



POIR3920

United States Politics: Money, Culture, Power

Session 2, Online-flexible 2026

School of International Studies

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General Information

Unit convenor and teaching staff Andrew Kapos andrew.kapos@mq.edu.au
Credit points 10
Prerequisites 130cp at 1000 level or above OR (20cp in POL or POIR or POIX units at 2000 level).
Corequisites
Co-badged status
Unit description US politics is today, as in much of its past, dominated by money and the power that money can buy. US cultural life is also preoccupied with money, in ways that profoundly affect the distribution of political power. Proceeding from these premises, this unit explores the relationship between money, culture and power in contemporary US politics. Topics covered include campaign financing, interest groups and the media; the impact of social inequalities of class, race, gender and sexual preference on US politics; the role of religion and political parties in the formulation of dominant political ideas; and the politics surrounding the global financial crisis and its aftermath.

Important Academic Dates

Information about important academic dates including deadlines for withdrawing from units are available at <https://www.mq.edu.au/study/calendar-of-dates>

Learning Outcomes

On successful completion of this unit, you will be able to:

ULO1: Analyse and interpret primary and secondary US political sources and present the information in a written form

ULO2: Distinguish between competing interpretations of key US political issues, and succinctly express the strengths and weaknesses of these interpretations in written and oral form

ULO3: Plausibly explain how and why Donald Trump won the 2016 Presidential election

Assessment Tasks

Name	Weighting	Hurdle	Due	Groupwork/Individual	Short Extension	AI Approach
Take home exam	50%	No	08/11/2026	Individual	No	Open
Major Essay	50%	No	20/09/2026	Individual	Yes	Open

Take home exam

Assessment Type ¹: Problem-based task

Indicative Time on Task ²: 37 hours

Due: **08/11/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: No

AI Approach: Open

Take home online exam on topics across the entire unit.

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and interpret primary and secondary US political sources and present the information in a written form
- Distinguish between competing interpretations of key US political issues, and succinctly express the strengths and weaknesses of these interpretations in written and oral form
- Plausibly explain how and why Donald Trump won the 2016 Presidential election

Major Essay

Assessment Type ¹: Written Submission

Indicative Time on Task ²: 48 hours

Due: **20/09/2026**

Weighting: **50%**

Groupwork/Individual: Individual

Short extension ³: Yes

AI Approach: Open

2500 word essay drawing on topics related to the unit

On successful completion you will be able to:

- Analyse and interpret primary and secondary US political sources and present the information in a written form

- Distinguish between competing interpretations of key US political issues, and succinctly express the strengths and weaknesses of these interpretations in written and oral form
 - Plausibly explain how and why Donald Trump won the 2016 Presidential election
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¹ If you need help with your assignment, please contact:

- the academic teaching staff in your unit for guidance in understanding or completing this type of assessment
- [Academic Success](#) for academic skills support.

² Indicative time-on-task is an estimate of the time required for completion of the assessment task and is subject to individual variation.

³ An automatic short extension is available for some assessments. Apply through the [Service Connect Portal](#).

Delivery and Resources

Lecture and Seminar/Tutorial Delivery and all Resources available on iLearn.

Policies and Procedures

Macquarie University policies and procedures are accessible from [Policy Central](#) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>). Students should be aware of the following policies in particular with regard to Learning and Teaching:

- [Academic Appeals Policy](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy](#)
- [Academic Progression Policy](#)
- [Assessment Policy](#)
- [Fitness to Practice Procedure](#)
- [Assessment Procedure](#)
- [Complaints Resolution Procedure for Students and Members of the Public](#)
- [Special Consideration Policy](#)

Students seeking more policy resources can visit [Student Policies](#) (<https://students.mq.edu.au/support/study/policies>). It is your one-stop-shop for the key policies you need to know about throughout your undergraduate student journey.

To find other policies relating to Teaching and Learning, visit [Policy Central](#) (<https://policies.mq.edu.au>) and use the [search tool](#).

Student Code of Conduct

Macquarie University students have a responsibility to be familiar with the Student Code of Conduct: <https://students.mq.edu.au/admin/other-resources/student-conduct>

Results

Results published on platform other than [eStudent](#), (eg. iLearn, Coursera etc.) or released directly by your Unit Convenor, are not confirmed as they are subject to final approval by the University. Once approved, final results will be sent to your student email address and will be made available in [eStudent](#). For more information visit connect.mq.edu.au or if you are a Global MBA student contact globalmba.support@mq.edu.au

Academic Integrity

At Macquarie, we believe [academic integrity](#) – honesty, respect, trust, responsibility, fairness and courage – is at the core of learning, teaching and research. We recognise that meeting the expectations required to complete your assessments can be challenging. So, we offer you a range of resources and services to help you reach your potential, including free [online writing and maths support](#), [academic skills development](#) and [wellbeing consultations](#).

Student Support

Macquarie University provides a range of support services for students. For details, visit <http://students.mq.edu.au/support/>

Academic Success

[Academic Success](#) provides resources to develop your English language proficiency, academic writing, and communication skills.

- [Ask a Study Coach](#)
- [Access StudyWISE](#)
- [Upload an assignment to Studiosity](#)
- [Complete the Academic Integrity Module](#)

The Library provides online and face to face support to help you find and use relevant information resources.

- [Subject and Research Guides](#)
- [Ask a Librarian](#)

Student Services and Support

Macquarie University offers a range of [Student Support Services](#) including:

- [IT Support](#)
- [Accessibility and disability support](#) with study
- Mental health [support](#)
- [Safety support](#) to respond to bullying, harassment, sexual harassment and sexual assault
- [Social support including information about finances, tenancy and legal issues](#)

- [Student Advocacy](#) provides independent advice on MQ policies, procedures, and processes

Student Enquiries

Got a question? Ask us via the [Service Connect Portal](#), or contact [Service Connect](#).

IT Help

For help with University computer systems and technology, visit <https://students.mq.edu.au/support/technology/service-desk>.

When using the University's IT, you must adhere to the [Acceptable Use of IT Resources Policy](#). The policy applies to all who connect to the MQ network including students.

Unit information based on version 2026.02 of the [Handbook](#)