

POSC 2201-101  
 Marquette University  
 American Politics  
 Spring Semester 2016  
 MWF 11:00 – 11:50

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 Office Hours: MW 1 – 3:30, Tu 9-12, F 12-1

### Course Objectives:

The purpose of this class is to develop both an understanding of the problem of politics – how to create and maintain a just political community – and the fundamental concepts relevant to American politics and government. We begin the course by examining the principles and documents at the foundation of American governance. We extend our focus by evaluating the institutions that constitute the federal system. This section will emphasize the separation of powers, the three federal branches (the presidency, Congress, and the judiciary), the bureaucracy, and political parties. We examine political behavior including voting, elections, interest group development, the media, and public opinion. In addition, students will gain a better understanding of current political controversies, the process by which these problems can be addressed by the American governmental system, and the citizens' role in the process.

Upon completing the course students will be able to identify and explain the functions of U.S. government institutions. Students will also be able to identify and explain the main principles animating the U.S. government. In addition, students will be able to gather information from credible sources and express their ideas using clear, logical prose.

### Required Books:

*By the People: Debating American Government*, brief 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., James Morone and Kersh, Oxford University Press, 2014.

Other readings will be available on D2L.

### Course Requirements:

3 exams	65%
2 issue response essays	30%
Attendance/Participation	5%

### Exams

There will be 3 exams. They will be non-cumulative. They will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. Missed exams cannot be made up unless you have made arrangements PRIOR to the exam date – no exceptions. Missed exams will receive a 0.

### Issue Response Essays

It is difficult to fully understand the concepts of the American political process without applying them to real-life problems and issues. Students are encouraged to follow political events by whatever means they choose. Current events will be discussed in class and students will be required to write two short essays on topics discussed in class. Specific guidelines will be distributed in class. Also, in addition to the hard copy of the essay that is turned in to the instructor, students are required to submit a copy of their essay on the course D2L dropbox. Essays are marked down one letter grade for each day they are late.

### Participation

Students are expected to do the readings before each class and contribute regularly to class discussion. Participation will be evaluated not simply on the quantity of class participation, but whether the participation reflects knowledge and understanding of course readings. I reserve to raise the grade of students whose contribution to class discussion is particularly notable.

### Attendance

Attendance is expected at each class, and a sign-in sheet will be provided at each class meeting. Do NOT sign in for classmates if they are absent. Signing someone else's name in their absence will be treated as academic dishonesty. If a student misses 6 or fewer classes during the semester attendance will not factor for the final grade at all. If a student misses more than 6 classes a grade of WA (Withdrawal-Excessive Absences) can be assigned.

The Marquette University Undergraduate Attendance Policy (revised in June 2011) states the following:

“Students are responsible for attending all class meetings for courses in which they are registered. Any absence, regardless of the reason, prevents students from getting the full benefit of the course and as such, no distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences, with the following exceptions:

1. Absences resulting from legal obligations (such as jury duty).
2. Absences resulting from university sanctioned activities and related travel.”

The Policy also states “the Marquette University Student Health Service does not provide documentation of illness, or of a visit to the Student Health Service. Likewise, college and other university offices (e.g., Office of the Dean, Counseling Center and Student Affairs) do not provide documentation of an absence on behalf of the student.”

In cases of excessive absences, the Marquette Undergraduate Attendance Policy will be followed. “For courses in which attendance is regularly taken, an instructor or college office may withdraw a student from a course due to excessive absences and assign a grade of WA (Withdrawn-Excessive Absences)...**Students who miss more than 6 classes in a 3 credit**

**course that meets 50 minutes, 3 times per week, will be considered to have excessive absences and may be assigned a WA.”**

Those who are involved in university sanctioned activities should submit a schedule of anticipated absences within the first 2 weeks of class, and also come talk to the instructor well in advance of any other university sanctioned activity that will result in a missed assignment/quiz/exam.

### Academic Integrity

#### Marquette Honor Pledge

*I recognize the importance of personal integrity in all aspects of life and work.*

*I commit myself to truthfulness, honor, and responsibility, by which I earn the respect of others.*

*I support the development of good character, and commit myself to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity as an important aspect of personal integrity.*

*My commitment obliges me to conduct myself according to the Marquette University Honor Code.*

More information on Marquette’s policy on Academic Integrity can be found at <http://www.marquette.edu/provost/integrity-index.php>.

Any incidents of academic dishonesty, such as cheating, dishonest conduct, or plagiarism will be punished to the fullest extent allowed by Marquette University policy.

### **Grading Scale:**

93-100	A
88-92	A/B
83-87	B
78-82	B/C
73-77	C
69-72	C/D
61-68	D
60 and below	F

### Course Schedule

Wed., Jan. 20 – Course Introduction

#### **Topic 1 – Founding Principles**

Fri., Jan. 22 – American Values

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 1 “Ideas that Shape American Politics”

Mon., Jan. 25 – American Values in History

“Beyond Tocqueville, Myrdal, and Hartz: The Multiple Traditions in America, ”  
*American Political Science Review*, Rogers Smith, 1993 (D2L)

Wed., Jan. 27 – American Lives

“Country Boys,” PBS Documentary in class

- Fri., Jan. 29 – Creation of the Constitution  
Morone/Kersh, Ch. 2 “The Constitution”
- Mon., Feb. 1 – Ideas and Ideology  
“Fundamental Attitudes: Ideology and Partisanship,” (D2L)  
“Beyond Red and Blue: The Political Typology,” *Pew Research Center*, 6/26/2014  
<http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/26/appendix-1-typology-group-profiles/>
- Wed., Feb. 3 – American Lives  
“Country Boys” PBS documentary in class
- Fri., Feb. 5 – Interpreting the Constitution  
“Theories of Constitutional Interpretation.” <http://cstl-cla.semo.edu/hhill/ui305/constitutional%20interpretationa.htm>  
  
“Cruz’s Law Professor on Birther Issue: His own Legal Philosophy Disqualifies him,”  
CNN, 1/12/16 (D2L)  
  
Judicial Activism v. Judicial Restraint, “How Activist is the Supreme Court?” *The New York Times*, 10/12/2013 (D2L)
- Mon. Feb. 8 – A Large Republic  
*Federalist #10*, James Madison (in Morone/Kersh Appendix III)
- Wed., Feb. 10 – American Lives  
“Country Boys” PBS documentary in class
- Fri., Feb. 12 – Separation of Powers  
*Federalist #51*, James Madison (in Morone/Kersh Appendix III)  
**Issue Response Essay #1 Due**
- Mon., Feb. 15 – Individualism  
“Of Individualism in Democratic Countries,” Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*, 1835 (D2L)
- Wed., Feb. 17 – Individualism and the Common Good  
“The Tragedy of the Commons,” Garrett Hardin, 1968 (D2L)
- Fri., Feb. 19 – **Exam 1**
- Mon., Feb. 22 – Civil Liberties  
Morone/Kersh, Ch. 4 “Civil Liberties”
- Wed., Feb 24 – Civil Rights  
Morone/Kersh, Ch. 5 “The Struggle for Civil Rights”
- Fri., Feb. 26 – The Civil Rights Movement  
“Eyes on the Prize” – video in class

## Topic 2 – Institutional Actors

Mon., Feb. 29 – Congress

Article I of the Constitution (in Morone/Kersh Appendix )  
Morone/Kersh, Ch. 10 “Congress”

Wed., Mar. 2 – Representative Behavior

“Speech to the Electors of Bristol,” Edmund Burke, 1774 (D2L)

Fri., Mar. 4 – Decision making in Congress

“The Electoral Connection,” David Mayhew, 1974 (D2L)

Mon., Mar. 7 – The Presidency

Article II of the Constitution (in Morone/Kersh Appendix)  
Morone/Kersh, Ch. 11 “The Presidency”

Wed., Mar. 9 – Presidential Power

From *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*, Richard Neustadt, 1991 (D2L)

“Why Obama can’t close Guantanamo,” Carl Rosenberg, *Foreign Affairs*, 2011 (D2L)

Fri., Mar. 11 - Unilateral Powers

Signing Statement to H.R. 2863 (D2L)

“The Tools of Presidential Direct Administration,” *By Order of the President: The Use and Abuse of Executive Direct Action*, Phillip J. Cooper, 2002 (D2L)

Mon., Mar. 14 – The Bureaucracy

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 12 “The Bureaucracy”

Wed., Mar. 16 – The Judiciary

Article III of the Constitution  
Morone/Kersh, Ch. 13 “The Judiciary”

NO CLASS, SPRING AND EASTER BREAK MARCH 17-28

Wed., Mar. 30 - *Mr. Cao goes to Washington* – documentary in class

Fri., Apr. 1 - *Mr. Cao goes to Washington* – documentary in class

Mon., Apr. 4 – Power of the Judiciary

*Federalist #78*, Alexander Hamilton (D2L)

Wed., Apr. 6 – **Exam 2**

Fri., Apr. 8 – Campaigns and Elections

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 8 “Campaigns and Elections”

### Topic 3 – Political Behavior

Mon., Apr. 11 - Money in Elections

Trevor Potter on *The Colbert Report* – video clip in class

“Donald Trump is Right about one Thing,” *RollCall*, 1/11/16 (D2L)

Wed., Apr. 13 – The Media

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 7 “The Media

“What you know depends on what you watch: Current events knowledge across popular news sources,” Fairleigh Dickinson University, 2012

<http://publicmind.fdu.edu/2012/confirmed/>

Fri., Apr. 15 – Public Opinion

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 6 “Public Opinion and Political Participation”

Mon., Apr. 18 – Interest Groups

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 9, pp. 308 - 327

**Issue Response Essay #2 Due**

Wed., Apr. 20 - Political Parties and Principles

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 9, pp. 327 – 355

### Topic 6 – Policy

Fri., Apr. 22 – Domestic Policy

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 14, pp. 498-521

Mon., Apr. 25 – American Domestic Policy Preferences

“The Operational-Symbolic Disconnect,” *Ideology in America*,  
Christopher Ellis and James A. Stimson, 2012 (D2L)

Wed., Apr. 27 – Social Welfare Policy

“In Finland’s Footsteps” (D2L)

“Paradise for Families” (D2L)

Fri., Apr. 29 – Foreign Policy

Morone/Kersh, Ch. 14, pp. 521-537

Mon., May 2 – Foreign Policy and Interest Groups

“Lobbying at the Water’s Edge: Corporations and Congressional Foreign Policy  
Lobbying.” *Laboratory on International Law and Regulation*, 7/2015 (D2L)

Wed., May 4 – American Exceptionalism

“National Stupidity: In International Politics, Pride Goeth before a Fall,” Stephen M.  
Walt, *Foreign Policy*, 2014 (D2L)

Fri., May 6 – “Beyond Tocqueville...: The Multiple Traditions in America” (D2L) YES, AGAIN!

**FINAL EXAM: TUESDAY, MAY 10 AT 8:00 AM**