

PSCI 2200 A
Introduction to U.S. Politics
Mondays & Wednesdays 14:35-17:25
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Tyler Attwood
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Course description

This course is designed to give students both an institutional overview of the U.S. system of federal government, as well as insight into the broader political, economic and cultural landscape of the U.S. Of central concern is the institutional framework of the three separate and co-equal federal branches (legislative, executive and judicial – Congress, the Presidency, and the Courts). Only by understanding the historical origins and dynamics of interaction of the three branches can we fully comprehend the complexities of U.S. politics. The course material is framed around a distinction between the concepts of **government** (the specific elements and institutions of the state) and **politics** (the broader social, political and economic actions within the state and civil society that determine who gets what, how and why). Thus, the course focuses partly on the “how questions”, or the central institutions within the three branches of American **government**, the U.S. Constitution, the electoral process, political parties and the details of creating and implementing laws and rules. Complementing this will be an analysis of American **politics** whereby we will address important “why questions.” To this end, we will explore key themes such as race, class, the activity of money and corporations, parties, elections, rights, and liberties. The combination of these two approaches will give students a more complete understanding of the political, economic, and cultural landscapes in the United States.

Course Texts

- **American Government: Power and Purpose**, Theodore J. Lowi, et al., **Brief 12th edition**, WW Norton, 2012, ISBN: 978-0-393-91208-1 (pbk.)
- **Deer Hunting with Jesus: Dispatches from America’s Class War**, Joe Bageant, Three Rivers Press, 2007, ISBN: 978-0-307-33937-9
- Both books are required and are available at [Haven Bookstore](#) (43 Seneca St. @ Seneca & Sunnyside)

- The Lowi book is also available as an e-book at a reduced price; see [here](#) for the downloadable version and [here](#) for the online version
- The additional required article can be found online [here](#) or by following the link in the reading schedule below

Evaluation

- **Midterm Exam 25% (in class, May 28th)**
- **Analytical review paper 30% (due June 18th)**
- **Final Exam 45% (Two parts: in-class multiple choice & definitions 25% + take-home essay questions 20%)**
- **All components of the course must be completed in order to pass the course.** For instance, if you do not submit the analytical review paper, you will receive a failing mark (**FND**: “Failure with no deferred final examination allowed. The grade *FND* is assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the Course Outline. The grade *FND* is assigned 0.0 grade points.”)
- **As per the Faculty of Public Affairs’ early feedback regulation, your midterm exam grade will be available to you on or before June 9th.**

Details regarding Term Work and Final Exam

The paper and take-home portion of the final exam will be submitted electronically via Web CT (**NOT EMAIL!**). Please see the assignment links on Web CT for the deadline and instructions. PAPER COPIES WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Assignments submitted late will be penalized **3% of the value of the assignment per day late**, to a maximum of 10 days, after which the assignment will receive a grade of zero. Weekends are included in the calculation of late penalties.

You must provide appropriate documentation for requests of an extension on medical grounds. See “Academic Accommodations” below for additional exceptions.

- **Midterm exam (25%):** An in-class midterm exam will be given on **Monday, May 28th**. The exam will take place in our regular classroom and you will have the full three hours of class time to write it. No lecture will be given that day. The midterm exam will consist of multiple choice questions and terms that you will define. You will have a choice for the latter section. The midterm exam will cover material from Lowi Chaps. 2, 3, 4, and 5. No make-up exam will be allowed except under the most serious circumstances and upon the presentation of documented evidence. I reserve the right to change the format of a make-up exam.
- **Analytical Review Paper (30%):** You are required to submit, no later than **Monday, June 18th**, a short paper based on the book *Deer Hunting with Jesus* and the article “America’s Ruling Class – And the Perils of Revolution”. This paper is not simply a summary of the readings. Rather, it is meant to be a combination of summary, evaluation, and commentary, in a roughly equal split. You are required to

read and incorporate both works into your review. Additional sources are required, but you are not permitted to use other sources that review or directly address either of the two works. Beyond summarizing the two works, your paper should evaluate the arguments and ideas in a way that shows understanding. In addition, your paper should incorporate some current aspect of US politics as a way of extending the ideas of the works. In other words, is there anything going on in US politics today that validates (or invalidates) the ideas of Bageant and/or Codevilla? How is one (or both) relevant in light of current dynamics in the US? It is this commentary element of your paper that will require additional outside sources (2-3 should probably be sufficient, but you are free to use more if you want). Your essay should be in the range of **7-8 pages**, 12-point Times New Roman or similar font, 1.5 line spacing, and standard margins. You should include a title page and a works cited page (do not count toward the page range) and ensure that you follow a consistent, acceptable citation style (e.g., APA, MLA), however you should not use footnotes to cite (use end notes or in-text citations instead). **Submit your papers on Web CT under the Assignments tab as noted above.** Paper copies will not be accepted.

➤ **Final Exam (45%):** The final exam consists of two parts: an exam worth 25% (multiple choice and definitions, **NOT cumulative**) and a take-home portion worth 20% (long answer/essays, **IS cumulative**). The exam component will take place during the formally scheduled exam period. It will cover material from Lowi Chaps. 6, 8, 10, and 11, as well as the Bageant book and Codevilla article. You will have three hours to complete it. The take-home component, which will cover material from the entire course, must be submitted on Web CT via the assignment tab no later than 5:00pm Wednesday, June 27th. Paper copies will not be accepted. Take-home exams submitted after the deadline will be subject to a late penalty of 3% per day late. Because of the department's deadline for submitting final marks, **THE FINAL DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTING A LATE EXAM IS 5:00PM WEDNESDAY, JULY 4th**. No take-home exams will be accepted after this date, barring exceptional (and documented) circumstances.

Web CT

There is a Web CT site for the course and you should make a habit of checking it frequently. The course outline and other important documents are posted there, and there is also a discussion forum for the assignments and general course issues. All students in the course can post messages and you are encouraged to reply to other students' postings. **Your essay and take-home portion of the final exam are to be submitted online only (no hard copies).** Look under the Assignments tab, click on the appropriate link, and attach your paper as a file. Please ensure that you use a common file format (.doc, .pdf, etc.). Comments and your mark will be available in the same area.

You should also monitor the Announcements tab for any last-minute changes or updates, such as class or office hour cancellations, room changes, etc. Please ensure that you have activated and properly configured your Carleton email account, which is the preferred means of conducting school-related business. The mail function on Web CT will be disabled. Grades will be updated in the Grade Book once all of the grades for an assignment are completed. Note that grades on Web CT are provided by me for your convenience and are not considered final and official.

Course Topics and Class Schedule

Monday, May 7: Introduction & Democracy's Challenge

- ❖ Discussion of course structure, assignments and expectations
- ❖ Intro lecture on the interplay of politics and economics (democracy and capitalism) in the US

Wednesday, May 9: The Founding & the Constitution

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 2

Monday, May 14: Federalism & the Separation of Powers

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 3

Wednesday, May 16: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 4

Monday, May 21

- ❖ Victoria Day holiday, no class

Wednesday, May 23: Congress

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 5

Monday, May 28

- ❖ Midterm exam in class today

Wednesday, May 30: The Presidency

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 6

Monday, June 4: The Federal Courts

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 8

Wednesday, June 6: Elections

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 10

Monday, June 11: Political Parties

- ❖ Lowi, Chap. 11

Wednesday, June 13 & Monday, June 18

- ❖ Deer Hunting with Jesus (entire)
- ❖ [Anthony Codevilla, "America's Ruling Class -- And the Perils of Revolution", *American Spectator*, July-August 2010](#)

Take-Home Exam to be distributed on June 18th

Academic Accommodations

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For students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Registered PMC students are required to contact the centre (613-520-6608) every term to ensure that the instructor receives your request for accommodation. After registering with the PMC, make an appointment to meet with the instructor in order to discuss your needs **at least two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations**. If you require accommodation for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodation to PMC by **(June 8, 2012 for early summer term examinations and July 27, 2012 for late/full summer term)**.

For Religious Observance: Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

For Pregnancy: Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

Plagiarism: The University Senate defines plagiarism as "presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's own." This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one's own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another's data or research findings;

- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course.

Oral Examination: At the discretion of the instructor, students may be required to pass a brief oral examination on research papers and essays.

Submission and Return of Term Work: Papers must be handed directly to the instructor and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Please note that assignments sent via fax or email will not be accepted. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

Grading: Assignments and exams will be graded with a percentage grade. To convert this to a letter grade or to the university 12-point system, please refer to the following table.

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

Grades: Final grades are derived from the completion of course assignments. Failure to write the final exam will result in the grade ABS. Deferred final exams are available **ONLY** if the student is in good standing in the course.

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Connect Email Accounts: All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science will be via Connect. Important course and University information is also distributed via the Connect email system. It is the student's responsibility to monitor their Connect account.

Carleton Political Science Society: The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, CPSS aims to involve all political science students in the after-hours academic life at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more,

please email carletonpss@gmail.com, visit our website at poliscisociety.com, or come to our office in Loeb D688.

Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.