

Political Science 1101-25H

American Government

Fall 2009

Hours: MW 2:00 – 4:00

TTh 1:00 – 3:00

(or by appointment)

Professor Howe

Office: Pafford 134

Ph. 678-839-4996

lhowe@westga.edu

“Power has a rationality that rationality does not know. Reason, on the other hand, has no rationality that power does not understand.” --Bent Flyvbjerg

PURPOSE: Students will be introduced to U.S. government institutions, processes, purposes, and controversies. The basic premise of the course is that politics is essential to living a good life and thus we will be interested in the question of what it means to live and do well. How do American federal government institutions help and hurt our search for freedom, justice, democracy, equity, and happiness? Who wins? Why? What ought we to do about it?

MATERIALS: SCHMIDT, SHELLEY & BARDES, *American Government & Politics Today* 2008-2009 Brief Edition. [Campus Bookstore, \$30.00]

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students will demonstrate that they have developed: An understanding of the basic values of American political culture; an understanding of the constitutional, institutional, political and legal processes of the U.S. and Georgia; an understanding of the interrelationship between American governmental institutions; an understanding of the basic terminology of political science and U.S. politics; and an understanding of how American culture, values and political institutions compare with those of other types of government.

REQUIREMENTS: Attendance and promptness are required. Three absences are allowed. Additional absences will count 1 point each off the final grade. If you are not present for roll, you are absent. Besides class readings, lectures, and discussions there will be five tests: two will be take-home essays and three will be in-class tests which will be about 80% multiple choice and 20% essay. There will also be three in-class group participation projects on three court cases, followed by a twenty minute individual writing session about the case, its issues, and your opinion. **Plagiarists will receive an F for the course.**

5 Tests 17% each (85%)

3 Court Case Responses 5% each (15%)

Assignments

Week Dates

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|------|--------|---|
| I. | Aug 13 | Introduction: Declaration of Independence |
| II. | Aug 18 | SCHMIDT, Chapter 1, Foundations.
SCHMIDT, Chapter 2, The Constitution |
| | Aug 20 | Herbert Storing, “The Small Republic” (handout) |
| III. | Aug 25 | Madison, Federalist # 10, in SCHMIDT, pp. 391-394.
1st Test, Essay, Assigned |
| | Aug 27 | SCHMIDT, Chapter 3, Federalism. |

- IV. Sep 1 Madison, Federalist # 51, in SCHMIDT, pp. 394-396.
Benning v. Georgia [2004] (handout)
 Sep 3 SCHMIDT, Chapter 3, Federalism
1st Test, Essay, Due in Class
- V. Sep 8 SCHMIDT, Chapter3, Federalism
 Sep 10 SCHMIDT, Chapter 4, Civil Liberties
- VI. Sep 15 *Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of Education* (handout)
 Sep 17 SCHMIDT, Chapter 5, Civil Rights
- VII. Sep 22 SCHMIDT, Chapter 5, Civil Rights
 Sep 24 **2nd Test (Multiple Choice, Essay) In Class**
- VIII. Sep 29 SCHMIDT, Chapter 7, Interest Groups and Political Parties
 Oct 1 SCHMIDT, Chapter 7, Interest Groups and Political Parties
 Movie: “Street Fight” (in class)
- IX. Oct 6 SCHMIDT, Chapter 8, Campaigns and Elections
 Oct 8 SCHMIDT, Chapter 8, Campaigns and Elections
- X. Oct 13 SCHMIDT, Chapter 9, Congress
- XI. Oct 20 SCHMIDT, Chapter 9, Congress
 Oct 22 SCHMIDT, Chapter 9, Congress.
- XII. Oct 27 **3rd Test (Multiple Choice, Essay) In Class**
 Oct 29 SCHMIDT, Chapter10, Presidency
- XIII. Nov 3 SCHMIDT, Chapter10, Presidency
 Nov 5 SCHMIDT, Chapter10, Presidency
- XIV. Nov 10 SCHMIDT, Chapter10, Presidency
 Nov 12 SCHMIDT, Chapter 11, Bureaucracy.
San Diego v. John Roe 543 U.S. 77 [2004] (handout)
- XV. Nov 17 SCHMIDT, Chapter 11, Bureaucracy
 Nov 19 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Judiciary
4thTest, Case Brief Essay Assigned
- XVI. Nov 24 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Judiciary
 Nov 27 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Judiciary
4th Test, Case Brief, Due in Class
- Dec 1 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Judiciary

Final Exam: Thursday, December 10, 2:00 – 4:00

(No early exams, no special deals, no make-ups)