

American National Government & Politics - POL 101
Fall 2004

Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 8, 9, 10, 11
MW 12:00 - 12:50 Bishop 209

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Course Description and Objectives

The primary purpose of this course is to introduce the dynamics of American national government and politics. This class should help you come to understand better our political system in several different and important ways: as a set of primary and underlying values; as a series of governing principles; as processes in which forces compete; as separate institutions with powers and limitations; and, as a framework for human behavior and interactions. To that end, we will draw heavily on contemporary events. Think about it? the upcoming Presidential election (not to mention Congressional races in the House and Senate), the transfer of power in Iraq, the nuclear tension with North Korea, the continuing war on terrorism and its effect on the 2004 campaigns, the scandals of corporate America, and a full slate of controversial cases pending before the U.S. Supreme Court make it ever so timely to study politics.

A second important objective of this course is to help you refine your analytical and expressive skills. Simply put, the need to enhance the abilities to think critically, speak intelligently, and write clearly is a top priority in today's world. If we as citizens are to participate in and contribute to our political society, we must be able to do three things well with new information and ideas: test their assumptions, assess their value, and then voice our own educated opinions. We can only do that well if we continue to improve our thinking and communicative skills.

Course Format

The structure of this POL 101 course is unique. It provides separate lecture and discussion sessions. Mondays and Wednesdays are set aside for lectures on course topics. The other class meeting of the week is a discussion session led by a graduate assistant. Here is the schedule for each of the 8 discussion sections for the course.

SECTION	TIME & DAY	LOCATION	DISCUSSION LEADER
1	8:00 TH	Lott (1 st floor)	Q. Mukoro
2	8:00 M	Lott (1 st floor)	E. Hamilton
3	8:00 TU	Lott (1 st floor)	L. Ward
4	8:00 W	Lott (1 st floor)	L. Ward
8	8:00 TH	Lott (2 nd floor)	L. Ward

9	8:00 F	Lott (1 st floor)	Q. Mukoro
10	8:00 TU	Lott (2 nd floor)	E. Hamilton
11	9:30 TU	Lott (1 st floor)	E. Hamilton

Text and Readings

All sections will use the Barbour and Wright textbook (below) available in the Ole Miss bookstore. Its purpose is simply to provide basic information and insights into American politics. The lectures will amplify, and sometimes go well beyond, the text. The reading assignments for each class are listed below in the course calendar. References to the textbook will list the relevant chapter (or provision of the U.S. Constitution). Other readings (web-based using Blackboard) may be assigned from time to time.

Barbour, Christine and Gerald Wright. *Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics*. Brief Edition. Paper (Boston: Houghton-Mifflin).

Course Requirements and Grade

Each component of the course is valued at 20%. If you miss one of the three scheduled exams (see below), **make-up tests** will be given on the **last class day** of the semester (**December 3rd at noon** in Bishop 209). On four occasions you will be asked to conduct a web-based assignment and submit a brief paper (see the notations on the calendar below). You will also be assigned a 2004 election project, as described at the end of the syllabus.

Hour Exams (September 15, October 13, November 8)	60%
Final Exam (December 6 at noon)	20%
Project, Essays, & Class Participation	20%

Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is essential to all values upon which a university is founded. We assume that you share that view. On papers and tests in this course, we expect you to do your own work and not to take the work of an outside source or a classmate as your own. A student with a documented case of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism or cheating) will - at the very least - receive the grade of F for the course and may face even more severe disciplinary action.

Course Calendar

<u>date</u>	<u>topic</u>	<u>reading</u>
August 23 (M)	Introduction to Government & Politics	~
25 (W)	Democracy: Who Rules?	ch. 1
30 (M)	Constitutionalism: Origins [Paper assignment #1]	ch. 2
Sept. 1 (W)	Constitutionalism: Limited & Balanced Government	ch. 2

	6 (M)	~ no class ~ Labor Day Holiday	
	8 (W)	Federalism: Do States Matter?	ch. 3; Articles IV, VI; 10 th Amendment
	13 (M)	Majority Rule & Minority Rights ~	
	15 (W)	Exam # 1	
date		topic	reading
Sept	20 (M)	Congress as an Institution	ch. 6; Article I
	22 (W)	Congress as a Policymaker	ch. 6
	27 (M)	Presidential Powers & Limits [Paper assignment #2]	ch. 7; Article II; [ch. 8]
	29 (W)	Presidential Performance	ch. 7
Oct	4 (M)	Inside the Supreme Court	ch. 9; Article III
	6 (W)	Choosing Supreme Court Justices	ch. 9
	11 (M)	Judicial Activism & Restraint	ch. 9
	13 (W)	Exam # 2	
	18 (M)	Public Opinion, Participation, & the Press [Paper assignment # 3]	ch. 10/ 13
	20 (W)	Why a two-party system?	ch. 11
	25 (M)	Republicans, Religion, and the New South	ch. 11
	27 (W)	Is there a Tyranny of Interest Groups?	ch. 11
Nov	1 (M)	Campaigning American Style [Election Project Paper # 4A]	ch. 12
	3 (W)	Elections 2004: Who Won and Why? [[Election Analysis Paper # 4B]	ch. 12
	8 (M)	Exam # 3	
	10 (W)	Civil Liberties: What are the Limits of Free Speech, and Who Sets them?	
	15 (M)	Civil Liberties: Religion in the Classroom - Prayers, Pledges, and Vouchers [Paper assignment # 5]	
	17 (W)	Civil Liberties: A Primer on Search & Seizure	ch. 4
	22-26	Fall Break ~ Have a Great Thanksgiving ~	

	29 (M)	Civil Rights: Racial Equality and Education	ch. 5
Dec	1 (W)	Civil Rights: The Force of Gender in Politics	ch. 5
	3 (F)	Make-up Exams (noon)	
	6 (M)	Final Exam (noon)	

Web-based Research & Writing for Lecture Sessions & Discussion Groups

1 (week of August 30th) Go to the home page of the Debates of the Federal Constitution of 1787 (part of the Yale University AvalonProject) @ <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/debates/debcont.htm>. This source contains the daily notes of James Madison on the proceedings of the Convention. Select a day from the months of June, July or August (depending on your discussion section), read the account, write a 2-page summary, and take it to your discussion session.

2 (week of September 27th) Go to Google.com (search engine). Type in the search space: political cartoons. It will send you to a variety of websites that contain political cartoons. Select a political cartoon dealing with the President, the office of the Presidency, or the Presidential campaigns that you like. Write a 1-page essay in which you comment on the meaning of the cartoon. Do you agree or disagree with its message? Bring the paper and the cartoon to your discussion session.

3 (week of October 18th) Now that a few months in this course have passed, think about where you might fall on the ideological continuum (conservative/liberal). Then go to this site on the web <http://www.self-gov.org/quiz.html>. Take the 掃 world担 Smallest Political Quiz.? When you finish, write a 2-page essay that addresses the following questions: Are the results consistent with your expectations? Why do you think you are the political person you are? Take the paper to your discussion group.

4 Election Project (week of November 1st) This is a two-step process. At the beginning of the lecture class on Monday, November 1, you must turn in a 3-4 page research report **[A]** that describes your Congressional race (House or Senate), the competitors, and the issues. Predict how you think the election will come out. Then after the election results are in, write a 1-page report **[B]** that explains the outcome (and vote) in the election. **This analysis will be due at the beginning of the lecture class on Wednesday, November 3.**

5 (week of November 15th) Go to the website for a national opinion polling organization such as Gallup (www.gallup.com/poll/) or Harris (www.harrispollonline.com). Find a polling report on an issue of civil liberties or rights that interests you. Write a 1-page analysis of the findings on that issue and take the paper to your discussion group.