

**Political Science 101
American Government
Fall Semester, 2007
Mr. Moore**

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This course is an introductory course in American Government. The major course objective is to provide the student with a basic understanding of how the political system works and the role played by individuals and groups in the process. As such, the emphasis is on the practical aspect of American politics. The information derived from this course can be used by the individual however he/she wishes.

A second major objective is to improve the reading comprehension and writing skills of those taking the class. This is achieved through reading assignments in three texts and essay exams.

Course Requirements: Students will be evaluated on the basis of their performance on two of three hourly exams and a comprehensive final. Borderline grades can be affected by class participation and attendance. Class participation is desired and encouraged. Each hourly is worth 100 points. The final is worth 120 points.

<u>Grading Scale:</u>	A: 92-100 percent
	A-: 90-91
	B+: 88-89
	B: 82-87
	B-: 80-81
	C+: 78-79
	C: 72-77
	C-: 70-77
	D+: 68-69
	D: 62-67
	D-: 60-61
	F: Below 60

Class Attendance: Class lectures comprise approximately 60 to 70% of the exam material, hence, regular attendance is essential for satisfactory completion of the course. Students will be allowed a total of **two** unexcused absences. This policy may be rigidly enforced for students who are doing less than C work. Excessive absences may result in dismissal from the course.

Office Hours: The instructor encourages students to meet with him if they are encountering problems. Office hours are 10:00-10:40 am T, R and M,W,F from 1-3:00 pm or by appointment.

Textbooks for the Course:

Robert DiClerico and Allan S. Hammock, Points of View 10th ed, New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006

Thomas E. Patterson, We The People, 6th Ed. New York-McGraw-Hill, 2006

Bruce Steinbrickner, Annual Editions 07/08, New York-McGraw-Hill, 2007

Students are also encouraged to become familiar with the following publications:

New York Times
Washington Post
Christian Science Monitor
Newsweek
Time

U.S. News and World Report
The Nation
The New Republic
National Review

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

I The Political System

A. The Theoretical Context

Patterson, Chapter 1 “The American Heritage”

DiClerico and Hammock

Howard Zinn, “How Democratic is America?” pp 2-14

Sidney Hook, “How Democratic is America? A Response to Howard Zinn,” pp

14-26

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., “Not the People’s Choice,” pp 107-112

Robert Weissberg, “The Electoral College Didn’t Do It,” pp 113-116

Earl Blumehauer and Jim Leach, “Redistricting, A Bipartisan Sport,” pp143-

145

Bill Bishop, “You Can’t Compete With Voters’ Feet,” pp 145-147

Annual Editions

Robert Pastor, “America Observed,” pp 142-143

Dean Murphy, “Who Should Redistrict?” pp 144-145

B. The Environment for Political Decision

a. Federalism: Shared Decision Making

Patterson, Chapter 3 “Federalism: Forging a Nation”

DiClerico and Hammock

George Miller, “Unfunded Mandates: Laws That Bind Us Together,” pp 45-48

Lamar Alexander, “The Federal Unfunded Mandates Reform Act: Lost in the Weeds,” pp 48-51

Annual Editions

Robert Pastor, “America Observed,” pp 142-143

b. The Constitution

Patterson, Chapter 2 “Constitutional Democracy: Promoting Liberty and Self-Government”

DiClerico and Hammock

Charles Beard, “An Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States,” pp 33-38

Robert Brown, “Charles Beard and the Constitution: A Critical Analysis,” pp

38-43

Annual Editions

Sanford Levinson, “It is Time to Repair the Constitution’s Flaws,” pp 30-32

Bruce Ackerman, “If Washington Blows Up,” pp 33-37

c. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Patterson, Chapters 4 and 5 “Civil Liberties;” “Equal Rights”

DiClerico and Hammock

Sandra Day O’Connor, “Law School Admissions: The Case For Affirmative Action,” pp 268-272

Clarence Thomas, “Law School Admissions: The Case Against Affirmative Action,” pp 273-276

Walter Brasch, “America’s Unpatriotic Acts,” pp 231-239

Robert Bork, “Liberty and Terrorism,” pp 240-248

to
Susan Estrich and Kathleen Sullivan, "Abortion Politics: The Case for the Right
Privacy," pp 289-300
James Bopp, Jr. and Richard Coleson, "Abortion on Demand Has No
Constitutional
Or Moral Justification," pp 301-316

FIRST EXAM

- d. Political Culture and Political Socialization
Patterson, Chapter 6 and Chapter 10 "Public Opinion and Political Socialization":
"The
News Media"
DiClerico and Hammock
Dick Morris, "Vox Populi in Cyberspace," pp 59-63

Norman Ornstein and Amy Schenkenberg, "The Promise and Perils of
Cyberdemocracy," pp 63-67
Fred Wertheimer. "TV Ad Wars: How to Cut Advertising Cost in Political
Campaigns," pp 87-90
Steven Bates and Edwin Diamond, "Damned Spots: A Defense of Thirty-
Second Campaign Ads," pp 90-93
Annual Editions
Eric Alterman, "Bush's War on the Press," pp 60-64
Terry Eastland, "Starting Over," pp 160-164
Mark Blitz, "The Media We Observe," pp 165-169

II Inputs Into the System

- A. The Voter: Public Opinion and Voting Behavior
Patterson, Chapter 7 "Voting and Participation"
DiClerico and Hammock
Arend Lijphart, "Compulsory Voting is the Best Way to Keep Democracy
Strong," pp 76-79
Austin Ranney, "Non Voting Is Not a Social Disease," pp 80-85
Annual Editions
David Rieff, "America the Untethered," pp 20-21
David Broder and Dan Balz, "How Common Ground of 9/11 Gave Way to
Partisan Split," pp 109-113
Jacob Hacker and Ruy Teixeira, "It Wasn't Just Iraq," pp 114-117
Allison Hayward, "Vote or Else," pp 146-147
- A. Political Parties
Patterson, Chapter 8 "Political Parties, Candidates and Campaigns"
DiClerico and Hammock
Darrell West, "Do Culture+ Security Issues=National Republican Era?" pp 118-
121
John Judis and Ruy Teixeira, "Movement Interruptus," pp 121-128
Annual Editions
Andrew Sullivan, "Crisis of Faith," pp 118-123
Thomas Schaller, "Gettysburg Again," pp 124-126
Charles Cook, "Rebalancing Act," p 138
Greg Sargent, "First Among Thirds," pp 139-141
- A. Interests Groups

Patterson, Chapter 9 “Interest Groups: Organizing for Influence”
Annual Editions

- Jason Lee Steorts, “Sugar Daddies,” pp 148-150
Jeffery Birnbaum, “The End of Legal Bribery,” pp 151-154
Richard Dunham, Eamon Javers, and Lorraine Woellert, “Shakedown on K Street,” 158-159

SECOND EXAM

A. Nominations and Elections

DiClerico and Hammock

- John Armor, “The National Primary: An Excellent Idea,” pp 99-102
Thomas Gangale, “The Graduated Random Presidential Primary System,” pp 102- 105

III The Political Subsystem

A. The Judicial Process

Patterson, Chapter 14 “The Judiciary: Applying the Law”

DiClerico and Hammock

- Edwin Meese, III, “A Jurisprudence of Original Intention,” pp 192-197
Irving Kaufman, “What Did the Founding Fathers Intend?” pp 198-203

Annual Editions

- David Garrow, “The Once and Future Supreme Court,” pp 92-96
Stuart Taylor, Jr., “Remote Control,” pp 97-98

B. The Executive

Patterson, Chapter 12 “The Presidency: Leading the Nation”

DiClerico and Hammock

- Donald Wolfensberger, “The Return of the Imperial Presidency,” pp 172-178
Eric Posner, “All Hail...King George?” pp 179-181

Annual Editions

- George Edwards, III, “Changing Their Minds: George W. Bush and Presidential Persuasion,” pp 47-53
Stuart Taylor Jr., “The Man Who Would Be King,” pp 54-55
Stephen Walt, “The Blame Game,” pp 58-59

C. Congress

Patterson, Chapter 11 “Congress”

DiClerico and Hammock

- Tom Harkin, It’s Time to Change the Filibuster,” pp 161-166
Bill Frenzel, “Defending the Dinosaur: The Case for Not Fixing the Filibuster,”

pp

167-170

Annual Editions

- Norman Ornstein and Thomas Mann, “When Congress Checks Out,” pp 65-70
Lee Hamilton, “The Case for Congress,” pp 71-73
Joshua Green, “Take Two,” pp 74-78

THIRD EXAM

D The Bureaucracy

Patterson, Chapter 13 “The Bureaucracy: Administering the Government”

DiClerico and Hammock

Philip Howard, "Civil Service Rules, A Drag on Our National Security," pp 183- 185

Gerald Pops, "A Strong Civil Service System is the Cure, Not the Problem," pp 186-190

Annual Editions

Stuart Taylor Jr., "Catastrophe Management," pp 102-103

John Judis, "The Case for Abolishing the CIA," pp 104-105

IV Systematic Output

A. Domestic Policy

Patterson, Chapter 15 and Chapter 16 "Environmental And Economic Policy":
"Welfare
And Education Policy"

Annual Editions

Sam Pizzigata, "The Rich and the Rest," pp 24-27

Paul Krugman, "The Tax Cut Con," pp 177-183

Linda Chavez, "The Realities of Immigration," pp 184-189

A. Foreign Policy

Patterson, Chapter 17 "Foreign and Defense Policy"

Annual Editions

James Traub, "Their Highbrow Hatred of Us," pp 22-23

Robert Kagan, "Cowboy Nation," pp 193-196

Fred Baumann, "Our Fractious Foreign Policy Debate," pp 207-211

Murray Weidenbaum, "Why War Is So Affordable," pp 216-218

FINAL EXAM