American Politics
POSC 2201-102
Marquette University
Spring 2010

Instructor: Dr. Karen Hoffman
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Office hours: MWF 10:00-12:00

Description

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. 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.

Books


Other readings posted on D2L

Course Requirements

2 exams 40%
8 quizzes 32%
4 issue responses 28%

Exams

Exams will be administered at mid-term and at the end of the course. They will be non-cumulative. They will consist of a mixture of multiple choice, short answer and essay questions. Missed exams will receive a 0.

Reading Quizzes

Reading the assigned material is important. To encourage reading I will periodically administer reading quizzes at the beginning of the class. I will announce upcoming quizzes one class period prior to the quiz. The quizzes are short – perhaps 10 questions. Quizzes cannot be made up, whether you simply come late to class or miss that class. I will drop the lowest of 9 quiz grades so that you will be graded on 8 quizzes. Missed
quizzes absolutely cannot be made up unless you have made arrangements PRIOR to the quiz date – no exceptions.

**Issue Responses**

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. Each Monday the instructor will discuss at least one current issue that has bearing on the material being covered in class. Students are required to choose four of these topics throughout the semester and for each, to write a 2 page, typed essay that reflects the student’s view of issue. Specific guidelines will be distributed in class.

- Every student must write an essay on the first topic of the semester – due Monday, January 25.

- A total of four must be completed by the end of the semester.

- Students are allowed only one response paper a week. In other words, you may not hand in 4 papers during the 14\textsuperscript{th} week of the class.

- There will be no topic during the final week of the class.

- Essays cannot be sent by email. They need to be hard copies. In addition to the hard copy, all essays must be submitted electronically to turnitin.com. Course ID# 3070773, password – america.

**Attendance/Participation**

The class will be conducted in a format that combines lecture with discussion. Students are expected to have read assigned material before coming to class. In addition, students are expected to follow current political events and come prepared to discuss political issues. There is a direct correlation between attendance in class and grades – better attendance typically leads to higher grades.

**Academic Dishonesty**

Any incidents of academic dishonesty, such as cheating on quizzes and tests or plagiarizing papers, will be punished to the fullest extent allowed by Marquette University policy.

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>88-92</td>
<td>A/B</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-87</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>78-82</td>
<td>B/C</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-77</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>69-72</td>
<td>C/D</td>
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<tr>
<td>65-68</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>65 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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Course Schedule

Wed., Jan. 20 – Introduction

PRINCIPLES OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Fri., Jan. 22 – Liberty
   Jillson, pp. 77-83
   “In New York City, Trans Fat Ban is Working,” on D2L
   “Trans Fat Ban is ‘Nanny State’ Intrusion,” on D2L

   John Stuart Mill – selection from On Liberty – on D2L
   Issue Response Due

Wed., Jan. 27 – Equality in American History
   Jillson, pp. 9-20
   Bill of Rights, Amendments I-X, IV of Constitution, Jillson, pp. 478-481

Fri., Jan. 29 – Roots of Equality
   Declaration of Independence, Jillson, 463-465

Mon., Feb. 1 – The Balance Between Liberty and Equality
   “In Finland’s Footsteps” – on D2L
   “Paradise For Families?” – on D2L

Wed., Feb. 3 – Individualism
   Tocqueville, “Of Individualism in Democratic Countries,” Vol. II, Sect. 2 – on D2L

Fri., Feb. 5 – The Public Good
   Jillson, pp. 3-8
   Garrett Hardin, “Tragedy of the Commons” – on D2L

Mon. Feb. 8 – Reading About Politics
   Readings on oil drilling in Alaska- on D2L

Wed., Feb. 10 – Movie, Thank You For Not Smoking

Fri., Feb. 12 – Movie, continued

Mon., Feb. 15 – Mon., Feb. 22 – Movie discussion

Wed., Feb. 17 – Separation of Powers
   Jillson, p. 231
   Federalist #51, Jillson, pp. 488-490
Fri., Feb. 19 – Federalism  
    Jillson, Ch. 3, pp. 51-74

Mon., Feb. 22 – Federalism: Air Pollution  
    “Ruling Helps California Combat Global Warming” – on D2L

    Jillson, pp. 22-48

INSTITUTIONS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Fri., Feb. 26 – Congress  
    Jillson Ch. 9, pp. 228-261  
    Article I of the Constitution, Jillson, pp. 472-475

Mon., March 1 – Why We Hate Congress  
    David Mayhew, from The Electoral Connection, on D2L

Wed., March 3 – Representation  
    Edmund Burke, “Speech to the Electors of Bristol,” on D2L

Fri., March 5 – The Presidency – Structure and Power  
    Jillson, Ch. 10, pp. 262-298  
    Article II of the Constitution, pp. 475-476

Mon., March 8 – Presidential Power  
    Richard Neustadt, from Presidential Power, on D2L

Wed., March 10 – MIDTERM EXAM

Fri., March 12 – Leadership  
    James Bryce, “Why Great Men are not Chosen Presidents,” from The Commonwealth, on D2L

MARCH 15 - 19 – NO CLASS MIDTERM BREAK

Mon., March 22 – The Judiciary  
    Jillson, pp. 332-356  
    Article III of the Constitution, Jillson, 476-477

Wed., March 24 – Judicial Power  
    Jillson, pp. 356-362  
    Federalist #78, Jillson, pp. 490-494

Fri., March 26 – Majority Rule  
    Tocqueville, “The Unlimited Power of the Majority in the United States and its Consequences,” from Democracy in America – on D2L
Mon., March 29 – The Bureaucracy
   Jillson, Ch. 11, pp. 299-331

Wed., March 31 – “Trump Reports Large Profit From Wollman Rink,” on D2L

APRIL 2 – 5 – EASTER BREAK

EXTRA-INSTITUTIONAL ELEMENTS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Wed., Apr. 7 – Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
   Jillson, Ch. 13, pp. 364-395

Fri., Apr. 9 – Flag Burning
   Texas v. Johnson – on D2L

Mon., Apr. 12 – Voting, Campaigns and Elections
   Jillson, Ch. 8, pp. 192-226

   Summary of Bush v. Gore – on D2L

Fri., Apr. 16 – The Media
   Jillson, Ch. 5, pp. 101-129

Mon., Apr. 19 – Interest Groups
   Federalist #10, Jillson, pp. 484-487

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IN PRACTICE

Wed., Apr. 21 - Storming Heaven – Chs. 1-4

Fri., Apr. 23 – NO CLASS – MPSA

Mon., Apr. 26 – Storming Heaven – Ch. 5-9

Wed., Apr. 28 – Storming Heaven – Chs. 10-14

Fri., Apr. 30 – Mine Wars – DVD
   Finish Storming Heaven

Mon., May 3 - Mine Wars - DVD

Wed., May 5 - Interest Groups and Social Movements
   Jillson, Ch. 6, pp. 130-161

Fri., May 7 - Catch-up and Review

FINAL EXAM

Monday, May 10 – 8:00 – 10:00 am