

American Politics  
 POSC 2201-102  
 Marquette University  
 Spring 2010

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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

*American Government: Political Development and Institutional Change*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed., by Cal Jillson, Routledge Press, 2009.

*Storming Heaven*, by Denise Giardina, Random House Books, 1987.

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<sup>th</sup> 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**

93-100	A
88-92	A/B
83-87	B
78-82	B/C
73-77	C
69-72	C/D
65-68	D
65 and below	F

## 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

Mon., Jan. 25 – One Theory of Liberty – The Harm Principle

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

Tocqueville, “Social Condition of the Anglo-Americans”, Vol. I, *Democracy in America* – on D2L

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

Wed., Feb. 24 – The Revolution and Creation of the Constitution  
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

Wed., Apr. 14 – Presidential Election of 2000  
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**