

**PS2250 Missouri Politics  
Spring Semester 2021  
Synchronous Online  
TR 12:30p.m. – 1:45 p.m.**

**Instructor:** Elizabeth Dorssom

**Email:** [eidxc5@umsystem.edu](mailto:eidxc5@umsystem.edu)

**Office Hours:** Wednesday/Friday

12pm-3pm via Zoom, and by appointment

Personal Meeting Room link:

<https://umsystem.zoom.us/j/5516769635>

**Communication Expectations:** *I have created a discussion board on Canvas to provide a central location for you to ask questions about the syllabus, schedule, content, etc. Emails sent/questions posted during the week (Monday – Friday), will be responded to within 24 hours. Questions posted/emails received over the weekend or during breaks/holidays will receive a response within 48 hours. Finally, if you wish to ask a question or pose a concern anonymously, feel free to post on this Padlet:*

<https://padlet.com/edorssom/8byd8v5zxbwph6jl>

If a question is asked via Padlet, I will respond by sending an email to the entire class.

**Course Description:** This course examines the government and politics of the state of Missouri. We will study the Missouri Constitution, the structure and function of the Missouri state government, and the politics - partisan and otherwise - of the state of Missouri. We will consider public policy development and implementation and examine several areas of public policy: health, public safety, education, resource management, and others.

**Course Objectives:**

By the end of the semester:

- Students will be able to identify and describe the branches of the Missouri government
- Students will be able to explain the current and historical political issues in Missouri
- Students will be able to describe the historical development of the Missouri Constitution and how the Missouri Constitution is amended
- Students will be able to identify the influence that individuals, government agencies, and various groups have on government policies

**Statement for Mental Health**

The University of Missouri is committed to supporting student well-being through an integrated network of care, with a wide range of services to help students succeed. The MU Counseling Center offers professional mental health care, and can help you find the best approach to treatment based on your needs. Call to make an appointment at 573-882-6601. Any student in crisis may call or go to the MU Counseling Center between 8:00 – 5:00 M-F. After hours phone support is available at 573-882-6601.

Visit our website at <https://wellbeing.missouri.edu> to take an online mental health screening, find out about workshops and resources that can help you thrive, or learn how to support a friend. Download Sanvello, a phone app that teaches skills and strategies to help you maintain good mental health. Log in with your Mizzou e-mail to unlock all the tools available through Sanvello at no cost to you.

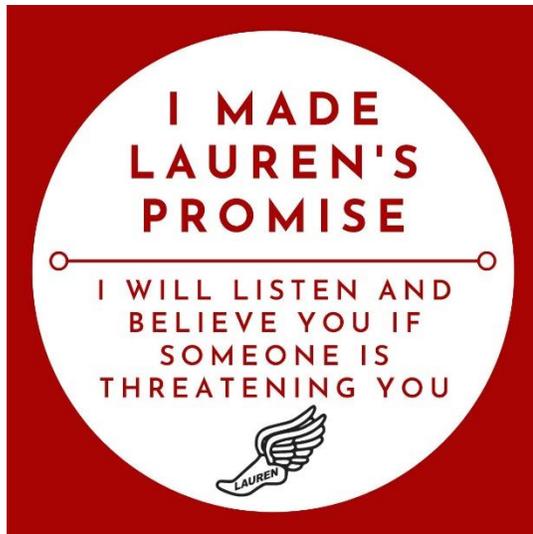
Students can encounter challenges that may impact their performance in their academic programs. The University of Missouri is committed to support students who encounter these challenges. Any student who cannot afford groceries or access sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live is urged to contact Nicole Logue, 2500 MU Student Center, ([loguejn@missouri.edu](mailto:loguejn@missouri.edu)) for a list of resources and support. In addition, the MU Tiger Pantry (<https://tigerpantry.missouri.edu/>) is a free resource with a food pantry and personal care items, located in the Hitt Street Parking Structure. Mental health is also an important aspect of well-being. The Counseling Center provides a range of services designed to help students navigate life challenges while in college. Crisis and consultation are available 24/7 by phone at [573-882-6601](tel:573-882-6601) or by going to the Counseling Center at 119 Parker Hall. Students in these situations may find it helpful to notify their professors so they can also assist with finding resources. You may also reach out to me if you need assistance.

### **Course Structure**

Our course takes a synchronous online format. We will meet via Zoom on Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30p.m. to 1:45p.m. via my Zoom Personal Meeting Room link: <https://umsystem.zoom.us/j/5516769635>

### **Required Texts**

- *Missouri: The Heart of the Nation, 4<sup>th</sup> edition.* William E. Parrish, Lawrence O. Christensen, and Brad D. Lookingbill
- *A Guide to the Missouri Constitution, 1<sup>st</sup> edition.* Gregory Casey and Justin Dyer.
- *Current Events.* This is a course in Missouri politics and the Missouri General Assembly will be in session for the entire semester. We will discuss current events and you need to keep up with current events. The local newspapers, *The Columbia Missourian* and *The Columbia Tribune*, are good sources. So too are the *Kansas City Star* and the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*. The *Jefferson City News Tribune* is another good source. Each of these newspapers have different rules about how many free articles you can get, so keep that in mind. Another good resource is the Missouri Digital News website, for news stories from around the state and current coverage of the General Assembly ([www.mdn.org](http://www.mdn.org)).



## **Important Dates**

**January 19<sup>th</sup>:** First day of class

**March 9<sup>th</sup>:** First exam,

**March 27<sup>th</sup>:** Spring break begins

**April 6<sup>th</sup>:** Class resumes after Spring break

**April 6<sup>th</sup>:** Second exam

**May 6<sup>th</sup>:** Third exam

## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION**

### **1. Make-up Examinations and Late Assignments**

In general, a missed examination may not be made up. Likewise, I do not accept late assignments. In either of these cases, you will not receive credit for the exam or assignment. I may provide exceptions for those with an acceptable written excuse from a university administrator, health care professional or member of the clergy. This note should be on letterhead with the name, address and telephone number of the person verifying the reason for the missed examination or late assignment. I am the final arbitrator of whether an excuse is acceptable. **Please note the dates and times of the examinations. Please bring your student ID to the exam.**

### **2. Examination Locations**

The midterm examinations will be held on Canvas during the regular class period.

## **COURSE POLICIES**

### **Classroom Misconduct**

Classroom misconduct includes forgery of class attendance, obstruction or disruption of teaching, failure to turn off cellular telephones leading to disruption of teaching, playing games or surfing the Internet on laptop computers unless instructed to do so, physical abuse or safety

threats, theft, property damage, disruptive, lewd or obscene conduct, abuse of computer time, repeated failure to attend class when attendance is required and repeated failure to participate or respond in class when class participation is required. Under MU policy, your instructor has the right to ask for your removal from the course for misconduct or excessive absences. The instructor then has the right to issue a grade of withdraw, withdraw failing or F. The instructor alone is responsible for assigning the grade in such circumstances. Finally, please read the “Netiquette Guidelines” in the discussion board prior to posting.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful.

### **Dishonesty and Misconduct Reporting Procedures**

MU faculty are required to report all instances of academic dishonesty or classroom misconduct to the appropriate campus officials. Allegations of classroom misconduct must be reported to MU’s Office of Student Accountability & Support. Allegations of academic misconduct must be reported to MU’s Office of Academic Integrity.

### **Title IX**

Mizzou policies and federal law prohibit all forms of sex discrimination in education, including discrimination on the basis of sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, and pregnancy. Discrimination includes any form of unequal treatment such as denial of opportunities, harassment, and violence. Sex-based violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, dating/interpersonal violence, and sexual exploitation. Because we care about our community, Mizzou employees are required to report all incidents of sex discrimination to the Title IX Office. The Title IX Office connects students with resources and helps them decide whether they wish to file a complaint of discrimination. The Title IX Office also provides accommodations to students who need help with academics, housing or other issues. To learn more, [contacttitle9@missouri.edu](mailto:contacttitle9@missouri.edu) or (573) 882-3880, or go to [www.title9.missouri.edu](http://www.title9.missouri.edu). Students may also contact the Relationship & Sexual Violence Prevention (RSVP) Center [atrsvp@missouri.edu](mailto:atrsvp@missouri.edu) or (573) 882-6638, or go to [www.rsvp.missouri.edu](http://www.rsvp.missouri.edu).

### **Accommodations**

Students with Disabilities: I am happy to accommodate students with disabilities. If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible. If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please establish an accommodation plan with the Disability Center (<http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 573-882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable

accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage

### **Intellectual Pluralism**

The University community welcomes intellectual diversity and respects student rights. Students who have questions or concerns regarding the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director; the director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities; MU Equity Office, or [equity@missouri.edu](mailto:equity@missouri.edu). All students will have the opportunity to submit an anonymous evaluation of the instructor(s) at the end of the course.

### **Religious Holidays**

Students are excused for religious holidays. Please let me know in advance if you have a conflict.

### **FERPA**

The University of Missouri maintains educational records of students in accordance with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). Related topics include privacy policies at MU, display of student directory information and details about how MU manages FERPA-protected information.

### **Academic Honesty**

Academic honesty is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed and presented. Any effort to gain advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards academic dishonesty as an extremely serious matter, with serious consequences that range from probation to expulsion. Please contact me if you are in doubt about what constitutes plagiarism, inappropriate paraphrasing, quoting, or collaboration. All examinations in this class must be completed independently.

### **How to Succeed in this Course**

- Stay connected. Plan to log into Canvas at least once a day Monday–Friday to check announcements, check your or email, and keep up with the discussions.
- Read and watch the material provided.
- Participate early and often in the discussions.
- Submit assignments on time.
- Read and use (or, at least, consider) the feedback you receive.
- Ask questions. Ask questions of me and your course peers.
- Allow yourself to be stretched, but not stressed. Use the support resources available to you when you need them. Please reach out to the instructor if you are struggling.

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Note: I reserve the right to alter the syllabus as needed. I will make sure any and all changes to the outline are clearly communicated to you and that you will have ample time to adjust if need be. I will not make changes without notifying you first.

Please check Canvas Announcements and emails regularly to ensure you do not miss any changes.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Grades are calculated as follows:

Introductory Quiz: 10%

Exam 1: 20%

Exam 2: 20%

Exam 3: 20%

Missouri Constitution Assignment: 15%

Final Project: 15%

### **Grading Scale**

I use the following, percentage-based, grading scale:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
A+	97-100
A	94-96
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	64-66
D-	60-63
F	Below 60

## **SCHEDULE OF TOPICS AND READINGS**

## **SECTION ONE: Missouri Democracy**

**Week One (January 19, 21):** Missouri political culture. Federalism and Missouri.

Reading: Casey and Dyer, Introduction

*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 1, Ch. 2*

**Week Two (January 26, 28, February 2):** The Missouri Constitution: previous constitutions, the Constitutional Convention of 1922 and the Constitutional Convention of 1943.

Reading: Article by Dyer, on Canvas; Casey and Dyer Article XII

*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 3, Ch. 4, Ch. 5*

### **NOTE: Missouri Constitution Assignment**

This assignment will be posted on Canvas on Monday, January 28 and will be due, in class, on Friday, February 15

**Week Three (February 4, 9, 11):** Citizen Democracy – Initiatives and Referenda, including the 2020 election.

Reading: Dyer and Casey, pages 49-53 and 74-75

*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 8, Ch. 9*

**Week Four (February 16, 18, 23):** Partisan Politics – Missouri's Political Parties

Reading: *Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 10, Ch. 11*

**Week Five (February 25, March 2, 4):** Interest Groups

Reading: Article by Endersby and Horner (on Canvas)

*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 12*

**GUEST SPEAKER: James Owen of Renew Missouri on March 4<sup>th</sup>.**

**Please Note: Exam One will be on Tuesday, March 9<sup>th</sup>.**

## **SECTION TWO: Institutions of Government**

**Week Six (March 11<sup>th</sup>, 16<sup>th</sup>, 18<sup>th</sup>):** The Missouri General Assembly

Reading: Casey and Dyer, Articles II, III and X

*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 14*

*Dyer, Constitutional revision article (Canvas)*

**Week Seven (March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 25<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>):** The Missouri Executive Branch

Reading: Casey and Dyer, Article IV

*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 15*

**Week Eight (March 11, 13, 15):** The Missouri Court System

Reading: Casey and Dyer, Article V

*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 16*

**Week Nine (March 18, 20, 22):** Local Governments  
Reading: Casey and Dyer, Article VI  
*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 17*

**Week Ten (March 30, April 1): Spring Break!**

**Please Note: Exam Two will be on Tuesday, April 6.**

**SECTION THREE: Politics and Policy**

**Week Twelve (April 8, 13, 15):** Missouri Politics – an overview of current political issues. We will then start considering Education policy specifically (K-12 and higher education)

Reading: Casey and Dyer, Article IX;  
*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 18*

**Week Thirteen (April 20, 22, 27):** Education policy – K-12 education and higher education; health and welfare policy (Medicaid, public assistance, prisons, etc.)

**Week Fourteen (April 29, May 4):** Civil Liberties in Missouri: Missouri is a hotbed of debate over civil liberties in issues such as the Right to Die, abortion, and religious freedom. Cases to study: Webster v. Reproductive Health, Cruzan v. Director, Trinity Lutheran Church of Columbia, Inc. v. Comer. Civil Rights in Missouri from the Missouri Compromise to the University of Missouri. We will examine the founding of Missouri as a slave state; Dred Scot v. Sanford; Gaines v. Canada, Lucille Bluford; and events related to protests in Ferguson (which will include a return to The Great Divorce).

Reading: Casey and Dyer, Article I  
*Missouri: The Heart of the Nation Ch. 6*

**Please Note: Exam Three will be on Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup>**  
**Final Project is also due May 6<sup>th</sup>.**

**MISSOURI CONSTITUTION FINAL PROJECT:**

Students will engage in a Missouri State Constitution building simulation. Students will use information they have learned over the course of the semester to create a party platform which highlight the institutional design they wish the new state constitution to have. On simulation day, students must present their ideas, debate with each other, and compromise on issues to create a new state constitution for Missouri's Bicentennial.

