

Huron Brief Course Outlines

Fall/Winter 2023-2024

Course Title: The Polarisation of American Politics

Course Number and Section

POLISCI

3396F - 550

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

This course examines political polarisation in American government and society. The course will explore the rise of polarisation in American institutions such as the Congress, the presidency, and the media. The weekly seminars will investigate questions such as: What explains the increased partisanship in Congress and among American voters? What are the causes of policy gridlock within and between the branches of government? How does the erosion of political and cultural norms contribute to polarisation in American government and society? The course will introduce students to the ideas and theories that will shed light on how polarisation impacts elections, the interactions between the three branches of government, the media, and American society. We will conclude by considering the political, economic, and social consequences of the polarisation of American politics and society.

Learning Outcomes:

Develop an understanding of the meaning and impact of political polarisation on American government and society;

Explain the rise and evolution of polarisation in the American political system and government;

Understand and explain how political actors such as individuals and political parties shape and influence polarisation;

Develop the ability to critically assess these ideas and information and to clearly communicate knowledge in written and oral form;

Develop the ability to critically evaluate academic and non-academic literature and to engage with the ideas in a constructive manner; and

Develop the skills to present information to an audience and to engage with others in a meaningful discussion about ideas covered in the course.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

The required readings (articles and book chapters) will be made available on the course website through OWL.

Methods of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Attendance and Participation	Ongoing	30
Seminar Presentation	TBD	20
Research Paper 1	11/10/23	25
Research Paper 2	12/8/23	25

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.