

Political Science 2051
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Fall, 2018
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Office Hours: Mon: 9:30-10:30 AM
T/Th: 8:30-9:30 AM

American Government

Purpose: The purpose of this course is to examine the environment, structure, and dynamics of the American political system. The course begins by examining the ideological, historical, socioeconomic, and constitutional context of politics in the United States. Components of the political process such as the branches of government, interest groups, and political parties will then be explored.

Core Curriculum Objectives: The core curriculum requirement in political science is designed to communicate an understanding of the nature of governments and of the actions of people concerning government and public policy. Such a requirement is intended to inform students in order that they may function more effectively as responsible citizens in their community, state, and nation. ***Exemplary Educational Objectives:*** to comprehend the origins and evolution of the American political systems, with a focus on the growth of democratic institutions, the Constitution, federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights; to understand the operation of the three branches (legislative, executive, judicial) of a national government; to explain the activities of various types of participants in politics – candidates, officials, voters, and others; to understand the evolution and current state of the U.S.’s role in the world; to understand current public policy questions at the state and national level; to analyze, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems; to read, listen to, and view mass media reports about politics and public policy with critical insight; and to recognize the similarities and differences between the U.S. political system and other political systems.

LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.

Required Text: O’Connor, Karen, Larry J. Sabato, and Alixandra B. Yanus. *American Government: Roots and Reform Edition*, 12th, (Pearson) Available in the University Bookstore.

Course Requirements

Students will be graded according to their performance on four exams, two class assignments. The material on all exams will come from the required text and in-class lectures.

General Policies

Academic Honesty Students are required to abide by the academic conduct policies outlined in the LSU Code of Student Conduct (<http://www.lsu.edu/judicialaffairs>). Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to: cheating on exams, plagiarizing, buying or selling assignments, altering grades, and collaborating with others without permission. I reserve the right to investigate when I suspect a violation of any of these policies. All violations of the university’s academic conduct policies are turned over to the Dean of Students.

Classroom Decorum Please be kind to those around you who are trying to listen, take notes, and participate. Please make every effort to be on time to class. Be seated and ready to begin at 1:30 and

leave early only for emergencies. Turn cell phones and pagers to silent. Most importantly, do not talk during class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave immediately.

Recording Devices, Photography and Computers No audio or video recording devices are allowed unless special permission is granted by the instructor. Please do not take photographs of the overheads. This rule is strictly enforced during exams and during review of exam materials. All violations of this policy are turned over to the Dean of Students. You are free to use laptop computers and other electronic devices for class purposes (e.g., taking notes, looking up relevant information, etc.).

Late Assignments and Missed Work Make every effort to take scheduled exams and hand in work on time. I recognize, however, there are legitimate reasons for missing a deadline or an exam. The following reasons are some, but probably not all, of the excuses that are considered acceptable: a documented illness, a family emergency, or some severe mechanical failure (related to transportation, computing, etc.). Please note that most job-related issues are not considered acceptable excuses (although see university regulations concerning military duties, official events, etc.). For late assignments, penalties are assessed based upon the circumstances, but will generally involve a substantial loss of points. Recognize that for reasons of fairness to other students in the class, credit cannot be given at the end of the semester for missed exams. In other words, when you experience a significant problem that prevents you from meeting a deadline or taking a test, it is your responsibility to let me know about it in a timely manner and to make arrangements to make up the missed work. Excuses must be provided within one week of your return, NOT at the end of the semester. Excuse forms are available on this course's Moodle site where they must be submitted along with any other accompanying documentation (a doctor's note, etc.).

Grading scale

97.0 to 100 A+	73.0 to 76.9 C
93.0 to 96.9 A	70.0 to 72.9 C-
90.0 to 92.9 A-	67.0 to 69.9 D+
87.0 to 89.9 B+	63.0 to 66.9 D
83.0 to 86.9 B	60.0 to 62.9 D
80.0 to 82.9 B-	below 60.0 F
77.0 to 79.9 C+	

Semester Outline

PART 1: Foundation of Government

Week 1

August 21	Syllabus/ Introduction to American Government
August 23	American Roots, Context, & Culture (Chapter 1)

Week 2

August 28	The Federal System & The Constitution
August 30	Origins of The Bill of Rights

Week 3

September 4	Civil Liberties
September 6	Civil Rights in America

Week 4

September 11 Review
September 13 **Exam 1**

Week 5

September 18 Congress
September 20 The Presidency

PART 2: Institutional Breakdown

Week 6

September 25 The Bureaucracy
September 27 The Judiciary

Week 7

October 2 Institutional Discussion (In-Class Assignment)
October 4 FALL BREAK

Week 8

October 9 Review
October 11 **Exam 2**

Week 9

October 16 Public Opinion & Political Socialization
October 18 Political Parties

Week 10

October 23 Elections & Voting
October 25 The Campaign Process

Week 11

October 30 Interest Groups
November 1 The News Media

Week 12

November 6 “New” News
November 8 Public Opinion Discussion (In-class Assignment)

Week 13

November 13 Review
November 15 **Exam 3**

Week 14

November 20 Domestic Policy
November 22 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 15

November 27 Economic Policy
November 29 Foreign & defense Policy

Final Exam