

University of West Georgia
Spring 2008
American Government
POLS 1101 – Section L2M
Meets: MWF 09:00am – 09:50am, Pafford 112

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LEARNING OUTCOMES: At the end of the semester, students will demonstrate that they have developed:

1. An understanding of the basic values of American civic culture.
2. An understanding of the constitutional, institutional, political, and legal processes of the U.S. and Georgia.
3. An understanding of the interrelationship between American Governmental institutions.
4. An understanding of the basic terminology of political science & U.S. politics.
5. An understanding of how American culture, values, and political institutions compare with those of other types of government.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance: You cannot participate, contribute, and learn if you are not in class. Therefore, attendance is a requirement of this course. Students are allowed 4 absences. **Students who miss more than 4 lectures will incur a penalty worth 10% of their Final Grade.** Please be aware that I make no distinction between excused and unexcused absences.

Participation: The structure of weekly class sessions will include a mixture of lectures, discussions, small group activities, and in-class debates. So please come to class prepared and ready to participate in whatever activities are planned for the session. **Class participation will be worth 20% of the Final Grade.** Participation entails completing 15 (fifteen) exercises from the Norrander and Corbett text, attending class, joining in-class debates, and being prepared with questions and comments about the material. The exercises are due at the beginning of class every Friday.

Exams: There will be two in-class exams during the semester, **each worth 20% of the Final Grade.**

Make up Exams: All make-up exams will be in the format of three essay questions. To receive full credit on a make-up exam ALL students must provide written documentation of the illness or emergency that precluded their attendance on the exam date. Anyone unable to provide written documentation will receive half credit for the make-up exam.

Research Paper: You are required to write a research paper for this course. **The research paper is worth 40% of the Final Grade.** To ease anxiety over its completion, this requirement is due in sections. In addition, throughout the semester I will provide specific instruction and guidance on how to successfully complete each section.

Grade Calculation – Grades will be calculated as follows:

No.	Requirement	Due Date	% Grade Value
1	In-class Participation	Every class	5
2	Exercises	Weekly	20
3	Research Question Proposal	Monday, February 4	5
4	Midterm Exam	Monday, February 18	20
5	Literature Review	Friday, February 29	5
6	First Draft	Friday, March 28	10
7	Final Draft	Wednesday, April 30	15
8	Final Exam	Monday, May 5	20

Please note that **NO curves** or adjustment of scores will be made. **Extra Credit** will be awarded for attendance to special events such as lectures, films, community events, etc. Additional information about the exams, reading summaries, research paper, and other coursework will be discussed as the semester progresses.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore J. Lowi, and Margaret Weir. 2007. *We the People: An Introduction to American politics* – 5th edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

Norrander, Barbara and Michael Corbett. 2006. *American Government: Using MicroCase® ExplorIt*, 9th Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.

Georgia State Constitution. It can be downloaded for free from the official Georgia General Assembly website at: <http://www.legis.state.ga.us/>

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION:

The only official method of communication via e-mail is through your campus e-mail account (MyUWG). Please do not send me email from other email clients (e.g. hotmail, yahoo, etc) because I will not answer email messages not communicated through MyUWG.

CLASSROOM POLICIES:

1. Please turn off cell phones during class.
2. Please arrive on time.
3. Please do not read newspapers, sleep, or work on material for other courses during class.
4. Since we will deal with controversial issues on a regular basis, it is vital to the success of this class to maintain an atmosphere of mutual respect and civility.

PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC HONESTY:

All assignments for this course must be your own original work. Research sources must be properly cited and acknowledged. The University of West Georgia has a Code of Academic Honor that will be followed in this course. Suspected violations of the Code will be subject to disciplinary action according to the University policy.

DISCLAIMER: No student can claim any rights based upon “perceived” omissions, ambiguities, vagueness or incompleteness contained in this syllabus. The instructor retains the right to amend this syllabus without prior notice.

WEEKLY CLASS SCHEDULE:

Jan. 9 – 11:	Introduction to the course and each other
Jan. 14 – 18:	Chapter 1: American Political Culture
Jan. 21 – 25:	Chapter 2: The Founding and the Constitution (Exercise 1) Monday, January 21 MLK Holiday (no classes)
Jan. 28 – Feb. 1:	Chapter 3: Federalism (Exercises 2 and 3)
Feb. 4 – 8:	Chapter 4: Civil Liberties (Exercise 4) Monday, February 4 – Research Question Proposal Due
Feb. 11 – 15:	Chapter 5: Civil Rights (Exercise 5)
Feb. 18 – 22:	Chapter 6: Public Opinion (Exercise 6) Monday – February 18 – EXAM 1
Feb. 25 – 29:	Chapters 7: The Media (Exercise 7) Friday – February 29 – Literature Review Due
Mar. 3 – 7:	Chapter 8: Political Participation & Voting (Exercise 8) Monday, Mar 3 – last day to withdraw with grade of W
Mar. 10 – 14:	Chapters 9/11: Political Parties/Groups & Interests (Exercises 9 & 11)
Mar. 17 – 21:	Mar. 15-22 Spring recess (no classes)
Mar. 24 – 28:	Chapters 10: Campaigns and Elections (Exercises 10) Friday, March 28 – First Draft Due
Mar. 31 – Apr. 4:	Chapter 12: Congress (Exercise 12)
Apr. 7 – 11:	Chapter 13/14: The Presidency/Bureaucracy (Exercises 13 & 14)
Apr. 14 – 18:	Chapter 15: The Federal Courts (Exercise 15)
Apr. 21 – 25:	Chapters 16/17: Government and the Economy/Social Policy
Apr. 28 – May 2:	Review and Overview Last day of MWF classes Wednesday, April 30, 2008 – Final Draft Due –
FINAL EXAM:	Monday, May 5, 2008 8-10 am