

American National Government, PLS 101
Syllabus (Spring 2011)
Leutze Hall 111

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Office hours: 30 minutes following class; other times by appointment only

Course Objectives: The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the structures, functions, and basic principles of the American national government.

- You will better understand the unique characteristics of particular institutions (Presidency, Congress, Federal Courts) and functions (federalism, separation of powers, representation and judicial review) in the political system.
- You will also come to know government in terms of the interactions of institutions and groups and individuals in the political arena.
- In short, you will comprehend American government as a process, as a set of dynamic relationships, as well as a legal structure.
- Finally, in light of this understanding of American government, you will be able to better evaluate the goals and performance of the American political system and effectively participate in the political processes.

Required textbook:

Barbour and Wright, 2006. *Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics, The Essentials*. (current edition) CQ Press.

- Assigned readings come from this book. The lectures will supplement and explain the assigned readings. Having done the assigned readings **before** lectures, you should be ready to initiate and participate in class discussion. Additionally, you are expected to be informed about current public issues and problems.

Attendance policy:

- There are no make-up exams!

Grading policy:

- Each exam is equally weighted.
- There are no +/- grades
- Grades are on a ten point scale (90)=A,(80)=B, etc.
- You are expected to know and comply with the **UNCW STUDENT ACADEMIC HONOR CODE** posted at:

http://www.uncw.edu/policies/documents/03_100FINALHONORCODE_Aug2009.pdf.

Important dates:

Class Begins 12 January
No Classes 17 January
Last day to drop without a grade 19 January
No Classes 14-18 March
No Classes 21 & 22 April
Last day of classes 2 May

1st exam

Section 001 14 – 18 February
Section 003 14-18 February
Section 005 14-18 February
Last day to withdraw with a W grade: 19 January

2nd exam

Section 001 ???
Section 003 ???
Section 005 ???

Final exam

Section 001 4-10 May
Section 003 4-10 May
Section 005 4-10 May

Exam content: all exam questions except current events will be selected from the review sets located under course content !

- Cha 1. Pol: Who gets what & how? (H. Laswell)
- Cha 2. Citizenship & Pol. Culture
- Cha 3. Founding
- Cha 4. Federalism

1st Exam (1/3 of course grade) on chapters 1-4

- Cha 7. Congress
- Cha 8. Presidency
- Cha 9. Bureaucracy
- Cha 10. Legal System

2nd Exam (1/3 of course grade) on chapters 7-10

- Cha 11 . Public Opinion
- Cha 12. Political Parties
- Cha 13. Internet Groups
- Cha 14. Vote, Campaign, Elections

Final Exam (1/3 of course grade) on chapters 11-14

American government websites:

<http://congress.org/>

<http://www.house.gov/>

<http://www.senate.gov/>

<http://www.capweb.net/>

<http://www.rollcall.com/>

<http://www.heritage.org/>

<http://www.democrats.org/index.html>

<http://www.gop.org/>

<http://www.thomas.loc.gov/>

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/>

<http://www.defenselink.mil>

<http://state.gov>

<http://library.uncwil.edu/subject/Polisci/>