

# Political Science 100: Nevada Constitution Summer 2006

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Office Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs 10:00 to 10:45

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This course, which satisfies the UNLV Nevada Constitution requirement, provides an overview of the political institutions, processes, and culture in Nevada. The historical context and current political, economic, and social characteristics will also be discussed.

## 1. Textbook

Bowers, *The Sagebrush State: Nevada's History, Government, and Politics* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)

## 2. Prerequisites

There are no course prerequisites for POS 100, however you must:

- have access to and be able to use either a typewriter or word processing software and
- have access to and a basic knowledge of navigating the Internet.

If you need assistance in finding or using computer resources, please talk to Dr. Hanks.

## 3. Requirements

1. Attendance: Attendance full-time at all five sessions is mandatory.

2. Examinations: There will be two exams: one at the beginning of the Wednesday session and one at the conclusion of the Friday session. Students must be present for both examinations; there will be no make-up exams.

3. Homework Assignments: There will be four homework assignments. Specific information is provided below.

## 4. Cheating

Any attempt to cheat on an examination or to present someone else's work as your own for a written assignment will be subject to the most severe penalty the University allows.

## 5. Grading

Examination 1 25%

Examination 2 35%

Homework Assignments (4 @ 10% each) 40%

90% - 100% = A

80% - 89% = B

70% - 79% = C

60% - 69% = D

below 60% = F

## **6. Class Interruptions**

Please keep interruptions to a minimum. Cell phones and pagers should be turned off, late arrivals and early departures are not permitted, and no “side-bar” conversations should be held.

## **7. Disabilities**

Learning Enhancement Services (LES) houses Disability Services, Learning Strategies and Supplemental Instruction. If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you need to contact LES for coordination in your academic accommodations. LES is located in the Reynolds Student Services Complex, suite 137. The phone is 702-895-0866 or TDD 702-895-0652. You may also visit their website at [www.unlv.edu/studentlife/les](http://www.unlv.edu/studentlife/les).

## **8. Schedule**

Course Introduction

1. Constitutional Framework
2. Nevada History (Chapters 1, 2, 11)
3. Political Parties (Chapter 4 pp. 44-47)
4. Elections (Chapter 4 pp 47-56)
5. Interest Groups and Lobbying (Chapter 5)
6. Legislative Branch (Chapter 6)
7. Executive Branch (Chapter 7)
8. Judicial Branch (Chapter 8)
9. County and City Governments (Chapter 9)
10. Policy and Finance (Chapter 10)
11. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (Chapter 3)

## **9. Homework Assignments**

For all the assignments your product should be ¾ to a full page in length. It must be single-spaced, be in 12-pitch *Times Roman* font, and have no larger than 1.25” margins on all four sides. The only information that should appear at the top of the page is your name and the title of the assignment. Do not include extra lines at the top of the page or between paragraphs. Points will be deducted for not following these instructions.

Note: It may not be possible to follow these directions if you are using a Macintosh computer or one produced in the Far East. If your computer can not produce output that follows the directions above, use a computer in the library or one in the UNLV computer labs.

Your assignments will be graded on content as well as style. You should answer the questions thoroughly and thoughtfully and your assignment should be grammatically correct with no misspelled words.

All assignments are due at the beginning of class (that means 11:00). Late assignments will not be accepted. You may turn assignments in early.

### **Homework 1 - State Website (due Tuesday)**

Spend at least 30 minutes exploring the Nevada state web site and the links on the site. Determine what kinds of information are available. Look for information that is of use to you personally, as well as information that may be useful in your academic studies. In other words, assess the site from the viewpoint of both a citizen and a student.

The Nevada state site can be found at [http:// www.nv.gov](http://www.nv.gov)

Write a brief description and assessment of what you found. Questions you may wish to answer include:

- What kind of information was available?
- What are the target audiences of this site? Would those groups find the available information useful?
- Were there appropriate links and were they easy to use?
- What would make the site better?

### **Homework #2 – Local Website (due Wednesday)**

Visit the Clark County site: <http://www.co.clark.nv.us> or the website for a local jurisdiction such as Las Vegas or Henderson for at least 30 minutes.

Write a brief description and assessment of what you found. Questions you may wish to answer include:

- What kind of information was available?
- What are the target audiences of this site? Would those groups find the available information useful?
- Were there appropriate links and were they easy to use?
- What would make the site better?

### **Homework #3 - Local Public Access Television**

Public-access television provides citizens the opportunity to see government in action and can be another valuable source of information. In Clark County, the meetings of government boards and commissions are broadcast on channel 2 and channel 4 (cable). NOTE: These channels are not available in the UNLV dormitories. You will have to make arrangements to

view them at a location that has cable access or watch the streaming video available on the Clark County website ([http://www.co.clark.nv.us/Public\\_communications/videostream.htm](http://www.co.clark.nv.us/Public_communications/videostream.htm))

Spend at least one hour watching a meeting of a local government body. Write a brief description and assessment of what you saw. Include answers to these questions:

- What meeting did you watch?
- Who were the participants (both officials and members of the public)?
- What issues were being discussed?
- What is your assessment of the discussions and decisions?

#### **Homework 4 – Newspaper Article on a Nevada or Clark County Issue**

Read a news article from the *Las Vegas Review Journal* ([www.lvrj.com](http://www.lvrj.com)) or the *Las Vegas Sun* (<http://www.lasvegassun.com/>) about Nevada or Clark County. Summarize the article (being careful not to plagiarize) and add your own views about the topic.

#### **10. Extra Credit - KNPR's (88.9) State of the State**

Listen to a one-hour segment on the “State of Nevada” program, which is broadcast from 9 am to 11 am and repeated from 7 pm to 9 pm, Monday through Friday. Previous programs are available on streaming audio online ([www.knpr.org](http://www.knpr.org)). The segment **must** be related to local government or to a civic issue. It may not, for example, be sports or entertainment-related. Your homework should include these topics:

- What was the topic being discussed?
- Who were the participants?
- What were the specific issues or controversies discussed?
- What was your impression of the discussions?