

**PSCI 2200A**  
**Introductions to US Politics**  
**Mondays 12.35-14.25**  
**Please confirm location on Carleton Central**

Instructor: Prof. Melissa Haussman  
Office: A 623 ALoeb  
Telephone: 520-2600 x2768  
Email: [Melissa\\_haussman@carleton.ca](mailto:Melissa_haussman@carleton.ca)  
Office hrs: M 2:45-5, Tues. 12-2 and by appt.

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. We have been watching the Primary process unfold since early January, and hopefully the Democratic nominee will be settled by the time the course begins! We will continue to observe the contest during the summer, leading up to the Democratic and then Republican national conventions in August/September.

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) Stephen Wayne, The Road to the White House 2008 (Thomson, 2008)

Course requirements:

Preparing questions each week and participating in TA groups:	30%
In-class Midterm (short answers/essays, choice provided on all answers)	35%
Final (material from Oct. 20 onward) <b>(will be scheduled during the formal exam period Dec 4-20<sup>th</sup>)</b>	35%

Class schedule:

**Week 1/Sept. 8**

Introduction to the Course  
Discuss Ch. 1, AG, Political Landscape

**Week 2/ Sept. 15**

US Constitution  
AG, Ch. 2

**Week 3/ Sept 22**

Congress, Structure  
AG, Ch. 7 & 13 (pp. 492-500 only); and Ch. 13 re: Congressional campaigns

**Week 4/ Sept 29**

President  
Read: AG, Ch. 8

**Week 5/Oct 6**

Supreme Court  
Read: AG, Ch. 10

**Week 7/Oct 13 (Thanksgiving)**

**Week 6/Oct. 20**

Midterm on material to date; short answer/essays, with choice provided will take the entire period.

Federalism

AG, Ch. 3

**Week 7/Oct. 27**

Civil Liberties

AG, Ch. 5

**Week 8/Nov 3**

Civil Rights

AG, Ch. 6

**Week 9/Nov. 10**

Parties & Pres. Elections I

AG, Chs. 12, 13; Mayer, ed., Chs. 1, 8; Wayne, 1-3

**Week 10/Nov. 17**

Presidential elections, Part II

Wayne, 4-6

**Week 11/Nov. 24**

Presidential elections, Part III

Wayne, 7-10

Mayer, ed, Chs. 3, 4

**Week 12/Nov. 30**

Wrap up and Review for Final (covers all material since Oct. 20)

---

**Academic Accommodations**

**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 letter of 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 **November 7, 2008 for December examinations**, and **March 6, 2009 for April examinations**.

**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](http://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: <http://www.carleton.ca/polisci/undergrad/Essay%20Style%20Guide.html>

**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.