be required to be watched. These will have a maximum cost to the student of \$20 dollars.

**Grade Breakdown:**

<b>Pts. Out of 100</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
<b>10%</b>	<b>Online Quizzes (3)</b>
<b>55%</b>	<b>Congressional Analysis Project using team based learning</b>
<b>35%</b>	<b>Senate Simulation Exercise</b>
<b>Required</b>	<b>Participation</b>

**Assignments Breakdown:**

- **Three Quizzes (10%):**
  - Three quizzes based on material from the assigned readings, videos and presentations.
  - Each quiz will be between 10-15 questions, and you will have 90 seconds per question.
- **Congressional Analysis Project using team based learning (55%)**
  - A multi-week project from week 2 through week 9 which you will work to complete as a team of 3-5 students.
  - Each group will select a topic, in conjunction with professor approval
  - Students will be given one class session a week to work as a group on the project and apply material learned to the class assignment(s).
  - Each group will deliver the following:
    - **Selection of Member of Congress (10%):** conducting research on which Representative your team has selected.
    - **Committee Assignment Memo (10%)**
    - **Legislative Policy Memo (15%):** Students will write a policy memo for a member of the House of Representatives that they select.

- **Bill Draft (10%):** They will analyze the bill, its impacts, its pluses/minuses. Maximum of 1,200 words (because if not it will be marked (“TLDR”).
  - **Class Presentation (10%):** as if presenting to member of Congress.
- **Simulation (35%):** Students will simulate an actual U.S. Senate and/or the U.S. Executive Branch interactions:
  - Students will be graded based on knowledge of the material during the session and application of material.
  - Students will submit a 250 word reflection after the simulation. This is the only document to “turn in” after this simulation.

**Participation:** Participation and preparation to be measured by active involvement in class discussions, team work, and simulation. Attendance is required per FIU and FIU Honors College requirements.

### Spring Schedule

*Readings, videos and other materials are assigned weekly!*

Week	Topic	Assignments
1 1/9-1/11	Introduction to the political cycle. Including an overview/refresher of U.S. Civics, and the U.S. Constitution.	<b>Quiz 1</b>
2 1/18	Politics, Governing, and the American System	<b>Teams Selected and Selection of Member</b>
3 1/23-1/25	How the United States Makes Laws: Politics, Policy, and Special Interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congressional Structure</li> <li>• Seniority</li> <li>• Staff</li> <li>• What is advocacy?</li> </ul> What do lobbyists do?	<b>Committee Assignment Memo</b>
4 1/30-2/1	Political, Cultural and Economic Events 1952-2022 (Part 1)  The rise of sponsored research, “big” government,	<b>Decide on Topic and Begin Writing</b>

	experts, and 24-hour media.	<b>Policy Memo</b>
<b>5</b> <b>2/6-2/8</b>	Political, Cultural and Economic Events 1952-2022 (Part 2)  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tribalism</li> <li>- Platforms</li> <li>- Power and “power” of each state.</li> </ul>	<b>Policy Memo Draft</b>
<b>6</b> <b>2/13-2/15</b>	Communications, Polling, and Data  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How social media has changed the game</li> <li>- Data and targeting and Polling</li> <li>- Websites and Social Media</li> <li>- Federal, State, Local and others...</li> </ul>	<b>Draft Bill and Presentation to Class of Policy Memo and Bill</b>
<b>7</b> <b>2/20-2/22</b>	Media, “facts,” “fake news,” and spinning	<b>Presentation Draft Due</b>
<b>8</b> <b>2/27-2/29</b>	<b>SPRING BREAK - No Class Session</b>	
<b>9</b> <b>3/6-3/8</b>	<b>Team Presentations</b>	<b>Team Presentations</b>
<b>10</b> <b>3/13-3/15</b>	The Senate: How the Senate Works	<b>Quiz 2</b>
<b>11</b> <b>3/20-3/22</b>	The Senate: How the Senate Works	<b>Simulation Assigned</b>
<b>12</b> <b>3/27-3/29</b>	Executive Branch: Who, What and How	<b>Quiz 3</b>
<b>13</b> <b>4/3-4/5</b>	Executive Branch Applying the Law	
<b>14</b>	Simulation	<b>Simulation Day</b>

4/10-4/12		
15 4/17-4/19	Conclusion: Bringing it all together	<b>Simulation Reflection Due (Canvas)</b>

The instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus. The instructor will provide students notice of any changes.