

PSCI 2200A
United States Government and Politics
Thursdays 2:35-4:35
Southam Hall 416

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This course provides an introduction to unique aspects of the U.S. political system. It is vital for students to understand that the institutional framework of three separated and co-equal branches (legislative, executive and judicial) sets the stage on which the drama of U.S. politics gets played out daily. We look at both the U.S. Constitution and its evolution in the eyes of the Supreme Court to understand the constitutional bases of the separation of powers and checks and balances. This is vital to understanding that certain branches are allowed to do certain things and others are not. This course uses the institutional division of powers both “horizontally” (at one level) and vertically, through federalism (dividing powers between national, state and city levels) as a backdrop to examining current controversial issues. It is my contention that in many ways, the Founding Fathers who wrote the Constitution in 1787 would not recognize the current institutional framework of US politics, given that in so many ways, the fundamentals of the system have been changed to accommodate the wealthy. We will ponder the many significant changes that have been brought to the system and their implications for the US democratic process.

Also, it is vital to understand that the US is currently in its most exciting presidential election season EVER, with the possibility of either the first woman or African-American nominee on the Democratic side. The Presidential primaries begin just before our course (on Jan. 3), continuing until early June, although the nominees will have been selected sometime in February. We will continue to watch how the state primary/caucus structure unfolds throughout the semester, which will be the lead up into the summer 08 campaign, the August national conventions of the Republicans and Democrats and the November 2008 presidential elections. Hold on to your hats for a wild and exciting ride!

The following books have been ordered for the course and are required. They are available at the Carleton University bookstore:

- 1) Karen O'Connor and Larry Sabato, American Government: Continuity and Change (NY: Pearson, 2008)-Alternate 2008 edition.
- 2) Russell Dalton, The Good Citizen (CQ Press, 2008)
- 3) Stephen Wayne, The Road to the White House 2008 (Thomson, 2008)

Course requirements:

Since this course is one in which each week builds upon previous weeks' knowledge, it is crucial to keep up with the readings and to be able to discuss them in class. It is equally vital that you let me know if you don't understand something and we can take time in class to discuss the question (since it is very likely more than one person will have the same question) and feel free to come to my office hours (or by appointment).

Note: ALL written work must be turned in to pass this course. Regarding late papers, I deduct 1/3 of a grade for each day missed.

Formal requirements:

Midterm Feb. 14	30%
Participation in class	10%
Final	35%
Paper Due April 3	25%

subject: looking at the process of either Republican or Democratic presidential primaries this past semester and whether you think the process worked well or not, referring to in-class and outside literature.

Class outline:

Jan.. 10	Introduction to the U.S. political landscape Read: AG (American Government), Ch. 1
Jan. 17	Crucial Structures enabling and limiting national power, cont.: Federalism, Constitution Read: AG, Chs. 2, 3
Jan. 24	President and Bureaucracy: Structures AG, Chs. 8, 9
Jan. 31	Congress: Structure Read: AG, Ch. 7
Feb. 7	Unique Relationships between Pres. and Congress: the Executive Order, the Recess Appointment, Vetoes and the War Power **Read: Fisher, <u>Constitutional Conflicts</u> , pp. 256-295 **Ken Mayer, <u>With the Stroke of a Pen</u> , Chs. 2, 3 (Fisher/Mayer on reserve)
Feb. 14	Midterm

Feb. 28	Unique aspects of US Elections-Presidential primaries & Congressional incumbency advantages, and BCRA Read: Wayne, Chs. 1, 2, 5
March 6	Presidential election campaigns post-primary, role of media in US elections (huge!) Read: Wayne, Chs. 6, 8, 9, AG Chs. 15, 16
March 13	Participation of Younger Voters and their Impact on the US System Read: Dalton, Chs. 2-6
March 20	Supreme Court, Structure and History Read: AG, Ch. 10
March 27	Civil Liberties/Civil Rights Read: AG, Chs. 5, 6
April 3	Review and wrap-up

Academic Accommodations

For Students with Disabilities: Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course are encouraged to contact the Paul Menton Centre (PMC) for Students with Disabilities (500 University Centre) to complete the necessary forms. 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 in-class test or CUTV midterm exam**. This will allow for sufficient time to process your request. Please note the following deadlines for submitting completed forms to the PMC for formally scheduled exam accommodations: **November 6th, 2006** for fall and fall/winter term courses, and **March 9th, 2007** for winter term courses.

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 Undergraduate Calendar defines plagiarism as: "to use and pass off as one's own idea or product, work of another without expressly giving credit to another." The Graduate Calendar states that plagiarism has occurred when a student either: (a) directly copies another's work without acknowledgment; or (b) closely paraphrases the equivalent of a short paragraph or more without acknowledgment; or (c) borrows, without acknowledgment, any ideas in a clear and recognizable form in such a way as to present them as the student's own thought, where such ideas, if they were the student's own would contribute to the merit of his or her own work.

Instructors who suspect plagiarism are required to submit the paper and supporting documentation to the Departmental Chair who will refer the case to the Dean. It is not permitted to hand in the same assignment to two or more courses. The Department's Style Guide is available at: www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/styleguide.pdf

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.

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.

Course Requirements: Students must fulfill all course requirements in order to achieve a passing grade. Failure to hand in any assignment will result in a grade of F. Failure to write the final exam will result in a grade of ABS. FND (Failure – No Deferred) is assigned when a student's performance is so poor during the term that they cannot pass the course even with 100% on the final examination. In such cases, instructors may use this notation on the Final Grade Report to indicate that a student has already failed the course due to inadequate term work and should not be permitted access to a deferral of the examination. Deferred final exams are available ONLY if the student is in good standing in the course.

Connect Email Accounts: The Department of Political Science strongly encourages students to sign up for a campus email account. Important course and University information will be distributed via the Connect email system. See <http://connect.carleton.ca> for instructions on how to set up your account.