

Mary E. Kazmierczak
Office: 449 Physics
Phone: 288-4431
Office Hours: MWF 9:00-9:45; TTh 9:30-10:00
E-mail: mary.kazmierczak@marquette.edu

POSC 2201
Spring 2010

AMERICAN POLITICS

Course Description and Learning Objectives: This course is an introduction to the analytical study of United States national governmental institutions, political life, and the principles and values that underlie them. Upon completion of the course, students will have an understanding of and be able to think critically about the purposes, principles, structures, and functions of the United States national government. To achieve this, we will examine the predominant theories and models which describe and explain the United States' political system. Historical and current events will be used to illustrate the concepts and provide insight into the relevance of national and state politics to students' lives. This course also aims to assist students in applying the political and moral issues discussed in the course to their political decision-making and participation as citizens.

Texts: The following books are required and may be purchased at the Bookstore:

O'Connor, Karen, and Sabato, Larry. *American Government: Roots and Reform*, 2009 Edition.

Woll, Peter. *American Government: Readings and Cases*, 18th Edition.

Additional required readings will be distributed in class or available on the internet.

Class Format: This course is a lecture course with open-ended discussion. As such, students are encouraged to raise questions and make pertinent comments during the lectures. The lectures for this class will not necessarily repeat or review material in the text, thus it is essential to complete the reading assignments before the first lecture on each topic in order to fully understand and appreciate the lecture. Students should also be prepared for discussion of current national political events relating to the week's topic.

Exams: There will be three exams and a comprehensive final. The exams will consist of both multiple choice and short answer/essay questions. Material for the exams will be drawn from both the readings and the lectures.

Assignments: To enhance awareness and understanding of current national political events, students are required to read the national political news in *The New York Times* www.nytimes.com or *The Washington Post* www.washingtonpost.com/?sub=new. Each week (10 total), students will submit one article on national political issues and write a short analysis of 2-3 paragraphs (1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced) on the relevant issues in the article. The analysis should explain how the article illustrates theories, concepts, or issues of the course, or how the material covered in the course assisted your understanding of the article. The newspaper article and analysis are due each Friday at the class meeting. Late or missing assignments will be

penalized.

Grading Policy: The final grade will be based on points earned on the exams, the newspaper analyses, class participation (attendance and discussion participation).

Exam 1: 20 %

Exam 2: 20 %

Exam 3: 20 %

Newspaper Analyses: 10%

Class Participation: 5%

Final exam: 25%

Grades will be distributed as follows:

A 93%-100%

AB 88%-92%

B 83%-87%

BC 78%-82%

C 73%-77%

CD 68%-72%

D 60%-69%

F 59% and below

Attendance Policy: Regular and prompt attendance is required for all lectures. Class attendance will be taken at the beginning of each class meeting. Class attendance is important because lectures will generally differ in content from the readings and announcements regarding any changes in the course schedule will be made in class only. If you are absent for any reason, it is your responsibility to find out what was covered and to get notes from another student. Attendance at exams is mandatory. Make-up exams will be given only to students who have a written doctor's excuse for illness, a verifiable family emergency, or a signed excuse from a faculty advisor for participation in college sanctioned activities. Students who know that they will be absent on the exam day must inform the instructor in advance and may take the exam in advance.

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating in any form will not be tolerated in this class. Anyone caught cheating on exams or on any other work assigned work will be punished in accord with University guidelines. Further information is available at <http://www.marquette.edu/rc/academicdishonesty.shtml>

Special Needs: If you have special needs due to any type of physical, mental, emotional, or learning disability, please see me during the first week of class to make appropriate arrangements to accommodate your needs.

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Jan 20	Introduction
Jan 22-27	Dilemmas of Democracy O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 1 Woll, ch. 1, art. 1
Jan 29-Feb 5	The United States Constitution O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 2 Woll, ch. 1, arts. 2-5 The Declaration of Independence, Appendix I Madison, "Federalist No. 51," Appendix III
Feb 8-12	Federalism O'Connor and Sabato, chs. 3, 4 Woll, ch. 2
FEBRUARY 15--FIRST EXAM	
Feb 17-24	Civil Liberties O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 5 Woll, ch. 3, arts. 17-20, 26-29
Feb 26-Mar 3	Civil Rights O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 6 Woll, ch. 3, arts. 21-25, 30
MARCH 5--SECOND EXAM	
Mar 8-12	Public Opinion and the Media O'Connor and Sabato, chs. 11, 15
Mar 22-35	Interest Groups O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 16 Madison, "Federalist 10," Appendix II Woll, ch. 5
Mary 29-Apr 5	Political Parties O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 12 Woll, ch. 4, arts. 31-35

Apr 7-9 Campaigns, Elections, and Voting
 O'Connor and Sabato, chs. 13, 14
 Woll, ch. 4, arts. 36-38

APRIL 12--THIRD EXAM

Apr 14-21 The Legislative Branch
 O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 7
 Woll, ch. 8

Apr 23-28 The Executive Branch
 O'Connor and Sabato, chs. 8, 9
 Woll, chs. 6-7

Apr 30-May 5 The Judiciary
 O'Connor and Sabato, ch. 10
 Woll, ch. 9

May 7 Conclusions

FINAL EXAM--TUESDAY, MAY 11, 10:30-12:30