

101: Introduction to American Government

Winter 2005

M W 6:30-8:18

0080 Derby Hall

Instructor: Jennifer Moyer
2081 Derby Hall
moyer.79@osu.edu
or aurorajm99@hotmail.com
378-1256

Office Hours:
M 5:30-6:15 Main Library
M 8:45-9:30 Starbucks
W 5:30-6:15 Main Library
R 11-12 Starbucks

Welcome to American Politics! I hope to have a great class this quarter. I intend for this class to be very challenging, yet exciting and interesting. I think our government and political system is a fascinating topic, and I hope to convey that to you. This class is about learning the basics that you need to know about government as well debating about current issues.

Grading:

Exam 1: 25%

Exam 2: 25%

Exam 3: 30%

Participation/Attendance: 20%

Plus there will be a tiny bit of extra credit, 2%. Political science graduate students often do experiments for their dissertation, and you can help. More details will be offered later.

Exams: The exams will be comprised of five parts. The first part will concern current events, and will quiz you on popular political figures and issues we have discussed in class. The second part is multiple choice. The third part will be a terms section, where you will choose a 6 out of 10 to define. The fourth part will be short answer, which should be answered by about a paragraph or so. You will answer 3 out of 4 offered. The fifth part will be a couple of extra credit questions. Exam #3 will be cumulative.

Exam Make-ups: Make-up for Exams #1 and #2 will be held right after Exam #3, during final week. If you have a final immediately following you exam in this class, you must provide proof and then you can take the make-up exam at another, pre-arranged time and date during exam week. The make-up exam will be harder than the regular exams. I will be the judge of if your excuse for not taking the exam during the regular time is a valid reason for missing the exam and therefore able to take the make-up. Basically, it is better to take the exam during the regular time.

Participation: About a third of each class will be discussion. The discussion will be based on our readings as well as your own opinions. You cannot participate if you are not in class, and so I will take attendance daily. Your participation grade will be very low if you just attend, however. Discussion requires talking in class. Don't be afraid! ☺ We are all here to learn.

Extra Credit Papers: You have the option to do an extra credit paper that can replace ONE of your exams. The paper should be between 5-7 pages in length. The extra credit paper will not count if it is of a lower grade than the exam grade you are hoping to replace, presumably the lowest one. You can only do one extra credit paper.

Paper #1 Topic: DUE JANUARY 31, CLASS TIME. Describe Congress's law making abilities. Then describe the President's ability in this area. Describe how Congress and President interact when making policy. How does the public come into the picture? Could the current situation be improved? How? The does the current situation help create good policy or bad policy? Give a detailed example.

Paper #2 Topic: DUE FEBRUARY 23, CLASS TIME. What does public opinion really mean? Is public opinion based on education, rationality? If not, what is it based on? How do legislators measure it? Should they follow it or not, and in what situations? Why might we respect politicians more if they do not follow public opinion? Do we reward or punish legislators who follow public opinion?

Paper #3 Topic: DUE MARCH 9, CLASS TIME. Describe fully how a bill becomes a law. Then describe how a constitutional amendment is made? What are the differences? What and who sets the policy-making agenda? Then describe how policy made by congress is executed. How can the policy created by congress be altered after the fact? What does this mean in terms of whom Americans blame if policy goes wrong? How democratic is policy-making, anyway?

Class Structure: About two thirds of each class will be my lecturing you about the inner-workings of government, which will of course be open to questions. The other third of class will be discussion of the real world political issues. The second part of class will be lecturing on a topic, then you will do your reading for the topic, and the NEXT class, when the facts and the topic have had a chance to sink in and be understood through real-world issues in the reading, we will debate the topic the first third of class, before moving on to the next topic. Class is structured this way for several reasons: it serves to allow for continuity from class to class, allows you to think of the facts and issues involved in each topic and come back with questions, and allows for us to see the various connections in government. Because of this, you need to be in class to get the facts about topics. I suggest you find someone in class early on who you can call on if you need to be absent to get notes from.

Texts:

There is one text for the class. It has been ordered at all the regular bookstores. It is a book based on current political topics.

Point-Counterpoint-Readings in American Government by Herbert Levine. **7th edition. MAKE SURE IT IS THE 7TH EDITION.**

I also very strongly recommend that you get one of those U.S. Government Quick Study Academic laminated folders.

Most of your readings will be coming from Point-Counterpoint, but there are three readings that will not be in the book and available on the library's electronic reserve. Please ask me if you do not know how to access electronic reserve.

Readings: When you are assigned a chapter to read, please read the background material and both the pro and anti positions of the issue at hand. Come to class ready to discuss the topic.

Class Schedule

January 3: Syllabus

NO CLASS

January 5: Introductions, Foundations

Reading: Chapter 1: Has the Wisdom of the Framers of the Constitution in Promoting a More Perfect Union been Overrated?

January 10: Presidency- Elections, etc

Reading: Chapter 13: Should the Electoral College be Abolished?

January 12: Presidency- Being President

Reading: Chapter 15: Does the President have Legal Authority to Engage in Military Action Against the Nation's Enemies without the Specific Authorization of Congress?

January 17: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

NO CLASS

January 19: Congress

Reading: Chapter 16: Should the Senate take into Consideration the Ideology of a Nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court in the Confirmation Decision?

January 24: Judiciary

Reading: Chapter 18: Should the Supreme Court Abide by a Strict Constructionist Philosophy?

January 26: Exam 1

Reading: Chapter 6: Should the Death Penalty be Abolished?

January 31: Politics and Media

Reading: Chapter 12: Does the Mass Media have a Liberal Bias?

EXTRA CREDIT PAPER #1 DUE

February 2: Campaigning

Reading: Chapter 10: Should you Vote for a Minor Party Candidate you may Prefer over the Lesser Evil from a Major Party

February 7: Public Opinion

Reading: Chapter 3: In Fighting the War on Terrorism, is the United States Acting within Reasonable Limits to Maintain its Civil Liberties?

February 9: Parties

Reading: Chapter 16 of Faultlines: Privatizing Social Security: Who Wins, Who Loses?

AND

Chapter 7: Should the Doctrine Between Church and State be Interpreted in a Way that is Favorable to Public Worship and Acknowledgment of God?

February 14: Participation, Elections, and Voting

Reading: Chapter 19: Should the Federal Government Decriminalize Drugs?

February 16: Representation

Reading: Chapter 10 of Faultlines: Ballot Initiatives

February 21: Exam 2

Reading: Chapter 11: Is Affirmative Action a Desirable Policy to Remedy Discrimination in Higher Education?

February 23: Policy-making

Reading: Chapter 20: Will Gun Control Reduce Violence? AND Chapter 5: Is Racial Profiling ever Justified?

EXTRA CREDIT PAPER #2 DUE

February 28: Interest Groups

Reading: Chapter 13 of Faultlines: A Force for Change or the State Quo?

March 2: Bureaucracy

Reading: Chapter 17: Is the Bureaucracy a Threat to Liberty?

March 7: State Government

Reading: Chapter 2: Should Power be Transferred from the Federal Government to the States?

March 9: Review

Reading: Chapter 4: Should a National Identification Card System be Established

EXTRA CREDIT PAPER #3 DUE

Exam Week: March 14-17

Disability Info:

Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact me privately to discuss your specific needs. Please contact the Office for Disability Services at 614-292-3307 in room 150 Pomerene Hall to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities.

Information from the Counseling and Consultation Office that some students may find helpful:

The social, emotional, and academic concerns that occur occasionally in everyone's life can generate conflicts and questions. Such concerns can make it difficult for a person to function in a satisfying manner, in class and otherwise. If you need help, there are places and people that can help.

Contact Information:
Younkin Success Center
1640 Neil Avenue, 4th Floor
Columbus, Ohio 43201
Phone: 614-292-5766, FAX: 614-688-3440

Academic Honesty:

Do not cheat, it is bad for you. The University Rule for this is 3335-31-02. Please understand that if any of these rules are violated, I will take appropriate action. I want YOUR ideas, not something from someone else, a test file of some sort, or an internet posting! I WILL TAKE ACTION IF I DISCOVER CHEATING IN ANY FORM.

Review Material

Terms to know:

Divided government	Symbolic representation	Congressional Lawmaking
Descriptive representation	Substantive representation	Electoral College
Majority Leader	Minority Leader	Party Platform
President Pro Tempore	Whip	Devolution
Reciprocity	Logrolling	New Federalism
Inherent Powers	Implied Powers	First Four Cabinets
Delegated Powers	Norm/Folkway	Resident
PAC	Lobbying	Citizenship
Interest Group	Geographic constituency	Checks and Balances
Demographic Constituency	Franking	Judicial Review
Electing Senators	3 Branches of Government	Separation of Powers
Gerrymandering	Electoral Connection	Block Grants
Caucus	Concurrent Powers	Democratic Party
Divided Chamber	Types of veto	Republican Party
Open rule	8 roles of the President	Civil Liberties
Closed rule	Semi-open/Semi-closed rule	Civil Rights
Selective/material Benefits	Solidary Benefits	Ex post facto Laws
Purposive Benefits	Informational Benefits	Collective Action Problem
Speaker of the House	Libel	Bicameral
Conservative Coalition	Articles of Confederation	Slander
Apprenticeship	Specialization	de facto/de jure laws
Co-sponsorship	Rules Committee	affirmative action
Floor Debate	Subcommittee	Civil Rights Amendments
Amendments (to bills)	Filibuster (Active and Silent)	Red Tape
Cloture	Majority Party	Progressive Era
Standing Committee	Select Committee	Prohibition
Conference Committee	Federalist Party	Jim Crow Laws
Committee of the Whole	Astroturf Lobbying	Political Socialization
Grassroots Lobbying	Bill of Rights	Gender Gap
Homestyle	Realignment	Public Opinion
Line Item Veto	Senatorial Courtesy	Public Opinion Polls
Constitutional Amendment	Socialist Party	Ideology
Iron Triangle	Bureaucratic lawmaking	Partisanship
Norms/Folkways	Saliency	Socioeconomic Status
Socialization	Framing/Priming	Demographics
Efficacy	Sound Bite	Mobilization
Values	Turnout	Two Party System
Types of Political Participation	Civic Engagement	Proportional Representation
Public Relations	Party Organization	Single member District
Tyranny of Majority	Convention	Third Parties
Political Machines	Plurality System	Soft Money
Hard Money	Single Issue Voter	Referendum
Patronage	Midterm Elections	Prospective Voting

Coattails	Presidential Elections	Retrospective Voting
Delegates	Platform	Split ticket Voting
Incumbent	Primaries	Town Meeting
Open seat	General Elections	Minority Majority District
Going Public	Veto	Pork Barrel Politics
Free Rider	Pocket Veto	Permanent Campaign
Collective Action Problem	National Security Council	Amicus Curiae
Grassroots	Cabinet	Writ of certiori
Issue Network	Congressional Oversight	Solicitor General
Judicial activism	US District Court	Supreme Court
Briefs	Stare decisis	Dissenting Opinion
Defendant	Anti-Federalism	Tyranny of Minority
Ballot		

Concepts to know:

Advantages and Disadvantages these Minority Groups have in being represented: African Americans, Asian Americans, Latinos, Women, Gay people

Differences between the Senate and House: Terms, districts, impeachments capabilities, handling treaties, handling money, the Rules Committee, collegiality, appointment process, why they may not get along, institutional loyalty

How a bill becomes a law

President v Bureaucracy v Congress in lawmaking and executing

What advantages the majority party has: the committees system, the rules system, the agenda, etc

How might someone become a party leader?

Eight Roles of President and the trade offs between them

How to legislators decide to run for a higher office? Utility of office, Risks, Probability of Winning, Value of office, etc

Becoming President- the full process

What disadvantages and advantages minorities may have in running for office

How third parties contribute to our party structure, even if they don't make it?

Why do we "Hate Congress but Love our Congressman"?

Each of the 10 Bill of Rights Amendments

Types of Media and why politicians may use each type

The eras of politics and the concept of realignment

Plus more. This sheet if a guide, but other concepts may be included, so pay attention.

I do not plan on changing anything about the syllabus, but it is my discretion to do so, and you will be informed of changes.