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UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA SPRING 2015

POL 201

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American National Governments

Office: Social Science 314a

Hrs: M 1-5 & by appointment

Graduate Teaching Assistants

Cheryl Ellenwood (cheryle@email.arizona.edu)

Ashley Harris (ashshea@email.arizona.edu)

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Office Hours & Locations

Tuesday 11-2, Social Sciences 134

Mondays 2-5, Social Sciences 134

Tues & Thurs 12:30-2pm Rm. 134

DESCRIPTION: This course provides a general introduction to the basic political institutions and processes of American government. It focuses primarily on national politics and is concerned, in particular, with evaluating the structure of political power and the nature, extent, and quality of citizen participation in political life. Two questions are central throughout: Who governs America, and who should?

REQUIREMENTS, GRADES AND DATES: Three examinations are required as is a 6-8 page essay. The following are the weights for each assignment and the date that each is due.

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Dates (Tentative & Subject to Change)</u>	<u>Grade Percentage</u>
Exam I	February 23 (Tentative)	25%
Exam II	March 30th (Tentative)	25%
Exam III	May 12th (6-8 pm)	25%
Essay	March 9th - optional first draft April 13th - required final draft	(10%) 25% (15% if revised)
Extra Credit	2 points will be added to the final grade of anyone who participates in the School of Government and Public Policy's, Experimental Subject Pool. To qualify for this credit please speak to one of the Teaching Assistants for the course.	

ESSAY: All students are required to write a 6-8 page essay. You may write on one of three topics:

1. The Causes of Political Polarization in American: What can't we all get along?
2. Deadlock of Democracy: Why can't Congress and the President get anything done?
3. Income Inequality in America. Is it a problem and how can it be fixed?

The essay must use at least **five primary sources, no more than two of which may be from on-line sources (Sources such as the NY Time which are available both on and off line are perfectly fine to use). You may NOT use Wikipedia as a source nor course textbooks or class lectures.** The paper is worth 25% of the final grade. Students have the option of writing a draft of the paper, receiving written feedback on it, and then rewriting it for a final grade. If you choose to do this, the first draft is worth 10% of the total grade and the final draft is worth 15% more. Papers will be evaluated on both style and substance and returned within two weeks of

their submission. Students who choose the rewrite option will then have one additional week to revise and resubmit the essay for a final grade. Final Papers submitted after April 16 will be marked down one letter grade for each class period the paper is late.

MAKE UP EXAMS: Make-Up exams are not given under ANY circumstances. Students who miss an exam **with a satisfactory excuse** will be excused from that exam. The course grade will then be computed as the average score on the other assignments. **A student who misses a second exam for any reason or who misses one exam and fails to submit a final paper will be dropped administratively from the course.**

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will be subject to disciplinary action consistent with University rules and regulations. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with University regulations regarding plagiarism and academic dishonesty. If you have any doubt as to what is expected in these regards, please ask or consulting the University Code of Academic Integrity at: <http://deanofstudents.arizona.edu/codeofacademicintegrity> .

POLICY ON ELECTRONIC DEVICES: All electronic devices (cell phones, laptops, tablets) must be turned off during class unless you have received prior written permission from the instructor. There is abundant research that working on a laptop distracts both you and those sitting around you from concentrating on class discussions. So, electronic devices will be approved only in cases of documented need. Any unapproved device used in class will be subject to confiscation and will be returned to the student in the instructor's office after class. Anyone using **ANY** electronic device without prior permission during an examination will receive a zero on that exam.

BOOKS AND READINGS: All assigned readings in the course are from two books which can be purchased through the ASUA bookstore. You also may be able to save some money by purchasing or renting the books online through www.amazon.com or other electronic bookstore. Used copies of all books should be available for significantly reduced prices.

1. Morris P. Fiorina, Paul E. Peterson, Bertram D. Johnson and William G Mayer, *New American Democracy, The Alternate Edition, 7/E*). Pearson. ISBN 0-205-791334-4. Listed as **FPJM** in Syllabus
2. Robert Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* (2nd Edition), Yale University Press, ISBN: 0-300-09524-4. Listed as **DAHL** in syllabus

In addition, students are required to read the *POLITICS* section of the *New York Times* or *Washington Post* every day. The *New York Times* can be found on-line at: <http://nytimes.com/>. The *Washington Post* can be found at: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/>.

COURSE OUTLINE: Readings for each topic are listed below. Approximately one topic will be covered every one and one-half to two weeks, although this will vary with the length of the readings and the level of class interest. **REQUIRED** readings for each topic are very modest; therefore students are expected to do all of the reading for a topic before that topic is discussed in class. **OPTIONAL** readings are listed as a guide to students who want to pursue a subject in

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greater depth; **they are not required and you are not expected to read them.** All dates in the Course Outline are tentative; the instructor will keep students informed as to when to proceed to the next topic.

NO CLASS: MLK Holiday (January 19th)

TOPIC I: Democratic Theories of American Politics (Jan 26, Feb 2)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Ch. 1.

Optional:

1. John Stuart Mill, Considerations on Representative Government.
2. J. Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy.
3. R. Dahl, Preface to Democratic Theory.
4. P. Bachrach, Theory of Democratic Elitism.
5. G. W. Domhoff, Who Rules America?
6. R. A. Dahl, Democracy and its Critics
7. M. Harrington, Why We Need Socialism in America?
8. D. Truman, The Governmental Process.

TOPIC II: The Constitution and Traditions of American Politics (Feb 2, 9)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Chs. 2, 3.
2. **DAHL**, Chs. 1-3 and Appendix A.
3. Also read:

Articles of Confederation (<http://www.usconstitution.net/articles.html>)

Declaration of Independence (<http://www.usconstitution.net/declar.html>) and

U.S. Constitution (<http://www.usconstitution.net/const.txt>)

Optional:

1. J. W. Peltason, Understanding the Constitution.
2. A. de Tocqueville, Democracy in America.
3. S. M. Lipset, First New Nation.
4. L. Hartz, The Liberal Tradition in America.
5. Charles Beard, An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution.

TOPIC III: Democratic Citizenship: Public Opinion and Participation (Feb 9, 16, 23)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Ch. 4, 5, 6.
2. Pew Research, "Political Polarization of the American Public,"
<http://www.people-press.org/2014/06/12/political-polarization-in-the-american-public/>

Optional:

1. S. Verba and N. Nie, Participation in America.
2. W. Kornhauser, The Politics of Mass Society.
3. R. Lane, Political Ideology.
4. Eric Fromm, Escape from Freedom.
5. Dennis Thompson, The Democratic Citizen.

FIRST EXAM: Monday Feb 23th (Tentative)

TOPIC IV: Campaigns and Elections (March 2, 9)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Ch. 10 & 11
2. **DAHL**, Ch. 4
3. Fiorina, "America's Missing Moderates: Hiding in Plain Sight,"
<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2013/02/12/americas-missing-moderates-hiding-in-plain-sight/>
4. Abramowitz vs. Fiorina, "Polarized or Sorted"
<http://www.the-american-interest.com/2013/03/11/polarized-or-sorted-just-whats-wrong-with-our-politics-anyway/>

Optional:

1. Angus Campbell, The American Voter: An Abridgement.
2. Gerald Pomper, Elections in America.
3. V.O. Key, The Responsible Electorate.
4. N. Nie, et.al., The Changing American Voter.

March 9th

First Draft of Paper due (Optional)

If you want to get feedback on your paper and have a chance to edit/rewrite the paper for a better grade, you must turn the first draft in on this date. Late drafts will not be accepted.

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TOPIC V: Political Parties, Interest Groups, Media (Mar 9, 23, 30)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Chs.7, 8 and 9

Optional:

1. W. Crotty, American Parties in Decline.
2. A. Ranney, Curing the Mischiefs of Faction.
3. J. L. Sundquist, Dynamics of the Party System.
4. E. E. Schattschneider, The Semisovereign People.
5. J. Q. Wilson, Political Organizations.
6. M. Olson, The Logic of Collective Action.

March 14-22 SPRING BREAK

SECOND EXAM: Monday Mar 30th (Tentative)

TOPIC VI: Congress: Representation and Responsiveness (April 6, 13)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Ch. 12

Optional:

1. Eric Redman, The Dance of Legislation.
2. Mark Green, Who Runs Congress?
3. M. Fiorina, Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment.
4. R. Fenno, Home Style.
5. D. Mayhew, Congress: The Electoral Connection

TOPIC VII: The Presidency & Bureaucracy (Apr 13, 20)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Chs. 13 & 14

Optional:

1. R. Neustadt, Presidential Power.
2. J. D. Barber, Presidential Character.
3. C. Rossiter, The American Presidency.
4. C. Jones, The Reagan Legacy

April 13th

Final Draft of Paper due (Required)

TOPIC VIII: The Courts and the Legal System (Apr 20, 27)

Required:

1. **FPJM**, Ch. 15&16, 17.

Optional:

1. A. Lewis, Gideon's Trumpet.
2. J. Frank, Courts on Trial.
3. W. Murphy, Elements of Judicial Strategy.
4. H. Jacob, Justice in America.

TOPIC IX: American Democracy Revisited (Apr 27, May 4)

Required:

1. **DAHL**, Chs. 5-7

THIRD EXAM: Tues 5/12 6-8 PM

Note the different Day/Time for Last Exam!!!!