CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ISSUES #13639

Tuesday & Thursday: 1:40 - 2:55 pm...Maybank 207

Office Hour: Wednesday, 3:30 - 4:30 pm at the Starbucks across from Maybank (or by appointment).

WELCOME TO CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ISSUES FALL 2013

Students who successfully complete the course will be familiar with contemporary political issues pertaining to both foreign and domestic policies, will demonstrate knowledge of the differing political and ideological perspectives on these issues and will apply those ideas to new situations.

This class is part of the General Education Social Science Requirement that mandates the following:

That Students can apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions.

This outcome will be assessed in the Research Report on Obamacare.

This course will have a double focus.

During the first half of the semester we will examine one of the key factors influencing FOREIGN POLICY today: The increasing importance of the Arab Street and Islam’s perspective of the World.

During the second half of the course we will discuss one of the major roadblocks pertaining to DOMESTIC POLICY today: The gridlock that has crippled Congress, including abuse of the Senate filibuster and extreme partisan gerrymandering of congressional districts.

In order to get the real feel of Washington, DC as politicians, journalists and lobbyists know it, the students will also read THIS TOWN by Mark Leibovich. It is an irreverent look behind the scenes in our nation’s capital. (Senators, newspaper editors and White House officials are reading it right now.)

Our special focus will be Obamacare now that it is scheduled to be fully implemented next year.

Above all, this class will place primary emphasis on STUDENT PARTICIPATION. Student Debates will afford each Student the opportunity to take an active part in the discussion of contemporary political issues.

Democracy is a Participatory Sport !!
REQUIRED:

* THE WORLD THROUGH ARAB EYES... Shibley Telhami
* IT'S EVEN WORSE THAN IT LOOKS... Mann & Ornstein
* THIS TOWN... Mark Leibovich

COURSE ORIENTATION:

This course will consist of five major components in addition to class lectures:

- Weekly Quizzes
- Three Tests
- Student Debates
- Analysis of THIS TOWN by Mark Leibovich
- Research Report on Obamacare

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITY

Regular class attendance and careful preparation for each class are required. STUDENTS MUST READ THE ASSIGNED CHAPTERS PRIOR TO EACH CLASS. As an “incentive,” many classes will begin with a 5 minute Quiz based exclusively on that day’s reading assignment.

Since teachers are “academic coaches,” students are expected to show up for class just as athletes are expected to show up for practice. Students must perform the assignments outlined in this syllabus and submit the required reports ON TIME. Ten points will be deducted from assignments that are late. After one week, the assignment will not be accepted and the grade for that assignment will be zero.

If absent, a Student is still responsible for everything covered during that class. GET THE NOTES!

Small STUDY GROUPS are strongly encouraged. No “extra credit” work will be offered. Students should concentrate on doing their best on the assignments outlined in this syllabus.

Students must demonstrate respect for the teacher and their fellow classmates during class. Disturbances of any kind (for example: private conversations, cell phones, TEXT MESSAGING, etc.) will NOT be permitted. If a student is asked to leave the classroom, it will be recorded as an absence.

Laptop computers are only permitted for taking notes. Any other use (such as watching “the big game”) will result in that student’s computer being banned for the remainder of the semester.

SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

If a student requires any type of SNAP accommodations, please make the appropriate notifications and arrangements with the Center for Students with Disabilities during the first week of classes.
Alternatively, if a student has a physical impairment of any kind that will require special arrangements for exams or papers...or, if a student must travel due to membership in any approved athletic, club or organizational program...please notify the teacher during the first week of classes. This information will be kept confidential.

OFFICE HOURS AND CONTACT INFORMATION

The regular Office Hour for this class will be Wednesday between 3:30-4:30 pm at the Starbucks Coffee Shop across from Maybank Hall. Students may also request a meeting at another time or place by using my PERSONAL email (zebracove@aol.com) or my cell phone (843-822-3254) or by Text Messaging.

My personal email will be checked daily during the semester. Do NOT use my college account.

Questions, comments or concerns pertaining to this course may also be placed via my cell phone (843-822-3254) between the hours of 10 am to Midnight, seven days a week. Calls placed before 10 am will result in a grade of “X” and the student should leave the state immediately.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Personal integrity is extremely important in college as it is throughout life.

When you enrolled in The College of Charleston, you signed an Honor Code. You are expected to live up to that code.

If you cheat on an exam or plagiarize any portion of your reports or assignments, you will FAIL this course and your case will be turned over to the Honor Board for further disciplinary action. If you have any questions or are unsure what constitutes cheating or plagiarism, ASK. Ignorance is not an acceptable defense.

ANALYSIS OF THIS TOWN BY MARK LEIBOVICH...20%

Each student must read THIS TOWN by New York Times Magazine editor Mark Leibovich. (It’s the hottest book in Washington, DC this fall...it lifts the veil on how DC really works.) Each student must then prepare three separate reports on this book, 3-4 pages double-spaced per report, plus a cover sheet. These reports should be an ANALYSIS (what do YOU think)...not a summary:

- Prologue – Chapter 5 (pp. 1-127) Due: Thursday, September 26
- Chapters 6-9 (pp. 129-246) Due: Thursday, October 24
- Chapter 10-Epilogue (pp. 247-368) Due: Thursday, December 5

Ten points will be subtracted from the report’s grade if it is late. At the end of the semester, the average of the three reports will represent 20% of the student’s final grade for this course.
DAILY QUIZZES... 20%

Most Monday classes will begin with a 5 minute Daily Quiz which will focus exclusively on that day’s reading assignment. It will be given at the start of the class and will consist of 10 objective questions worth 10 points each. At the end of the semester, the two lowest quiz grades will be eliminated and the rest of the quiz grades will be averaged. That average will represent 20% of the student’s final grade.

If a student is absent from class or arrives after the quiz period has ended, the quiz grade for that class will be zero. There will be NO make-up quizzes.

STUDENT DEBATES... 10%

There will be 11 Student Debates throughout the semester. Some topics have already been assigned; two additional topics will be selected by the class. Four students will be selected to participate in each Debate, two for the Affirmative side and two for the Opposition. Participants will have two weeks to prepare for the each Debate. The Debate itself will last one hour. Students not engaged in that specific Debate MUST bring two written questions which will be collected at the end of the Debate.

Students will recommend a grade for each Debate Team but the professor will give the official grade for each Debate. The student’s Debate grade (or the average of his/her Debate grades, if participating in more than one) will represent 10% of the student’s final grade for this course.

TESTS... 30%

There will be a total of 3 Tests throughout the semester. Each Test will be comprehensive (i.e., it will cover EVERYTHING read, reviewed or discussed during that period of the course) and will consist of 25 objective questions (2 points each) and 5 essay questions (10 points each) plus a 5 point bonus question. Each Test will be 1 hour in length, followed by a review of the Test.

Each Test will cover only the material contained in that phase of the course. At the end of the semester, each of the three Tests will represent 10% of the student’s final grade for the course for a total of 30%

If a student is absent from class on Test day, that Test must be made up by appointment at the earliest opportunity and a 10 point penalty will be applied to that Test grade.
RESEARCH REPORT & ANALYSIS OF OBAMACARE... 20%

Each student will be required to prepare a RESEARCH REPORT on OBAMACARE (The Affordable Care Act).

Each REPORT should include a response to the following questions (but the Report is not limited to these questions):
1) How would you describe the concept of universal health care?
2) Why is this specific issue of such great importance?
3) How does Obamacare (The Affordable Care Act) respond to this need (be specific)?
4) What are the strongest arguments in favor of Obamacare?
5) What are the strongest arguments in opposition to Obamacare?
6) What is your analysis of this issue (what do YOU think)? [Analysis must be 2-3 pages.]

This REPORT, including a cover sheet, is due at the start of class on Thursday, November 7. Ten points will be subtracted if it is late. Each REPORT should be prepared individually. Following submission of the Report, two Student Debates will be devoted to this topic. The Report will represent 20% of each student’s final grade.

GRADERS

Grades in this class are based on a straight scale:

A = 93-100
A- = 90-92
B+ = 88-89
B = 83-87
B- = 80-82
C+ = 78-79
C = 73-77
C- = 70-72
D+ = 68-69
D = 63-67
D- = 60-62
F = 59 and below
COURSE SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS

Week 1

Tuesday, August 20  
- Sample Quiz  
- Overview of the Course & Assignments  
- Basic Global Metrics

Thursday, August 22  
- ARAB EYES: Introduction (pp. 1-15)  
- Class Discussion

Week 2

Tuesday, August 27  
- Daily Quiz  
- ARAB EYES: Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 17-44)

Thursday, August 29  
- Student Debate  
- MARIJUANA SHOULD BE LEGALIZED

Week 3

Tuesday, Sept. 3  
- Daily Quiz  
- ARAB EYES: Chapters 3 & 4 (pp. 45-72)

Thursday, Sept. 5  
- Student Debate  
- THE PATRIOT ACT SHOULD BE REPEALED

Week 4

Tuesday, Sept. 10  
- Daily Quiz  
- ARAB EYES: Chapters 5 & 6 (pp. 73-104)

Thursday, Sept. 12  
- Student Debate:  
- TEXTING WHILE DRIVING SHOULD BE ILLEGAL

Week 5

Tuesday, Sept. 17  
- TEST 1  
- Review Test

Thursday, Sept. 19  
- Student Debate:  
- THE CHILDREN OF ILLEGAL ALIENS (THE DREAMERS) SHOULD BE GRANTED US CITIZENSHIP
Week 6

Tuesday, Sept. 24
• Daily Quiz
• ARAB EYES: Chapters 7 & 8 (pp. 105-143)

Thursday, Sept. 26
• Student Debate:
• THE DRAFT SHOULD BE REINSTATED FOR MEN AND WOMEN
• ASSIGNMENT DUE:
  THIS TOWN: Preface – Chapter 5 (pp. 1-127)

Week 7

Tuesday, October 1
• Daily Quiz
• ARAB EYES: Chapters 9 & 10 (pp. 145-182)

Thursday, October 3
• Student Debate:
• GUNS SHOULD BE TIGHTLY REGULATED

Week 8

Tuesday, October 8
• Daily Quiz
• ARAB EYES: Chapters 11 & 12 (pp. 183-211)

Thursday, October 10
• Student Debate:
• (Topic selected by the Class)

Week 9

Tuesday, October 15
• FALL BREAK (Mid Term Grades Due)

Thursday, October 17
• Daily Quiz
• IT'S EVEN WORSE: Introduction & Chapter 1 (pp. ix-30)

Week 10

Tuesday, October 22
• Daily Quiz
• IT'S EVEN WORSE: Chapter 2 (pp. 31-80)

Thursday, October 24
• Student Debate:
• GAY MARRIAGE SHOULD BE LEFT UP TO STATES
• ASSIGNMENT DUE:
  THIS TOWN: Chapters 6 – 9 (pp. 129-246)

Week 11

Tuesday, October 29
• TEST 2
• Review Test
Thursday, October 31
• Daily Quiz
• IT’S EVEN WORSE: Chapter 3 (pp. 81-103)

Week 12

Tuesday, November 5
• Daily Quiz
• IT’S EVEN WORSE: Chapter 4 (pp. 107-130)

Thursday, November 7
• Student Debate:
  • OBAMACARE WILL IMPROVE OUR HEALTH
  • ASSIGNMENT DUE:
  • REPORT ON OBAMACARE

Week 13

Tuesday, November 12
• Daily Quiz
• IT’S EVEN WORSE: Chapter 5 (pp. 131-162)

Thursday, November 14
• Student Debate:
  • OBAMACARE WILL HOLD DOWN HEALTH COSTS

Week 14

Tuesday, November 19
• Daily Quiz
• IT’S EVEN WORSE: Chapter 6 (pp. 163-178)

Thursday, November 21
• Student Debate:
  • (Topic selected by the Class)

Week 15

Tuesday, November 26
• Daily Quiz
• IT’S EVEN WORSE: Chapter 7 (pp. 179-201)

Thursday, November 28
• THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Week 16

Tuesday, December 3
• Reading Day

Thursday, December 5
• FINAL EXAM (TEST 3)
  • Review Test
  • ASSIGNMENT DUE:
    • THIS TOWN: Chapters 10-Epilogue (pp. 247-368)
Recommended Language for Course Syllabi

College of Charleston Honor Code and Academic Integrity

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our Honor Code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

Incidents where the instructor determines the student’s actions are related more to a misunderstanding will handled by the instructor. A written intervention designed to help prevent the student from repeating the error will be given to the student. The intervention, submitted by form and signed both by the instructor and the student, will be forwarded to the Dean of Students and placed in the student’s file.

Cases of suspected academic dishonesty will be reported directly by the instructor and/or others having knowledge of the incident to the Dean of Students. A student found responsible by the Honor Board for academic dishonesty will receive a XF in the course, indicating failure of the course due to academic dishonesty. This grade will appear on the student’s transcript for two years after which the student may petition for the X to be expunged. The F is permanent. The student may also be placed on disciplinary probation, suspended (temporary removal) or expelled (permanent removal) from the College by the Honor Board.

Students should be aware that unauthorized collaboration—working together without permission—is a form of cheating. Unless the instructor specifies that students can work together on an assignment, quiz and/or test, no collaboration during the completion of the assignment is permitted. Other forms of cheating include possessing or using an unauthorized study aid (which could include accessing information via a cell phone or computer), copying from others’ exams, fabricating data, and giving unauthorized assistance.

Research conducted and/or papers written for other classes cannot be used in whole or in part for any assignment in this class without obtaining prior permission from the instructor.

Students can find the complete Honor Code and all related processes in the Student Handbook at http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php
POLS 102: CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL ISSUES
Tom Chorlton

INTERNATIONAL METRICS

POPULATION:

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<td>Sudan</td>
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GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT (GDP):

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G-8 (GROUP OF EIGHT LARGE INDUSTRIAL ECONOMIES):

United States $14.6 Trillion GDP
United Kingdom $2.2
France $2.5
Italy $2.0
Germany $3.3
Japan $5.4
Canada $1.5
Russia $1.4

G-20 (GROUP OF TWENTY LARGEST ECONOMIES):

United States
United Kingdom
France
Italy
Germany
Japan
Canada
Russia
China
Saudi Arabia
Brazil
India
Mexico
South Africa
Indonesia
Turkey
South Korea
Argentina
Australia
European Union (EU) $16.2 T

WORLD BANK

Economic Development Bank to assist developing countries.

INTERNATIONAL MONETARY FUND (IMP)

International organization to stabilize a developed country’s economy in times of crisis.

WORLD TRADE ORGANIZATION (WTO)

International organization to regulate global trade.
PERMANENT MEMBERS OF THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL
(with Veto power):

United States
Russia
China
United Kingdom
France

NUCLEAR WEAPONS:

United States
Russia
China
United Kingdom
France
India
Pakistan
North Korea
Israel

LARGEST CITIES (2003 Metropolitan Area):

1 – Tokyo 35.0 Million
2 – Mexico City 18.7
3 – New York 18.3
4 – Sao Paulo
5 – Mumbai
6 – Delhi
7 – Kolkata
8 – Buenos Aires
9 – Shanghai
10- Jakarta
11- Los Angeles
18- Moscow
21- Paris
25- Chicago
27- London
38- Baghdad