

Fall A, 2025

POS310

65901 & 65902

**Instructor:** Dr. George Watson

**Office:** Online, use e-mail and discussion forums to communicate directly with Professor Watson

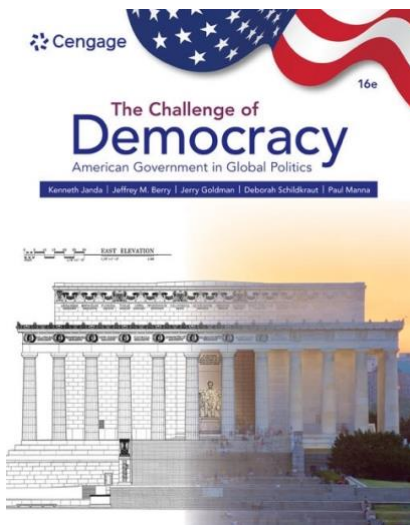
**Phone:** Use e-mail

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**Office hours:** Use online resources 24/7

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### Textbook Information



Kenneth Janda et al., *The Challenge of Democracy*, 16th ed. (Boston: Cengage Learning, 2026).

You are required to use the most recent 16<sup>th</sup> edition of this electronic text and the accompanying access to Cengage Learning's MindTap, which contains an electronic version of the text, a collection of supplemental materials, and required quizzes. There is no need to purchase a print edition, though you are provided that option.

**Purchase the text by going to the POS310 Canvas class site and clicking on the "Access POS310 Cengage Site" link provided in the Cengage MindTap module, the last of the modules provided on the homepage.** This gives access to the MindTap site, your initial entry guiding you through the process of purchasing the text and registering to use the MindTap course material. If you have other courses using a Cengage text, there are options to purchase Cengage Unlimited, allowing full access to all Cengage materials. Purchasing the text through the POS310 course website means you will be unable to purchase it in advance. You will have to wait until the course is loaded into Canvas. **Do not purchase the text outside of our class website as that will pose problems with access to the Cengage MindTap site and will ultimately cost you more.** Please, just follow the instructions provided here.

Cengage Publishing, in collaboration with the ASU bookstore, has integrated the required text and accompanying materials for this course into your Canvas class website and made it available to you at a special discounted rate of \$87.25 plus tax. The charge for the materials will appear on your student account under the item type Digital Integrated Course Mtrl after drop/add. You have the option to opt out of this program by clicking this link: [https://includedcp.follett.com/1230\\*](https://includedcp.follett.com/1230*), but please be advised that access to this courseware is required to take this course, and if you do opt out you will need to purchase elsewhere at current market rates, which will be more expensive.

## Catalog Description

American National Government—Powers, functions, and agents of American political institutions. Meets the federal government requirement for teacher certification. Credit is allowed for only POS 110 or POS 310, not both.

## Course Overview

We are all residents and/or citizens of the U.S. With that comes what political scientists call civic responsibility, the belief that each of us must contribute in some way to help make this world, this society, a better place for our having been here. I encourage you to read the statement on civic responsibility from the Campus Compact, an association of presidents of U.S. universities and colleges, including Arizona State University, located at

<https://compact.org/current-programs/civic-action-planning/action-statement-of-presidents-chancellors>

Especially in this era of so-called fake news and alternative facts, you are the target of governments, politicians, political parties and movements, advocacy groups, and others trying to influence our civic structures, policies, and culture. A knowledge of government and politics is essential if you wish to evaluate the claims of these entities and make choices consistent with your own developing values and beliefs. You may think you already know enough to do this, but I'm confident you have more to learn. Your text is authored by some of the most highly respected political science professors in their respective fields. The supplemental material available through Cengage's MindTap and that which I have inserted should add considerable value to the text. As you can see from the table of contents, its coverage is comprehensive. To cover a full semester's work in just over seven weeks will require commitment and diligence on your part. I'll do my best to make this material interesting, relevant, and accessible.

As a compressed online introductory course, this class will rely on activities that efficiently promote knowledge and comprehension of the material. Demonstrating that will earn you a grade of C in the course. Higher levels of cognition that show you can analyze, apply, synthesize, and evaluate various constructs and components of the subject matter will result in B-level and A-level grades.

The text has 18 chapters organized into six parts. For evaluation purposes, I have grouped these into four units, the second of which is divided into two subsections. For each unit, you will be asked to read the chapter text and other assigned materials, complete quizzes on each chapter, submit an assignment for each unit, and take the unit exams.

## American Institutions Requirement

This course fulfills the ASU American Institutions General Studies requirement. Students completing an American Institutions course will be able to:

- demonstrate how ideas and groups have historically shaped the creation of and change in U.S. institutions.
- identify key institutions in U.S. politics and their impacts on social, economic, and political outcomes. This will include differential impacts on disparate communities.
- describe the impact of key ideas, people, events, institutions, or movements on the nature, history, and boundaries of American citizenship and the various forms of civic participation in a self-governing society.
- communicate coherent arguments using evidence drawn from qualitative or quantitative sources.

## Additional Course-Specific Learning Objectives

In addition to the outcomes for the American Institutions requirement provided above, this course will also help you do the following:

- understand and appreciate the dilemmas facing democratic societies.
- explain and apply the basic constructs used to explain and analyze the political process.
- evaluate critically the claims and counterclaims offered by actors in the political system.
- develop your own value system and situate yourself appropriately in the civic culture.

- participate effectively in the political system.

An extensive set of specific learning outcomes is provided for each chapter topic to help you know more specifically what is expected. You will be evaluated on your mastery of these expected outcomes.

### Course Assignments, Schedule, & Grading

Activities used for instruction and assessment of learning include: the textbook; supplemental readings and materials; assignments; instructor presentations; chapter quizzes; and unit exams. See attached Course Outline—Detailed for more information about the subject matter covered in each unit.

UNIT	TOPICS	ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS Submissions are due by end of day, 11:59 pm.	POINTS
<b>Course Home</b>	• Syllabus	• Syllabus/intro quiz (due 8/26)	• 10 extra
<b>Unit 1</b>	• Assignment 1 • Chpts 1–4 • Supplements • Unit 1 exam	• Assignment 1 submission (due 8/27) • Complete chapter quizzes in MindTap (due 8/29) • Read/view/perform any additional material • Take Unit 1 exam (8/29-31)	• 20 • 10 each • 0 • 100
<b>Unit 2</b>	• Assignment 2 • Chapters 5–7 • Supplements • Unit 2a exam • Chpts 8–10 • Supplements • Unit 2b exam	• Assignment 2 submission (due 9/12) • Complete chapter quizzes 7-9 in MindTap (9/8) • Read/view/perform any additional material • Take Unit 2a exam (9/8-9) • Complete chapter quizzes in MindTap (9/17) • Read/view/perform any additional material • Take Unit 2b exam (9/17-18)	• 20 • 10 each • 0 • 75 • 10 each • 0 • 75
<b>Unit 3</b>	• Assignment 3 • Chapters 11-14 • Supplements • Unit 3 exam	• Assignment 3 submission (due 9/25) • Complete chapter quizzes in MindTap (9/28) • Read/view/perform any additional material • Take Unit 3 exam (9/28-29)	• 20 • 10 each • 0 • 100
<b>Unit 4</b>	• Assignment 4 • Chapters 15-18 • Supplements • Unit 4 exam	• Assignment 4 submission (available 10/5; due 10/10) • Complete chapter quizzes in MindTap (10/10) • Read/view/perform any additional material • Take Unit 4 exam (10/10-11)	• 20 • 10 each • 0 • 100

### Grade Threshold Values

Grade	A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	D	E
Percentage	98	92	90	88	82	80	78	68	60	<60

These percentage threshold values apply to assignments, chapter quizzes, exams, and other credits, as well as your final course grade.

### Performance Assessment and Grading Protocol

Grades reflect your performance on chapter quizzes, assignments, exams, and other credits. Chapter quizzes are knowledge checks on your understanding of the chapter material. Assignments involve real-

world applications relevant to your understanding of American government and politics. Exams evaluate a fuller mastery and retention of the course material. Other credits are information and survey items.

### Chapter Quizzes

Chapter quizzes are required, accounting for 30% of your course grade. They appear in the Apply It section of the MindTap chapter material. You may also directly reach a quiz from the Canvas class site using the link provided in the Cengage module. Each of the eighteen chapters has a twenty-five-question multiple choice quiz. It is open book, but to have access to the text while taking a quiz requires going back to your Canvas class tab on your browser and opening a second MindTap tab or window.

You have two chances at each question. Your initial choice is marked immediately. If incorrect, you are offered an opportunity to make another choice. I recommend doing the following. Read the chapter. Take the quiz immediately thereafter. If you miss a question, go to the text, which you called up on a different tab. Find the place where the text presents the material for that question. Read it over with a view to answering the question. Return to the quiz, make your new choice for a response. Whether right or wrong, you will have to move on to the next question.

Due dates for chapter quizzes are set for the first day of the exam over that material. Taking chapter quizzes in advance of the exam over those chapters is highly recommended. Nonetheless, these quizzes may be taken late without penalty if need be, though no later than the first day of Exam 4.

Each twenty-five-question quiz is scored on a twenty-five-point basis, one point for each question. These points are not equivalent to exam or assignment points. You receive a percentage score for your quizzes point total and that will be weighted as 30% of your final course grade.

### Assignments

There are four assignments that account for 15% of your course grade. You may use any material while carrying out these assignments, and you may ask others to help you understand the material, but your choices for responses must be your own. You may redo any of these assignments in an effort to attain full credit, Assignment 4 being limited to three attempts. Both the instructions and submission links for assignments are provided in the Assignments module. To facilitate their assessment, submissions take the form of quizzes, and you may use material you have gathered in the assignment process to answer the questions.

Published due dates of assignments are designed to keep you current in the class. Life happens though. Assignments may be submitted without penalty after the due date, though no later than the first day of Exam 4.

Assignment one is worth 15 points, the remaining three are 20 points each. These points are not equivalent to exam or chapter quiz points. You receive a percentage score for your assignments point total, and that will be weighted as 15% of your final course grade.

### Exams

Mastery of the text's eighteen chapters and accompanying reading and other materials is assessed through five exams that constitute 50% of your course grade. Three cover four chapters, each valued at 100 points, and the other two addressing three chapters, valued at 75 points each. Exams consist of multiple choice, multiple answer, matching, and true/false questions. The exam is taken in the course Canvas site, not your Cengage MindTap system. It requires use of the Respondus lockdown browser, the app for which may be downloaded through a link in the Course Resources module on the course homepage. We do not use the webcam system. Grade results will be posted in the Canvas grade center

Unlike the assignments, you may not retake exams. Unlike the chapter quizzes, your answers to questions are not assessed while taking the exam. You are not permitted to use the text or any other material while taking the exam. Your work on the exam must be your own. You may not receive nor offer anyone else information about the exam.

Exam dates are firm, but notify the instructor if a situation arises that prevents taking it at that time. follow appropriate University policies to request an accommodation [for religious practices Links to an external site.](#) or [University-sanctioned activities Links to an external site.](#)

Exam points are not equivalent to assignment or chapter quiz points. You receive a percentage score for your exams point total, which will be weighted as 50% of your final course grade.

### Other Credits

Five percent of the course grade is based on other offerings equivalent to extra credit. One is a ten-question, 10-point quiz over this syllabus, constituting two of the five percent. You are permitted to repeat the quiz, as needed, to secure full points. Check the Course Schedule in this syllabus or the dated module containing the quiz for the due date. It is unavailable after that date. Another is the American Politics Who's Who. All you need do is complete and submit the ungraded survey to obtain the five-point, one percent grade credit. There will be two others, the mere completion of which secures the one percent credit for each.

The Respondus lockdown browser is required for the syllabus quiz. That permits you to establish there are no issues with the lockdown browser that will be in use for exams. It also provides you examples of the types of questions, especially the multiple answer formats, that you will encounter in exams.

These Other Credit points are not equivalent to exam, assignment, or chapter quiz points. You receive a percentage score for your Other Credit point total, and that will be weighted as five percent of your final course grade.

## **Student Success**

This is an online course. To be successful:

- check the course daily for any new announcements or posts
- read and respond to course email messages, as may be needed
- complete assignments, quizzes, and exams by the due dates specified
- read all assigned material more than once, with particular attention to learning outcomes
- review the Watson Commentary PowerPoint slides provided for each chapter
- read or watch the chapter overviews
- understand what you read and post any questions you have in the appropriate discussion forums
- spread your work across the time available for the unit, up to 18 hours a week or more
- review exams afterwards to assess items missed
- do not work ahead, focus on the unit reading materials at the appropriate time

## **Communicating with the Instructor**

This course provides a variety of discussion forums for questions dealing with the class. Prior to posting a question, please check the syllabus, announcements, the FAQs page, and existing posts. If you do not find an answer, post your question. Feel free to respond to any questions posted by others. For questions of a personal nature, email your instructor. If you do not receive a response to your email within 24 hours, please resend the email. ASU email is the [official means of communication](#) among students, faculty, and staff. You are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion. You also bear the responsibility of missed messages, so check your ASU-assigned email regularly.

## **Online Course Access and Text Acquisition**

This is an online course with two distinct sites that you must access to do all of the course work. The Canvas site resides at ASU, and you may link to it through your myasu account. Easiest access is through <https://asu.instructure.com/> or <http://myasucourses.asu.edu> The Canvas site is your course home from which you obtain information about the course, take the syllabus/intro quiz and the unit exams, submit your assignments, and access the Cengage MindTap site for the online text, the chapter quizzes, and other ancillary materials you may find interesting. **You should purchase your text and register at that site using the Access POS310 Cengage Site link provided in the Cengage module, near the bottom of the**

**Canvas course homepage.** Purchasing a print text in some other venue will not provide access the Cengage MindTap class site. Renting the text still requires you to purchase an access code, a more expensive route than just purchasing the online text and access recommended. If you opt for the trial period with Cengage for the text in order to defer initial payment, be sure to make the purchase before your trial period ends. The trial period does not circumvent purchase of the text or access to the Cengage materials.

## **The FAQs Page**

A FAQs page on the Canvas class website provides answers to the most common questions asked concerning the structure and operation of the class. Some of these provide information useful for understanding certain course material. You are advised to look through the items covered there as soon as you can.

## **Course Time Commitment**

This three-credit course requires approximately 135 hours of work. Please expect to spend around 18 hours each week reading and studying for this course. There is a direct and strong correlation with how much time one spends on this class and how well one scores on the exams. **If you don't have the time to take this semester class in the half-semester time scheduled for it, do not take it.** Moreover, you need to be able to spend time throughout the class, not just devoting time to it on the day before an exam.

## **Name Consistency**

Be sure your last name in the Canvas gradebook and your last name in the Cengage MindTap gradebook are the same. Score from the MindTap quizzes are automatically submitted to the Canvas gradebook.

## **Email and Internet**

ASU email is an [official means of communication](#) among students, faculty, and staff. You are expected to read and act upon email in a timely fashion, bearing responsibility for any missed. *All instructor correspondence will be sent to your ASU email account.*

## **Drop and Add Dates/Withdrawals**

This course adheres to a compressed schedule and may be part of a sequenced program, therefore, there is a limited timeline to [drop or add the course](#). Consult with your advisor and notify your instructor to add or drop this course. If you are considering a withdrawal, review the following ASU policies: [Withdrawal from Classes](#), [Medical/Compassionate Withdrawal](#), and a [Grade of Incomplete](#).

## **Grade Appeals**

Grade disputes must first be addressed by discussing the situation with the instructor. If the dispute is not resolved with the instructor, you may appeal to the department chair as specified in the [University Policy for Student Appeal Procedures on Grades](#).

## **Student Conduct and Academic Integrity**

Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>. Additionally, required behavior standards are listed in the [Student Code of Conduct and Student Disciplinary Procedures, Computer, Internet, and Electronic Communications policy](#), and outlined by the [Office of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#). Anyone in violation of these policies is subject to sanctions.

[Students are entitled to receive instruction free from interference](#) by other members of the class. An instructor may withdraw a student from the course when the student's behavior disrupts the educational process per [Instructor Withdrawal of a Student for Disruptive Classroom Behavior](#).

Appropriate online behavior (also known as *netiquette*) is defined by the instructor and includes keeping course discussion posts focused on the assigned topics. Students must maintain a cordial atmosphere and use tact in expressing differences of opinion. Inappropriate discussion board posts may be deleted by the instructor.

The Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities accepts [incident reports](#) from students, faculty, staff, or other persons who believe that a student or a student organization may have violated the Student Code of Conduct.

### **Prohibition of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use on Assessments**

AI is proving quite useful in gathering information and composing written text. In this particular course, however, there is little utility or opportunity for its use. It could conceivably help as a supplement to learning and applying certain concepts, and you are welcome to make use of it in this manner. When it comes to actually doing the chapter quizzes, assignments, and exams, however, do not attempt AI support. It is not permitted. It is not a substitute for learning, thinking, and applying. Moreover, AI remains unreliable. We'll talk more about that in the class.

### **Prohibition of Commercial Note Taking Services**

In accordance with [ACD 304-06 Commercial Note Taking Services](#), written permission must be secured from the official instructor of the class in order to sell the instructor's oral communication in the form of notes. Notes must have the notetaker's name as well as the instructor's name, the course number, and the date.

### **Course Evaluation**

Students are expected to complete the course evaluation. The feedback provides valuable information to the instructor and the college and is used to improve student learning. Students are notified when the online evaluation form is available.

### **Accessibility Statement**

In compliance with the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Section 504, and the Americans with Disabilities Act as amended (ADAAA) of 2008, professional disability specialists and support staff at the Student Accessibility and Inclusive Learning Service (SAILS) facilitate a comprehensive range of academic support services and accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

[Qualified students with disabilities may be eligible to receive academic support services and accommodations.](#) Eligibility is based on qualifying disability documentation and assessment of individual need. Students who believe they have a current and essential need for disability accommodations are [responsible for requesting accommodations and providing qualifying documentation](#) to SAILS. Every effort is made to provide reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities.

Qualified students who wish to request an accommodation for a disability should contact the SAILS by going to <https://eoss.asu.edu/drc>, calling (480) 965-1234 or emailing [DRC@asu.edu](mailto:DRC@asu.edu). To speak with a specific office, please use the following information:

<b>ASU Online and Downtown Phoenix Campus</b> University Center Building, Suite 160 602-496-4321 (Voice)	<b>Polytechnic Campus</b> Sutton Hall, Suite 201 480-727-1039 (Voice)
<b>West Campus</b> University Center Building (UCB), Room 130 602-543-8145 (Voice)	<b>Tempe Campus</b> Matthews Center – 1 <sup>st</sup> floor 480-965-1234 (Voice)

### **Computer Requirements**

This course requires a computer with Internet access and the following:



- Web browsers ([Chrome](#), [Internet Explorer](#), [Mozilla Firefox](#), or [Safari](#))
  - Chrome and Firefox are recommended. Safari & Explorer have had issues.
- [Respondus Lockdown browser](#) (free)
- [Adobe Acrobat Reader](#) (free)
- Microsoft Office (Word & PowerPoint) or software that can read those files (docx & pptx).

A smartphone will NOT be sufficient for completing your work in ASU Online classes. As of now, the Respondus lockdown browser required for exams will work with iPad and Chromebook apps. The coursework and exams are handled more easily, however, with a computer.

## **Trouble Shooting and Technical Support**

This course uses Canvas to deliver content. Technical assistance can be accessed through the Help link on your Canvas home page or My ASU Service Center at <https://asu.my.site.com/>, which offers a 24/7 live chat or the option of submitting your request online.

To monitor the status of campus networks and services, visit the System Health Portal at <http://syshealth.asu.edu/>.

To contact the ASU help desk call 1-855-278-5080 or 480-965-6500.

To contact Cengage Technical Support, call 1-800-990-8211.

If experiencing issues accessing course content, before calling technical support, try the following:

1. Disable your browser's pop-up blocker. To find out how, google "disable pop-up blocker" followed by the name of your browser.
2. Use a different browser.
3. Sign out of the course and log back in.
4. Clear your browser cache. To find out how, google "clear cache" followed by the name of your browser for a list of web sites with step-by-step instructions.
5. Restart your computer
6. Use a different computer.

## **Reporting Title IX Violations**

Title IX is a federal law that provides that no person be excluded on the basis of sex from participation in, be denied benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity. Both Title IX and university policy make it clear that sexual violence and harassment based on sex is prohibited. An individual who believes they have been subjected to sexual violence or harassed on the basis of sex can seek support, including counseling and academic support, from the university. If you or someone you know has been harassed on the basis of sex or sexually assaulted, you can find information and resources at <http://sexualviolenceprevention.asu.edu/faqs/students>.

As a mandated reporter, I am obligated to report any information I become aware of regarding alleged acts of sexual discrimination, including sexual violence and dating violence. ASU Counseling Services <https://eooss.asu.edu/counseling> is available if you wish to discuss any concerns confidentially and privately. ASU online students may access 360 Life Services, <https://goto.asuonline.asu.edu/success/online-resources.html>.

## **Policy on Discrimination**

Arizona State University is committed to providing an environment free of discrimination, harassment, or retaliation for the entire university community, including all students, faculty members, staff employees, and guests. ASU expressly prohibits discrimination, harassment, and retaliation by employees, students, contractors, or agents of the university based on any protected status: race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, veteran status, sexual orientation, gender identity, and genetic information.



## **Syllabus Disclaimer**

This syllabus is a statement of intent and serves as an implicit agreement between the instructor and the student. Every effort will be made to avoid changing the course schedule, but the possibility exists that unforeseen events will make syllabus changes necessary. Please remember to check your ASU email and the course site often.