

Political Science 101
Professor Lowry
Office: Seigle 243
Office Hours: Wednesdays 2-4

American Politics
Fall 2011
Lectures: M & W 11-12
Discussion Sections: W, Th, or F

Description

This course considers the basic aspects of American politics and government: foundations, participation, and institutions. The format of the course typically consists of two lectures each week (Mondays and Wednesdays 11-12) and a discussion section once a week.

Requirements

Students are expected to keep up with the readings. Lectures will complement, but not replicate, the readings and students will be responsible for material in both. Further, material in the course is made relevant to current events. Therefore, students should keep up with the news. Attendance and participation in discussion sections is mandatory. Your grade will be determined by three exams (the first two worth 100 points each and the third worth 150) and participation in discussion sections (50 points). The dates for the exams are listed on the syllabus. Please note those dates so that you don't end up with scheduling conflicts. With this many students, we cannot offer alternative times to take the exams.

Readings

Your readings will come from a text and a variety of other sources. The text (*American Government: Power and Purpose 11th ed.*, brief version) is available at the bookstore. We will make the other readings available.

Purpose

Upon completion of this course, you should have a basic knowledge of American politics. We feel that such knowledge is an important part of a general education. Our hope is that such knowledge will enable you to better understand and assess politics and current events. We also hope that you develop or further your interest in those events. In addition, this course should enable you to consider Political Science as a major as it does provide an overview of numerous subject areas. Besides, it might even be interesting.

We reserve the right to change specifics in the syllabus as the semester progresses.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignments
8/31 – 9/2	Introduction	Text: 1
9/7 – 9/9	Constitution	Text: 2 Other: Olson
9/12 – 9/16	Federalism and Separation of Powers	Text: 3 Other: Drinking Age
9/19 – 9/23	Civil Rights	Text: 4 (pp. 94-116) Other: Varnum v Brien
9/26 9/28	Catch-up and Review Exam 1	No sections
10/3-10/7	Public Opinion and the Media	Text: 9 Other: Althaus Free Falls
10/10-10/14	Parties and Interest Groups	Text: 11 and 12 No sections(Fall break)
10/17-10/21	Elections and Voting	Text: 10 Other: Tea Party
10/24 10/26	Catch-Up and Review Exam 2	
10/31 - 11/4	Congress	Text: 5 Other: Smith Congress
11/8-11/12	Presidency	Text: 6 Other: Analyzing Obama
11/15-11/19	Executive Branch	Text: 7 Other: Constraints
11/21	Courts	Text: 8 (Thanksgiving)
11/29-12/3	Courts and Civil Liberties	Text: 4 (pp. 74-93) TBA
12/5 12/7	Catch-Up and Review Exam	