
Current Issues in American Public Affairs and Politics

OSHER 630-001

Dates: Tuesdays: September 1 – October 6

Time: 1:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Location: Online via Zoom

Instructor: Tim Chambless

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Course Description:

Welcome! I am Tim Chambless. I am now mid-way through my 14th year (since January 2007) teaching Current Issues in American Public Affairs/Politics for motivated older students who are participating in the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. I enjoy teaching adult learners who are learning throughout their lives and come to class ready to ask probing questions. I like my Osher classes to be lively dialogues in which important timely issues are discussed in a seminar format.

I love these words from the gifted Italian Renaissance man Michelangelo: "I am still learning!"

This course highlights CURRENT ISSUES. Public policy issues – national, international, local – are considered. Handouts are provided. ANY SUBJECT CAN BE EXAMINED. This class can be a forum for dialogue on any controversial subject. We can learn together —doing what Socrates, Plato and Aristotle encouraged their students to do: consider the hard questions, and brainstorming possible answers! This Osher class allows adult learners to brainstorm together! We are free to think!

This class emphasizes discussion and dialogue. As your Osher Instructor, I believe the answer can never be known if the question is not asked. I want to discuss with students rather than lecture at students. Also, I believe that there is no such thing as a bad question -- only bad



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answers. If you believe that I have provided a bad answer to your question, then we can explore together. It is my hope that each student will feel that his/her question has been considered fully by the end of our class time together. I believe ignorance is not bliss; ignorance is, in fact, ignorance.

Since 1982 I have taught over 30,000 students and these classes: American National Government, Constitutional Law, The Constitution telecourse, Law and Politics, State and Local Government,

Political Parties, Mass Communication Law, Controversial Legal Issues, and Current Events.

For 25 years (1994-2017), I led a one-week undergraduate student seminar to Washington, D.C. I have worked for a U.S. Senator and Congressman, Governor of Utah and Mayor of Salt Lake City. I served on the Salt Lake City Board of Adjustment (1990-2001) and was Board Chair for 8 years. I served on the Salt Lake County Fine Arts Advisory Board, the City Citizen-Police Review Board, and American Civil Liberties Union – Utah Chapter. I served 9 years (2001-2010) on the Salt Lake City Planning Commission. In 2011 I was Vice-Chair of the Salt Lake County Citizens Advisory Redistricting Commission. Today I am Board President for Utahns for Responsive Government supportive of Proposition 4 which Utah voters approved in 2018. It created an anti-gerrymandering citizen commission. May 6th I was elected to be a national delegate supporting presidential candidate Joe Biden. I believe strongly in America's First Amendment freedoms, Civil Rights and Civil Liberties. I speak often to the news media about U.S. national politics and Utah public policy issues.

News stories from the New York Times, Salt Lake Tribune and Deseret News, BBC and PBS as well as Cable News Network and National Public Radio are provided. I know that you will come to our ZOOM Online class meetings ready to ask the hard-substantive questions, ready to think critically.

Everyone participates! I promise to try my best to answer your timely difficult questions!

NO EXAMS and NO PAPERS

Yes, it is true. No exams! No papers! Yes to critical thinking! Active class participation!

Scheduled discussion topics may be complemented by questions on any daily news stories.

Again, please know we must have this Osher class taught via Online ZOOM interaction this term.



Course Overview:

Week 1: Worldwide Pandemic? U.S. Economy? Campaigns – President, Senate, House?

Week 2: U.S. Economy? Recession? Depression? Pandemic? Utah Cases/Deaths

Week 3: Utah Legislature interim session? Important Bills? Utah Governor's Race?

Week 4: Congress – Pending Bills? Trials? The Unexpected News Stories?

Week 5: President's Pardon Power? Campaigns? Public Opinion Polls? Debates?

Week 6: U.S. Supreme Court's New Term Yesterday? Possible "October Surprise?"

Good luck to you!

Tim Chambless, Ph.D.