

Political Science 1101-25H

American Government

Fall 2007

Hours: MW 2:00 – 5:00

TTh 2:00 – 3:30

Or by appointment

Professor Howe

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*“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* 2006-2007 Brief Edition. ISBN 0495130699.

**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 Days 5% each (15%)

#### Assignments

#### Week Dates

- |      |                  |  |
|------|------------------|--|
| I.   | Aug 16           | Introduction: Declaration of Independence<br>SCHMIDT, Chapter 1, Foundations, pp. 1-18.<br>SCHMIDT, Chapter 2, The Constitution, pp. 19-45           |
| II.  | Aug 21<br>Aug 23 | Herbert Storing, “The Small Republic” (handout)<br>Madison, Federalist # 10, in SCHMIDT, pp. 389-392.<br><b>1<sup>st</sup> Test, Essay, Assigned</b> |
| III. | Aug 28<br>Aug 30 | SCHMIDT, Chapter 3, Federalism, pp. 46-68.<br>Madison, Federalist # 51, in SCHMIDT, pp. 392-394.<br><i>Benning v. Georgia</i> [2004] (handout)       |

- IV. Sep 4 SCHMIDT, Chapter 3, Federalism  
**1<sup>st</sup> Test, Essay, Due in Class**  
Sep 6 SCHMIDT, Chapter3, Federalism
- V. Sep 11 SCHMIDT, Chapter 4, Civil Liberties  
Sep 13 *Mozert v. Hawkins County Board of Education* (handout)  
SCHMIDT, Chapter 4, Civil Liberties
- VI. Sep 18 SCHMIDT, Chapter 5, Civil Rights, pp. 98-125  
Sep 20 SCHMIDT, Chapter 5, Civil Rights
- VII. Sep 25 **2<sup>nd</sup> Test (Multiple Choice, Essay) In Class**  
SCHMIDT, Chapter6, Public Opinion  
Movie: "Vote For Me." (in class)  
Sep 27 SCHMIDT, Chapter 7, Interest Groups and Political Parties, pp. 156-187  
Movie: "Street Fight" (in class)
- VIII. Oct 2 SCHMIDT, Chapter 7, Interest Groups and Political Parties  
Oct 4 SCHMIDT, Chapter 8, Campaigns and Elections, pp. 188-215
- IX. Oct 9 SCHMIDT, Chapter 8, Campaigns and Elections
- X. Oct 16 SCHMIDT, Chapter 9, Congress, pp. 216-244.  
Oct 18 SCHMIDT, Chapter 9, Congress
- XI. Oct 23 SCHMIDT, Chapter 9, Congress  
Oct 25 **3<sup>rd</sup> Test (Multiple Choice, Essay) In Class**
- XII. Oct 30 SCHMIDT, Chapter10, Presidency, pp. 245-268  
Nov 1 SCHMIDT, Chapter10, Presidency
- XIII. Nov 6 SCHMIDT, Chapter, Presidency  
Nov 8 SCHMIDT, Chapter10, Presidency
- XIV. Nov 13 SCHMIDT, Chapter 11, Federal Bureaucracy, pp. 269-291.  
*San Diego v. John Roe* 543 U.S. 77 [2004] (handout)  
Nov 15 SCHMIDT, Chapter 11, Federal Bureaucracy
- XV. Nov 20 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Federal Judicial System, pp. 292-316  
**4<sup>th</sup>Test, Case Brief Essay Assigned**
- XVI. Nov 27 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Federal Judicial System  
Nov 29 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Federal Judicial System  
**4<sup>th</sup> Test, Case Brief, Due in Class**  
Dec 4 SCHMIDT, Chapter 12, Federal Judicial System

**Final Exam: Thursday, December 13, 2:00 – 4:00**  
(No early exams, no special deals, no make-ups)