

Political Science 101
American Government
TR 9:25-10:40
Maybank # 316

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Office hours: 1:30-2:30 Tuesday thru Friday and by appointment

Course Description: This course discusses the structure, context, functions, and problems of American national government. It is required for political science majors and it fulfills three units toward the social science degree requirement.

Texts and Materials: Please purchase the following:

Corbett & Norrander. American Government Using Microcase Explorit. 9th Edition. Wadsworth 2005.
Garraty. Quarrels That Have Shaped the Constitution. Rev. Ed. Harper. 1988.
Ginsberg, Lowi & Weir. We The People Shorter 6th Ed. Norton. 2007.

Requirements:

1. Exams: There will be three in-term exams and one final exam. All are required. Students are expected to appear and complete the exams as scheduled beginning on page three of this syllabus. **There will be no make-up exams without an advance written request and written permission from the instructor prior to the exam dates.** Included in, but not limited to, the following exigencies not likely to be granted a changed exam date are: marriages, divorces, births, deaths, doctors' appointments, and car wrecks. All exams will consist of some multiple choice, fill-in, and short answer. The in-term exams are worth 20% each toward the course grade. The final exam is worth 25% toward the course grade. Study hints for each exam are provided one calendar week ahead of time.
2. All exam work is to be written in blue or black ink only. Blue books for all exams are provided by the instructor. **On all exams and other written work, identify yourselves only by the last five digits of your C of C student number (ex.: 00-000).**
3. Attendance: Roll call will be taken periodically and attendance will accumulate toward 10% of the course grade. In the past, absences have led to serious and harmful effects. Students who are late to class (defined as later than the instructor's arrival) will not be permitted to sign the roll call sheet. Students who must leave early for excuses including but not limited to marriages, divorces, births, deaths, doctors' appointments, and car wrecks will not be permitted to sign the roll call sheet.
4. Grading policy: There is no class curve. Grades are based on numeric exam scores and attendance, computed by weighted average for the term: all scores are based on the numeric possibility of 100 points:

A = 93+
A- = 90-92.9
B+ = 87.5-89.9
B = 83-87.4
B- = 80-82.9
C+ = 77.5-79.9
C = 73-77.4
C- = 70-72.9
D+ = 67.5-69.9
D = 63-67.4
D- = 60-62.9

5. A minimum of four Microcase “homework” assignments will be collected as scheduled below and accumulate toward an additional 10% of the course grade (please note that half of that 10% is “extra credit”). See page six.
6. Alternate meeting site: If for any reason we are locked out of our normal classroom or building, we will rendezvous at the Randolph Hall fountain and meet there or elsewhere. This includes all test dates.
7. The instructor urges all students to consider a well-rounded undergraduate education, including at least one of the following: four years of health food diets, three years of petro-chemistry, two years of dulcimer lessons, one year of some exotic foreign language such as Arabic, Russian, or Chinese, six months of wind surfing lessons, or one hour of work on a rowing machine.
8. All hand-held electronic devices, cell phones, pagers, i-Pod and such devices and alarms shall be turned off during all class periods. Those who violate this rule may be asked to leave and attendance for that date will be deducted.
9. Do not phone the David Mann in the phone book. He is a different person. Contact your instructor as above. The instructor does not have e-mail at his residence; therefore, if you e-mail over the weekend or in the evening, do not expect a response until the morning of the next “business” day.
10. Study hints: See the last page of this syllabus for course study hints.
11. Reading and exam schedule: go to the next page, please.

D. Participation and Voting

GLW: Ch. 8; M: 8

<http://www.vanishingvoter.org/>

www.fec.gov Federal Elections Commission

www.vote-smart.org/ links to information on candidates, parties, election rules, and issues

***second exam**

E. Interest Groups

GLW: Ch. 11; M: 11; G 8

<http://www.wctu.org>

<http://nationalgrange.org>

<http://aflcio.org>

<http://www.jatlanta.org>

<http://commoncause.org>

<http://www.nra.org>

www.opensecrets.org who contributes; who receives

<http://www.seac.org/> student environmental action committee

www.townhall.com/citizens conservative organizations and citizen groups

www.cc.org/ Christian Coalition

F. Political Parties and Elections

GLW: Chs. 9 & 10; M: 9, 10

<http://democrats.org>

<http://www.reformparty.org/>

<http://rnc.org>

<http://www.greenparty.org/>

***third exam**

III. Leadership in Government and Politics

A. Congress

GLW: Ch. 12; M: 12

<http://congress.org/congressorg/home/>

www.capweb.net information and links on and about Congress

B. President

GLW: Ch. 13; G: 15; M: 13

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

www.fedworld.gov links to all federal departments involved in foreign affairs and national defense

<http://www.lib.umich.edu/govdocs/stats.html> information on military and security issues; covers U.S. and other countries

C. Bureaucracy (Executive Branch) GLW: Ch. 14; M: 14

<http://www.fedstats.gov> links to statistics on federal government programs

<http://www.aei.org> American Enterprise Institute, a conservative "think tank"

<http://www.movingideas.org/> liberal "think tank" links

D. Federal Court System GLW: Ch. 15; M: 15
G: 5, 12, 19, 20

<http://www.supremecourtus.gov/>

<http://www.uscourts.gov> information on US courts

<http://www.law.cornell.edu> links to law and court sites

<http://www.cofc.edu/~mann/newlaw.html> Dr. Mann's law resources page

IV. Policymaking: Theory and Context—Civil Rights GLW: Ch. 5; G: 10, 18, 20; M: 5

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/>

<http://www.now.org/>

<http://www.aclu.org>

www.yahoo.com/Society_and_Culture/ links to many social movements, issues, and groups

***final exam (as scheduled by the College)(material since third exam only)**

Microcase Exercise Assignments.

A minimum of four Microcase “homework” assignments will be collected as scheduled below and accumulate toward an additional 10% of the course grade (please note that half of that 10% is “extra credit”).

The first Microcase exercise will be due on Thursday, August 30th, at the beginning of the class period in the class room. Grading is pass/“resubmit”. Exercises will be returned the subsequent Tuesday. Students may receive full credit for a re-submitted (fully corrected) exercise provided that each corrected exercise arrives at the subsequent Microcase due date in the class room. Multiple corrections are permitted.

After the first four, noted below, exercises will continue to be assigned **as announced in class**. Remember that the first four assigned will accumulate toward 10% of the course grade. After the first four, announced exercises may be collected on any particular day. They will count as a course grade tie-breaker.

The first four assigned Microcase exercises are:

<u>date</u>	<u>Exercise #</u>
8-30	1
9-6	2
tba	4
tba	3

On Studying and Writing College Level Work

A. Studying

1. Since exams are announced according to the course schedule, there should be no surprises. Preparation and study should be a daily activity. This is very difficult. For hints on studying and writing college level work: <http://nutsandbolts.washcoll.edu>. **There is an on line study guide for Ginsberg, the cite for which can be found there.**

2. Assuming that you have read the material subject to any exam as recommended above,

- a. divide the material which is subject to the exam into coherent parts (*i.e.*, by subject matter);
- b. study the material by subject matter, *i.e.*, lecture and corresponding texts together; at minimum, this should be done for at least one solid hour nightly;
- c. review all the material at least one solid hour without interruption each successive night;
- d. on the night before the exam, do as above; try to finish early in the evening.
How do you know when you are finished? When you know what is on the next page without turning the page.

B. The Exam Situation

1. Scan the entire exam before answering anything. Be sure to know what is expected.

2. All exams for this course will have some multiple choice questions taken directly from Ginsberg and Microcase text portions. This is to satisfy the instructor that you have read, digested, and understood the texts.

3. All exams will have some "fill in the blank" questions taken from lecture and texts. This is to satisfy the instructor that you have read, digested, and studied lecture material, required readings and computer exercises.

4. All exams will also include questions with the following instructions: "Identify and explain the significance of...." These questions require **two** types of information. The **first** type of information is the definition of the term--simply, in as complete and concise a fashion as possible, describe what the term means. The **second** type of information is more complex. Explaining the significance of a term is to show how the term relates to the course or exam theme, subject matter, other terms, general concepts, and political values. This information you may not find in either your lecture notes or the texts. This information requires you to think about the course material. Explaining the significance of a term is the most difficult and underestimated portion of any exam. And while you read this on the first day of class, what follows, perhaps only making some sense, will some day serve as an example of how to do well on this portion of the exam.

Example of explaining significance: Suppose a term subject to the first exam was "protective tariff." You probably could define that term easily. You might even be able to define it now. If you can, you receive half credit. For the other half credit you must explain the significance of the term using course-related materials. Calhoun's theory of concurrent majorities borrowed Jefferson's nullification and interposition strategy for states. When Congressional laws served to undermine the compact between states, such laws could be declared null and void by the state, according to that theory. Therefore, if a protective tariff undermines a state's economy, then a state could ignore the law of Congress. Of course all of this relates to "what is the extent of national government power." Are there other or additional concepts you could employ to explain the significance of the term?

Note: it is never so that the significance of a Supreme Court case is its decision; is there a pattern to decision-making of the Court that relates to a larger theme?; are there other examples of cases you can relate?