

Introduction to American Government

POL 100H

Fall 2019

PROFESSOR	Jason M. Roberts
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OFFICE HOURS	Wednesday 9:00-12:00 and by appointment
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LOCATION	Graham Memorial 210
TIME	Tues/Thurs 9:30-10:45

Course Description

This course is an introduction to American political institutions, political behavior, and the policy process. In this course we will discuss the origins of the current governmental system in America, the structure of the U.S. government, and how theories of American government apply to current events and problems the government and citizens face today.

Expectations

I expect all students to behave professionally in this class. I am generally intolerant of disruptive behavior in the classroom, including talking during lectures, reading newspapers, and ESPECIALLY the ringing of cell phones. Class discussions are expected to be civil, rational, and respectful of the opinions of others. Although class attendance is not mandatory, you will be held responsible for all material in the textbooks and in lectures, even if you miss a class. Moreover, I expect all students to attend class prepared to participate in any class discussion and to show up on time.

Required Texts

- Ellis, Joseph. 2000. *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation*. Vintage Press.
- McCarty, Nolan. 2019. *Polarization: What Everyone Needs to Know*. Oxford University Press.
- Hetherington, Marc and Jonathan Weiler. 2018. *Prius or Pickup?: How the Answers to Four Simple Questions Explain Americas Great Divide* Houghton Mifflin.
- I will also distribute other readings from time to time on Sakai.

Recommended Text

- Kollman, Ken. *The American Political System*. W.W. Norton & Company.¹

¹Students who are familiar with the workings of American government need not purchase this text. Any edition will work as a basic reference.

Course Requirements

Exams (2) 50% Exams will be taken in class and will consist of free response and essay questions.

Writing Assignment 25% The paper will be due November 12, 2019. Details on the writing assignment will be distributed in class.

Class Engagement 25% The instructor will evaluate your participation and engagement in this course through monitoring of attendance, participations, and discussion questions.

Research Participation All students who enroll in Political Science 100 are required to participate in research studies conducted in the Political Science Department should they be conducted during the semester you are enrolled in the course. The total time commitment to such studies will not exceed 3 hours. Failure to satisfy the research participation requirement will result in an incomplete for the course. This requirement does not substitute for other course requirements, nor does it generate extra credit. You will be alerted to studies via Sakai. The subject pool and the research studies are currently administered by Professor Anna Bassi. Should you have any questions please email her. It is important to note that if studies are made available they must be completed in a timely manner, as the studies are not always available throughout the semester. In the event that you would rather not actively participate in an actual study, you have the option of satisfying the research participation requirement in a different way. This alternative assignment consists of writing a 4-page research paper. This assignment needs to be completed by the last day of classes.

Miscellany

Grading and Makeups

A final grade of “incomplete” will only be given in this course under exceptional circumstances and is solely at the discretion of the instructor. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one letter grade per day late. In addition, written assignments that do not follow the guidelines of the assignment and/or have poor grammar and spelling will be severely penalized. As a general rule, make-ups for exams will not be given. Students who must miss exams because of scheduled activities of an official University student organization, a religious holiday, or a verifiable illness should contact the instructor IN ADVANCE of missing an exam so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Grading Scale

A – 94-100

A- – 90-93

B+ – 87-89

B – 84-86

B- – 80-83

C+ – 77-79

C – 74-76

C- – 70-73

D+ – 67-69

Assignments

You are responsible for keeping a copy of all written assignments for the course. This ensures that we will not run into problems with lost assignments. You are also responsible for keeping copies of the assignments once they are handed back. Sometimes errors do happen, and a grade may not be recorded for you. If this happens you must be able to produce the GRADED paper to verify that the assignment was completed and that the grade is correct.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic dishonesty is broadly defined as submitting work that is not your own without attribution, and is not acceptable in this or any other academic course. Any academic dishonesty found on an assignment results in a failing grade for that assignment and will be prosecuted to the fullest extent permissible under University of North Carolina guidelines, which can be accessed at: <http://honor.unc.edu>.

Student Disabilities

Any student with a documented disability condition (e.g. physical, learning, psychiatric, systemic, vision, hearing, etc.) who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations should contact the instructor and the Academic Success Program (919-962-7227) at the beginning of the semester.

Instructor Availability

If you would like to speak with me outside of class time, feel free to stop by my office during regularly scheduled office hours. If you are unable to meet during office hours, you can arrange an alternate time to see me by setting up an appointment. I also respond quickly to email inquiries.

Communication

Periodically the professor may communicate with students via email, regarding assignments, schedule changes, or other course related matters. Students are responsible for the content of *all* such communications.

Tentative Course Outline

Date	Description	Required Readings
August 20	Introduction	n/a
August 22	Concepts I	Olson, Hardin
August 27	Concepts II	Putnam
August 29	NO CLASS–APSA	n/a
September 3	Articles of Confederation	<i>Ellis</i> Ch. 1; <i>Articles of Confederation</i>
September 5	“Unite or Die”	n/a
September 10	<i>Constitution</i> I	<i>Constitution</i> ; Stengel
September 12	<i>Constitution</i> II	<i>Ellis</i> Chs. 2, 3; Fed. #10 #51
September 17	Federalism	TBA
September 19	Congress I	Mayhew; Jacobson
September 24	Congress II	Smith et al.
September 26	Congress III	Chergosky
October 1	Congress IV	McCarty Chs. 2, 3
October 3	Presidency I	Dickerson; McCarty Ch. 8
October 8	Presidency II	<i>Ellis</i> Chs. 4, 5, 6
October 10	Judiciary	<i>Marbury v. Madison</i> (1803); Epps; Ornstein
October 15	MIDTERM EXAM	n/a
October 17	NO CLASS–FALL BREAK	n/a
October 22	Public Opinion	Asher
October 24	Public Opinion II	McCarty Ch. 4
October 29	Prius or Pickup I	Hetherington Chs. 1-4
October 31	Prius or Pickup II	Hetherington Chs. 5-7
November 5	Elections I	Schnudson
November 7	Elections II	McCarty Ch. 6
November 12	Elections III	Fuller
November 14	Parties I	Aldrich, McCarty Ch. 5
November 19	Parties II	Rauch, McCarty Ch. 7
November 21	Civil Rights & Liberties I	Fuller
November 26	Civil Rights & Liberties II	Parloff
November 28	NO CLASS—THANKSGIVING	n/a
December 3	Catchup and Review	n/a
December 10 - 8:00	FINAL EXAM	n/a