

PS 1100: American Government (Section 4)  
Spring 2016  
Middlebush Hall 310  
MWF 11:00-11:50

Instructor: Theodore J. Masthay  
Office: 211 Professional Building  
Office Hours: Tuesday and Wednesday 1-4 pm  
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“Politics is conflictual, political process matters, and politics is everywhere.” In this course, the goal is to consider these premises from a number of angles to help you conclude why politics matter. This is an introductory course that will have a descriptive element, but I want you to think critically about what in American politics is good, what is flawed, and the ways that life in America could be improved through the political process. Topics we will cover include the founding, constitutional rights, political institutions, political behavior, and public policy. By the conclusion of the semester, you should be able to explain how these different concepts interact, how they involve you, how you can affect them, and be able to critically develop opinions about how to solve our country’s most important problems.

NOTE: This syllabus is subject to change at any time throughout the semester. You will be informed of all changes and a revised copy of the syllabus will be available on Blackboard.

**Textbooks**

Bianco, William T. and David T. Canon. 2015. *American Politics Today, 4<sup>th</sup> Essentials Edition*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Dow, Jay, Sean Nicholson-Crotty and L. Marvin Overby. University of Missouri Readings in American Government. E-Reader.

**Grading**

The semester will consist of three exams, weekly quizzes, one in-class simulation and attendance.

Exam 1	20% of final grade
Exam 2	20% of final grade
Exam 3	20% of final grade
Quizzes	20% of final grade
Electoral Systems Simulation	15% of final grade
Attendance	5% of final grade

A+: 98-100    B+: 88-89.99    C+: 78-79.99    D+: 68-69.99    F: 0-59.99  
A: 93-97.99    B: 83-87.99    C: 73-77.99    D: 63-67.99  
A-: 90-92.99    B-: 80-82.99    C-: 70-72.99    D-: 60-62.99

### **Attendance**

Attendance is required in this course. You are allowed four unexcused absences throughout the semester. Each absence after that will result in a 1% point deduction in your final course grade up to 5 percentage points (the full value of the attendance grade).

### **Exams**

There will be three exams throughout the semester. They will consist of multiple choice questions and identifications. The first two exams be administered in Middlebush 310, during our regularly scheduled class time. The third and final exam will still be administered in Middlebush 310, but will occur during the university assigned time. Please bring your own blue books to all three exams.

You may challenge the grade of your exams. However, you may not contact me until 24 hours after the exam has been handed back. While I will review your grade with the potential for it to increase, I reserve the right to lower your grade as well.

### **Makeup Exams**

There will be no makeup exams administered without ample cause and notice. Valid excuses include significant illness, death in the family, or required attendance at a university sponsored event (including athletics). I must receive notice of these issues *before* the scheduled date of the exam. Documentation for your absence must be given to me within one week after the exam is administered. If you miss an exam without fulfilling these duties, you will receive a 0.

### **Quizzes**

Weekly quizzes will be administered throughout the semester at the end of class on Fridays unless otherwise noted. Missed quizzes will be assigned a grade of 0 (unless there is a valid excuse). I will drop your two lowest quiz grades at the end of the semester. The quizzes will focus on the previous week's readings and lectures.

### **Electoral System Simulation**

There will be an experiential portion of this course in the form of an in-class simulation. Details of this class project will be given closer to the date it will occur.

### **Classroom Rules**

No electronic devices are to be used during class time. This includes laptops, tablets, cell phones, etc. I impose these restrictions because, not only does it lead to better academic outcomes (Fried 2008), it actually leads to higher satisfaction among students (Wurst et al. 2008). Use of electronics is not only distracting to the user, but also those around him/her.

Fried, Carrie B. 2008. "In-class Laptop Use and Its Effects on Student Learning." *Computers & Education* 50 (3): 906-914.

Wurst, Christian, Claudia Smarkola and Mary Anne Gaffney. 2008. "Ubiquitous Laptop Usage in Higher Education: Effects on Student Achievement, Student Satisfaction, and Constructivist Measures in Honors and Traditional Classrooms." *Computers & Education* 51 (4): 1766-1783.

Be courteous of your peers. University is a place where ideas should and do flow freely, but all discussions should remain respectful.

Class ends at 11:50, not 11:49...or 11:48...or 11:47, etc. Please do not begin packing your things until I have indicated that class has ended. I will do everything in my power to make sure that class does not extend past 11:50.

A note about emails: Do not expect to receive any correspondence from me between the hours of 6 pm and 8 am on any day, including the night before an exam. Do not email me to ask about grades, I am not allowed to discuss those over email per FERPA regulations. If you have questions, come to my office hours or set up an appointment. You must email me from your @missouri.edu account; I will not respond to any other addresses. **Do not email me any questions about the course without first consulting the syllabus.**

### **Recording Lectures and Selling Notes**

University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in [section 200.015](#) of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may not make audio or video recordings of course activity, except students permitted to record as an accommodation under [section 240.040](#) of the Collected Rules. All other students who record and/or distribute audio or video recordings of class activity are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of [section 200.020](#) of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

Those students who are permitted to record are not permitted to redistribute audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of [section 200.020](#) of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.

If it is brought to my attention that you have been selling notes, study guides, exams, etc. on any site such as Flashnotes, Studyblue, etc. you will be treated as if you have openly cheated and will suffer the same consequences of academic dishonesty outlined later in this syllabus.

## **Academic Honesty**

Here is an excerpt from the university statement on academic honesty:

*Academic integrity is fundamental to the activities and principles of a university. All members of the academic community must be confident that each person's work has been responsibly and honorably acquired, developed, and presented. Any effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.*

I will pursue cases of academic dishonesty vigorously and to the greatest extent allowed by university policy. So please don't cheat.

## **ADA Statement**

If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Center (<http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 573- 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on "Disability Resources" on the MU homepage.

## **Title IX**

University of Missouri policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, ancestry, religion, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, pregnancy, age, genetic information, disability and protected veteran status. Discrimination includes any form of unequal treatment such as denial of opportunities, harassment, and violence. Sex-based violence includes rape, sexual assault, unwanted touching, stalking, dating/interpersonal violence, and sexual exploitation.

If you experience discrimination, you are encouraged (but not required) to report the incident to the MU Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. Learn more about your rights and options at <http://missouri.edu/civil-rights-title-ix/> or call (573) 882-3880. You also may make an anonymous report online.

Mizzou employees are required to refer all incidents of sex discrimination to the Office for Civil Rights & Title IX. The Office connects students with resources and helps them decide whether they wish to file a complaint of discrimination. To learn more, contact [title9@missouri.edu](mailto:title9@missouri.edu) or (573) 882-3880, or go to [www.title9.missouri.edu](http://www.title9.missouri.edu) or <http://missouri.edu/civil-rights-title-ix/>.

## **Course Calendar**

### Week 1 (Jan 20, 22): Introduction; What is Politics?

- Course Overview; no readings

### Week 2 (Jan 25, 27, 29): The Founding and the Constitution

- Bianco and Canon, Chapter 2
- Dow, p. 13-17
- Dyer, p. 25-28

### Week 3 (Feb 1, 3, 5): Federalism

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 3
- *McCulloch v. Maryland*, p. 29-31
- *Gibbons v. Ogden*, p. 32
- *Barron v. Baltimore*, p. 33-34

### Week 4 (Feb 8, 10, 13): Civil Liberties

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 4
- *Mapp v. Ohio*, p. 105-107
- *Griswold v. Connecticut*, p. 107-108

### Week 5 (Feb 15, 17, 19): Civil Rights

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 5
- *State of Missouri Ex Rel Gaines v. Canada*, 109-112
- *Brown v. Board of Education*, p. 113-114
- *Brown v. Board of Education II*, p. 115-118
- Civil Rights Act of 1964, p. 134-135
- **EXAM 1 on Friday, February 19**

### Week 6 (Feb 22, 24, 26): Congress

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 10
- Mayhew, p. 79-80
- Hulse, p. 81-82
- Ang and Overby, p. 82-86

### Week 7 (Feb 29, Mar 2, 4): The Presidency

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 11
- Neustadt, p. 82-87

Week 8 (Mar 7, 9, 11): The Federal Judiciary

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 13
- Commission on Judicial Independence, p. 92-96

Week 9 (Mar 14, 16, 18): Bureaucracy

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 12
- Wilson, p. 96-104
- **EXAM 2 on Friday, March 18**

Week 10 (Mar 21, 23, 25): Public Opinion and the Media

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 6
- Petrocik, p. 35-38

**No Class from March 26-April 1: Enjoy Spring Break**

Week 11 (Apr 6, 8): Public Opinion and the Media/Political Parties

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 6
- Petrocik, p. 35-38
- Bianco and Canon, chapter 7

Week 12 (Apr 11, 13, 15): Political Parties

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 7

Week 13 (Apr 18, 20, 22): Interest Groups

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 8
- Olson, p. 61-62
- *Trustees of Dartmouth College v. Woodward*, p. 64-68
- *Citizens United v. FEC*, p. 68-71

Week 14 (Apr 25, 27, 29): Elections

- Bianco and Canon, chapter 9
- Robertson, p. 44-50

Week 15 (May 2, 4): Simulation and Debrief

- **Electoral systems simulation**

**FINAL EXAM on Thursday, May 12 from 10:00-12:00**