POLITICAL SCIENCE 100
Nevada Constitution
Section XX
Course date & time, Course Location
Fall 20XX Syllabus

Dr. Eric Herzik
Office: Mack Social Science (MSS) #224
Office Hours: Thursday 2:30-3:30 and by appointment
Phone: 682-7764
Email: herzik@unr.edu
Webcampus: https://wcl.unr.edu
Department Website: www.unr.edu/cla/polisci

Course Description:
The focus of the course is on various structures and processes of Nevada politics as expressed in the state constitution. However, the Nevada constitution is best understood within the context of the American federal system so the course takes a comparative approach juxtaposing the Nevada and US Constitution. The course will consider each document, but will focus on similarities in development, structure and purpose.

A constitution is a contract between the people and their government. It is a consensual document in which the people of a society grant certain powers to the government, which is bound by restrictions found in the constitution. It is through constitutions that the people prescribe the structure of government, limit government power, protect individual liberties, and promote stability, continuity, and order.

The notion of consensual government has a long history in Western philosophy. The British philosopher, John Locke, whose work greatly influenced the shape of the American political system, certainly advanced the idea of the constitutional contract. An important idea in American constitutional history is the concept of separation of powers. To avoid the potential for governmental tyranny, the U.S. Constitution divides government into three branches based upon the functions they perform: the legislative or lawmaking function, the executive or enforcement function, and the judicial or interpretive function. Power is also divided between the national and state governments. Further dilution of governmental power comes by way of various amendments, fashioned most clearly in the Bill of Rights, that explicitly empower and protect individuals within the governmental system. Power is thus diluted and mixed throughout the American governmental system.
Each state, being a separate civil society, has a constitution. The Nevada Constitution in many ways mirrors the national constitutional model. The Nevada Constitution duplicates the three-branch separation of powers found in the U.S. Constitution. In fact, Nevada, like many states, further divides power in each branch of government through such mechanisms as legislative term limits, multiple and independently elected executive officials, and elected judges. (Each of these concepts will be developed in following lessons.) The Nevada Constitution also has a well-developed set of guarantees for individual control of government through various mechanisms that provide for direct democracy. The three most important elements in the Nevada constitution that illustrate the concept of direct democracy are the initiative, referendum, and recall processes.

In addition to outlining the basic structures and procedures of government, the Nevada Constitution prescribes the delivery of key services to be provided by the state. There are separate articles in the Nevada Constitution covering education (Article 11); revenue and taxation (Article 10); public institutions such as prisons and welfare (Article 13); and local government (Article 8).

American governmental power, be it national, state, or local, flows from legal documents—constitutions—created by the people. Written constitutions serve as guides to the structure of our governmental system and provide an insight to the values and goals of a society. The Nevada Constitution thus reflects aspects unique to our political culture and history, but is also firmly grounded in many common ideals of the American political tradition. Successful completion of this course should bring insight into how these multiple influences on Nevada government blend to shape the structure and workings of Nevada government and politics as expressed in the state's constitution.

This course is not open to students who have obtained credit for PSC 103, PSC 208 or HIST 217.

Important Note: This class is a correspondence class that has been converted to an online semester-based format to help students obtain credits needed for graduation. Due to its original format, this class does not contain threaded student discussions that are normally required in Online and Independent Learning classes.

This class will run for six weeks total. Please note that, if you do not drop the class by the deadline or complete the class within the scheduled duration, you will receive a failing grade.

Course delivered through 365 Learning.
Online Learning is a program run by 365 Learning at the University of Nevada, Reno. In addition to Online Learning, 365 Learning oversees Summer Session, Wintermester, Weekend Classes, Evening Classes, and Freshman Start, all of which strive to offer students convenient options for higher education.

Online Learning’s main mission is to provide students the opportunity to take quality courses via individualized methods of learning that are not bound by time or place. Our team develops and maintains online courses and provides the essential support students need during their online learning experience.

Our editors and designers assist faculty in the design and development of online classes. After the classes are live and running, 365 Learning is whom you contact if you need help.

While questions related to course content—such as assignments and readings—should be directed to your instructor, we are here to assist with everything else. Questions about proctored testing, checking out loan items, or problems with your course site? Those are questions for our team.

**Mailing Address:**
Online Learning  
Extended Studies  
University of Nevada,  
Reno/0050 Reno, NV 89557 USA

**Location:**  
University of Nevada, Reno  
Campus Continuing Education Building  
1041 N. Virginia St., Room 225  
Reno, NV

**Phone:** (775) 784-4652 or 1-800-233-8928  
**Fax:** (775) 784-1280  
**Email:** 365@unr.edu

**Office Hours:** 7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday-Friday

**Required Texts and Course Materials:**

Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will be able to explain the origins, history and essential elements of the Nevada Constitution and identify how these were influenced by the United States Constitution.
2. Students will be able to discuss how (and in what sections of each constitution) individual rights are protected in both the US and Nevada Constitutions.
3. Students will be able to identify in the Nevada Constitution where specific powers are granted to the branches of government for budgeting and other political processes.
4. Students will be able to evaluate aspects of Nevada governmental operations as defined in the Constitution and how these compare to other states and the nation as a whole.

This course satisfies Core Objective 8 (Constitution) of the Silver Core Curriculum: Students will demonstrate familiarity with the origins, history, and essential elements of the Constitutions of the United States and Nevada, as well as the evolution of American institutions and ideals."

This core objective requires students to demonstrate familiarity with the origins, history and essential elements of both the US and Nevada Constitutions. This is achieved through a series of weekly assignments which include both individual essays and “constitutional exercises” where specific parts of constitutions must be linked to specific aspects of constitutional protections.

The final exam will serve as the basis for assessment in the course and cover a student’s competency of both the US and Nevada Constitutions. We will pull a sample of students and their scores to develop the level of competency attained for items involving the constitutions.

Class Policies and Procedures:
This course is taught over a six-week term. Student will be required to comply with the 365 Learning requirements outlined individually throughout this syllabus.

Description of Assignments:
Students must complete the assigned readings and answer the questions provided for each week. Again, each week has both substantive essay questions and an exercise that examines a specific part of the Nevada Constitution.
Please type your answers to the weekly lesson assignments directly in the assignment submission box. Attachments will not be accepted.

In addition, there is a graded examination. The examination will be delivered through ProctorU

Students may choose to take their proctored exams through ProctorU, an external service that allows students to complete their required supervised exams online from any location. Exams taken through ProctorU require specific hardware, which is the responsibility of the student to provide.

In order to test through ProctorU, you will need:

- A reliable computer running Windows XP (or higher) or Mac OS X (or higher).
- A webcam with 640 x 480 video pixel resolution or higher. Webcams built into laptops or computer monitors are usually sufficient.
- Headphones or working speakers connected to the computer.
- A working microphone connected to the computer. A webcam with a built-in microphone is recommended.
- A web browser with Adobe Flash Player installed. Flash Player 10 is recommended.
- A reliable, high-speed internet connection (minimum 768 Kbps download speed / 384 Kbps upload speed).
- The authority to allow remote access-video and screen-sharing connections-to the computer by one of ProctorU's proctors. (The proctor will walk you through this authorization process.)

In addition to the above technical requirements, you will need a handheld mirror during your testing appointment. If your camera is built into your computer monitor, ProctorU will ask you to hold up a mirror so your proctor can see the edges of your screen.

**Grading Criteria:**

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<th>Writing assignments: 135 points (15 points each)</th>
<th>Exam: 265 points (Essays plus constitutional exercises)</th>
<th>Total: 400 Points</th>
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All grading will be on a 0-100 scale. The following correspond to the approximate letter grades in my class:

| 94-100 = A | 84-86.99 = B | 74-76.99 = C | 64-66.99 = D |
| 90-93.99 = A- | 80-83.99 = B- | 70-73.99 = C- | 60-63.99 = D- |
| 87-89.99 = B+ | 77-79.99 = C+ | 67-69.99 = D+ | <60 = F |
Early or late examinations will not be permitted. Late assignments will be deducted a letter grade per week.

**Reviewing Graded Assignments**

After your assignment has been submitted and graded by your instructor, you can check your grade by clicking on "My Grades" on the course menu. This will take you to a page where you can track your assignments submission history, scores for all assignments in the course, as well as view instructor comments in a snapshot.

To view a completed assignment and your instructor’s comments, click on the hyperlinked number in the Grade column. This will allow you to review your submission materials: your submission date, your comments to your instructor, and the file or assignment you submitted.

**Course Calendar / Topics and Readings:**
Readings from each text are identified by the author’s last name

Lesson 1: Constitutional Development
- Reading: Arnold, chapter 1 “Structure and Preamble”
- Bowers, chapters 1 & 2 Nevada “Origins and Early Statehood”

Lesson 2: Rights and Liberties in Nevada
- Reading: Arnold, chapter 5, pages 75-104 “The Bill of Rights”; pages 107-124 “New Birth and Freedom”
- Bowers, chapter 3 “Civil Rights and Liberties in Nevada”

Lesson 3: Governmental Structures: Legislative
- Reading: Arnold, chapter 2 pages 7-46 “Article 1: The Congress”
- Bowers, chapter 6 “The Nevada Legislature”

Lesson 4: Governmental Structures: The Executive
- Reading: Arnold, chapter 2, pages 47-61, “Article 2: The Executive”
- Bowers, chapter 7 “The Nevada Executive”

Lesson 5: Governmental Structures: The Courts
- Reading: Arnold, chapter 2, pages 62-66 “Article 2: The Courts”
- Bowers, chapter 7 “The Nevada Judiciary”

Lesson 6: Public Participation
- Reading: Arnold, chapter 5, pages 126-124
- Bowers, chapters 4 “Elections” and 5 “Interest Groups”
Lesson 7: Shared Powers and Limits Between state and the Federal Government
Reading: Arnold, chapters 3 & 4

Lesson 8: State Policies
Reading: Bowers, chapters 9 “Local Government” and 10 “Budgeting and Finance”

Lesson 9: Current and Future Developments
Reading: Arnold, Epilogue “Beyond the Basics”
Bowers, Chapter 11 “Nevada, Past, Present and Future”

Academic Dishonesty:
Cheating, plagiarism or otherwise obtaining grades under false pretenses" constitute academic dishonesty according to the code of this university. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and penalties can include canceling a student's enrollment without a grade, giving an F for the course or for the assignment. For more details, see the University of Nevada, Reno General Catalog and the Office of Student Conduct (http://www.unr.edu/student-conduct/policies/university-policies-and-guidelines/academic-standards/policy)

Disability Services:
Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with me and the Disability Resource Center as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations. You can refer to the Disability Resource Center website at http://www.unr.edu/drc.

Academic Success Services:
Your student fees cover usage of the Tutoring Center (784-6801 or www.unr.edu/tutoring-center) and University Writing Center (784-6030 or http://www.unr.edu/writing-center). These centers support your classroom learning; it is your responsibility to take advantage of their services. Keep in mind that seeking help outside of class is the sign of a responsible and successful student.

Audio and Video Recording:
Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may have been given
permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.