

Political Science (POL) 1201
American Government & Politics
Fall 2005, 3 Credits

Days/Time: MWF, 10:30 a.m. – 11:35 a.m.
Location: Science 2950
Instructor: Angela Bos
Office: 140C Community Service
Phone: (320) 589- 6205
E-mail: bosal@umn.edu
Office Hours: Monday 3:30pm-4:30pm and Wednesday 1pm-2pm in my office, Tuesday 2-3pm at Common Cup coffee shop, or by appointment.
TA's: Evan Mowry, Casie McMahon, Emily Schwieger, Tim Lindberg and Katherine Glasrud

Course Description

This is an introductory course in Political Science. It is designed to promote understanding of and hands-on experience with a main component of the study of politics: the application of theory to real world examples. This class does not require prior knowledge or experience in Political Science, only an interest in understanding the world and our role in it. This course is, for a large part, an active-learning experience. You will be required to participate in groups and complete hands-on analytic activities. This is only partially a lecture-oriented course and you must be prepared to enter the course with this in mind.

The course is designed around three main areas of American politics: governmental ideas and frameworks; political institutions and political representation; and the ways in which citizens are linked to the U.S. government. Throughout these sections of the course, you will participate in individual and group projects surrounding a specific public policy issue to apply themes and debates in political science to analyze how the concepts manifest themselves in current policy debates. This course provides a foundation for further scholarship in any area of the social sciences and is an excellent introductory course for students interested in U.S. politics.

Course Objectives

- Given quizzes, readings, and classroom activities, students will further their basic knowledge about the U.S. political system.
- Given the individual and group Issue Portfolio assignments, students will think critically about how the U.S. system of government works by analyzing a specific policy issue throughout the semester with relation to different concepts in this course.
- Given the course paper assignment based on an optional book, students will apply analytic skills with regards to the political system learned in class to a current pop-culture book about politics.
- Through classroom learning and a TA section on polls, students will develop the skills to be a critical and informed consumer of political polls.
- Given the final Issue Portfolio assignment and through presenting their group work, students will practice civic engagement skills necessary for effective citizen participation.
- Given the Issue Portfolio assignment students will present their findings from throughout the semester at a final research conference.

Course Requirements

The course will not simply consist of me giving lectures, but will include several components in which you must participate in the learning. Student preparation, attendance, and active participation are required and will constitute an important part of your final grade. Students should come to class ready to answer basic questions about any of the assigned readings for that session. I also suggest you try to read a daily newspaper throughout the semester.

The lectures will often incorporate content you should have read prior to class and will assume that you have done the readings; coming to class prepared for group activities is essential for participation in the class. Weekly group and individual activities that are completed in class will be turned in randomly at 6 sessions throughout the semester for credit (you will have one freebie). There will be TA sections throughout the semester, held during class time. You must attend all TA sections; the dates are clearly listed on the syllabus and the TAs will take attendance at each session. Three quizzes, consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions, will be given to test your basic comprehension of both the readings and information presented/discussed in class. A basic template for what you should look for in the readings will be distributed early in the semester; completing these will aid you greatly when studying for the quizzes. One short 4-6 page Analytic Paper will require you to write a brief analysis of one of the three optional popular books about politics.

Final assessment for the class is based on the Issue Portfolio you will complete throughout the semester. Three assignments require individual work, whereas the first assignment requires your group to work together. The portfolio consists of four main parts: a memo prepared by your entire group that defines the issue (assignment 1) and three individual assignments: two memos for which you will have a choice between two different topics (assignments 2 and 3) and a memo that describes the type of political participation you have completed with regards to the issue (assignment 4). Your group – those who are working on the same issue throughout the semester – will work together to synthesize all the findings from your individual projects into one final report to give to the class at the end of the semester.

Issue Portfolio

Your Issue Portfolio is the cumulative body of work from the semester and consists of your main assignments from your individual research in the course. The entire portfolio, which will consist of four 1-2 page single-spaced memos, will be handed in at the end of the semester for evaluation and assessment. Your portfolio consists of four individual assignments. Additional information will be provided on each of these assignments. For the assignments where you have choice (assignments 2 & 3), you will sign up for your choice toward the beginning of the semester. When these assignments are due, we will do a jigsaw simulation (more information later) through which you will share the information you learned with the other students working on the same public policy issue.

You may choose to revise the assignments in your Issue Portfolio to resubmit at the end of the semester. If you make revisions, you must submit both your original assignment and the new versions in the portfolio. A new overall grade will be given based on how well the comments on your memos were addressed. If you choose not to make revisions, your grade for the portfolio revisions will be the average of your separate Issue Portfolio assignments.

Class Final Presentations

In place of a final exam, our class will have group presentations of the issue portfolios which will take place during the last two weeks of class. The main task of the presentations is experience in publicly presenting your ideas to a group. All group members must participate in the presentation in some capacity and you are encouraged to be creative and to consider bringing treats (hopefully related to your issue/findings) for your classmates. The presentation time will depend on the number of groups and will be announced in class. All students are expected to attend all presentations and, on the days you do not present, you may be required to participate as a chair/discussant for another group's presentation or to participate as an 'active audience member' who will ask the presenting group a question. You will also be

assigned to be a Chair or Discussant on a different panel. Your role is to keep time, introduce the panel to the audience, and provide at least one comment or question for the group that presents. You will also have the opportunity to sign up for an 'active member' of the audience role at our conference. This role is to ask one question to a group during the question/answer section of the presentation. These questions, comments must be turned in on a notecard with your name for credit. The group presentations will be graded individually by your self-assessments of your contributions to the group's work and on your group members' assessments of your contributions.

Analytic Paper

You will be asked to write one additional 4-6 page paper based on your analysis of one of the optional books for the course. Several weeks before the paper is due, you will receive a list of questions to choose from to address in your paper. The week before the paper is due, you should have read the book for the paper to participate in an in-class exercise about the books.

Course Assignments

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Issue Portfolio (44%) | Due: | Points: |
| Assignment 1: Define the Issue | 9/19 | 160 points total (4 parts, 40 points/part) |
| Assignment 2: Congress or the Courts (choose one) | 10/14 | |
| Assignment 3: Public Opinion or Elections (choose one) | 11/18 | |
| Assignment 4: Participate! | 11/30 | |
| Group Portfolio Presentations | Final Two Weeks of Course (weeks 15-16) (groups will sign up for slots the week before presentations begin). | 40 points (see assignment sheet breakdown of how these points are assigned; based on self evaluations and evaluations made by other group members). |
| Other Presentation Roles – For each of the three sessions dedicated to the conference you will have a role either as a presenter, chair/discussant or audience participation. You must attend all three sessions. | Final Two Weeks of Course (weeks 15-16) | 20 points |
| Final Issue Portfolio | 12/14 | 40 points |
| Quizzes (25%) Three quizzes are scheduled to test basic comprehension of course content. They will include multiple choice and short answer questions. | Dates: | 150 (50 points each) |
| | Section 1 Quiz – 9/23 | |
| | Section 2 Quiz – 10/21 | |
| | Section 3/Analytic Paper book Quiz – 12/5 | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Analytic Paper (13%) (4-6 pages) Read one of the optional books listed on the syllabus and write an essay on one question provided for that book | Due Week 11 (11/9) | 75 points (see assignment sheet for breakdown of how these points are assigned). |
| Participation (8%) Group or individual exercises completed in class | Collected randomly at 6 class sessions throughout the semester (on freebie) | 50 points (10 points/assignment, 5 total; one freebie!) |
| TA Section Participation (10%) Based on attendance in TA Sections. | Dates: 9/9, 9/16, 10/14, 10/24, 11/4, 11/11, and 11/25 (all Fridays except 10/24). | 60 points (6 sessions X 10 points/session. One free miss given 7 sessions) |
| Extra Credit: Study Participation Participate in the instructors research study | | 30 points |

Total Points Possible: =595

Extra Credit Points Possible: 25

Grades

Your final course grade will be based on the total points you receive from all assignments listed above. The plus and minus grade system will be used. The following are the grading standards set forth in the University's Uniform Grading Policy. The complete policy statements are available on the web at:

<http://www.umn.edu/usenate/policies/gradingpolicy.html>.

- § A range- Achievement that is outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements. Points: **533+**
- § B range- Achievement that is significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements. Points: **476-532**
- § C range- Achievement that meets course requirements in every respect. Points: **414-473**
- § D range- Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements. Points: **355-413**
- § S - Achievement that is satisfactory, which is equivalent to a C- or better (achievement required for an S is at the discretion of the instructor, but may be no lower than a C-). Points: **414**
- § F - Represents failure (or no credit) and signifies that the work was either (1) completed but at a level of achievement that is not worthy of credit or (2) was not completed and there was no agreement between the instructor and the student that the student would be awarded an I. Points: Below **354**
- § I (Incomplete) - Assigned at the discretion of the instructor when, due to extraordinary circumstances (e.g., hospitalization), a student is prevented from completing the work of the course on time. It requires a written agreement between instructor and student.

Grading Philosophy

This class is designed to be fun, emphasize participation and practice, and demonstrate how to apply what we learn in class to real-world politics. While this course will be challenging, my philosophy is that all students should have the opportunity to succeed in this class and I am here to help make sure that you do!

The assignments are assessed by a point system and grades will be assigned based on cumulative points at the end of the semester. The detailed assignment sheets will specify how points are awarded.

Required Readings

All books are available to be purchased at the UMM Bookstore.

Required Books:

1. *Struggle for Democracy*, 7th edition. Penguin version. Authors: Greenberg and Page. Allyn & Bacon/Longman.
2. *You Decide* - 2005 edition. Publisher: Allyn & Bacon/Longman.
3. *Choices: An American Government Reader*, Published by Allyn & Bacon/Longman.

Optional Books:

Choose and buy one of the following 3 books:

1. *Nickel and Dimed: On (Not) Getting by in America* by Barbara Ehrenreich. Owl Books. 2002.
2. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. Simon and Schuster, 2000.
3. *What's the Matter with Kansas? How Conservatives Won the Heart of America*. Owl Books. 2005.

List of additional readings (not in course books):

1. Fishkin, James. 1995. *The Voice of the People*. Chapter 1. **On e-reserve.**
2. Johnson, Timothy R. and Andrew Martin. 1998. *The Public's Conditional Response to Supreme Court Decisions*. Timothy R. Johnson; Andrew D. Martin. *The American Political Science Review*. **JSTOR.**
3. John R. Petrocik. 1996. "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study", *American Journal of Political Science* (p. 825-850). **JSTOR.**
4. Asher, Herbert. 2004. "Analyzing and Interpreting Polls" in *Principles and Practice of American Politics: Classic and Contemporary Readings*. 2nd edition. Eds. Kernell, Samuel and Steve Smith. Pages: 412-440. **On e-reserve.**

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy. Since this course requires active participation in the classroom you are expected to attend all class meetings. You are responsible for whatever happens in class, such as announcements, group work, and handouts. Six times throughout the semester either individual or group work will be turned in and five of them will be counted for participation points. Please turn off your pagers and cell phones.

Meeting with the Instructor. I strongly encourage you to meet with me during office hours. I am available daily on e-mail and check our voice messages frequently. Be aware that while I may often respond to your e-mails immediately, I may not get to responding right away. I will try to respond within 24 hours. Please do not hesitate to call me at my office phone number or e-mail me to set up a meeting to discuss course topics, your assignments, or anything else you would like to chat about. I have designed this course for hands-on learning with lots of opportunities for practice with the techniques and skills I am teaching. Please come to me with any questions or concerns.

Disabilities and Special Needs. It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Please contact Disability Services in 363 Briggs Library (320-589-6178). The Disability Services Office at UMM provides support for students with physical, mental or cognitive disabilities. It is the office designated with the responsibility for determining reasonable accommodation according to the Americans with Disabilities Act and for maintaining confidential records documenting disabilities. The goal of the office is to reduce or remove barriers for persons with disabilities.

Incompletes. Incomplete coursework is a major inconvenience for students and instructors. I expect you to do everything in your power to avoid this situation. Legitimate excuses include verified illnesses and family emergencies. No incompletes will be given unless a legitimate excuse is verified and you have a prior written agreement with the instructor.

Grade Disputes. I want you to have every opportunity to understand the criteria I use to evaluate your work. This is why I allow revisions for the assignments that will be included in your final Issue Portfolio. Evaluation of your portfolio is based solely on revisions and will allow you to use feedback on earlier assignments to improve your overall course grade. If you feel you have been given an unfair grade on a course assignment, please submit a short paragraph summarizing your dispute to me and we can set up a meeting to discuss the dispute.

Late Work. Late work is highly discouraged. All assignments must be submitted at the beginning of class on the stated date. Late work will be penalized one entire grade (e.g., A to B) for every 24 hours after the due date. The weekend counts as one day. I am skeptical of any excuses for late work that involve computer failure, thus you should be sure to save your work often and to back it up in another way.

Make-Up Work. Students are expected to turn in assignments in class on the date it is scheduled in the syllabus. Possible exceptions include serious illness (requires health service note), family emergency, religious observances, or a legitimate conflict with recognized University activities (these require a Chancellor's excuse). You must have documentation for these emergencies. If these apply, you must contact me to request a makeup. Make these arrangements as soon as you know of the conflict – BEFORE the due date if possible.

Academic Integrity. Academic integrity is essential to a positive teaching and learning environment. All students enrolled in University courses are expected to complete coursework responsibilities with fairness and honesty. Failure to do so by seeking unfair advantage over others or misrepresenting someone else's work as your own, can result in disciplinary action. The University Student Conduct Code defines scholastic dishonesty as follows:

Scholastic Dishonesty: Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures, or data analysis.

Within this course, a student responsible for scholastic dishonesty will be assigned a penalty up to and including an "F" or "N" for the course. If you have any questions regarding the expectations for a specific assignment or exam, please ask.

Classroom Conduct. My expectation is that students will be highly engaged and active in our learning environment. While politics is at times a contentious and controversial subject, I expect students to maintain the highest level of civility and respect to one another and to the instructor in the class regardless of sharp differences of opinions. This class will require sophisticated arguments and critical thinking and I expect that students use these skills to develop their own opinions and express their own thinking. If at anytime I feel that a student is not conforming to these expectations, I will ask the student to leave immediately. While the world of political debates often goes 'negative' and personal, I expect more from you as students of politics! **University Policy on Student Conduct:** The University requires a community free from violence, threats, and intimidation; protective of free inquiry; respectful of the rights of others; open to change; supportive of democratic and lawful procedures; and dedicated to a rational and orderly approach to the resolution of conflict.

Diversity in the Classroom. Diversity in the classroom is the ultimate goal of any successful democratic environment. One of my goals as an educator is to provide students with the exposure to opinions, cultures, political viewpoints and personal experiences different from their own. With this in mind, I expect students to respond with respect and an open mind to expressions of examples of the previous list that they may find challenging or very different and to actively participate in creating an environment where every person in the class is safe to express his/her opinion.

Policy on Sexual Harassment. The University of Minnesota has a strict policy on sexual harassment. According to this policy, sexual harassment is defined as “unwelcome sexual advances, and verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature designed to interfere with an individual’s work or create a hostile working or academic environment.” Any behavior will be immediately reported to the Board of Regents resulting in disciplinary action up to and including academic dismissal.

Academic Senate Expectations of Student Workload. According to the University Academic Senate, “one semester credit is to represent, for the average University of Minnesota undergraduate student, three hours of academic work per week (including lectures, laboratories, recitations, discussion groups, field work, study, and so on), averaged over the term, in order to complete the work of the course. Enrollment for 15 credits in a semester would thus require approximately 45 hours of work per week, on average, over the course of the semester. All grades for academic work are based on the quality of the work submitted, not on hours of effort.” For this class, then, you should be putting in approximately 9 hours of work per week including class time.

Return of Coursework to Students. All papers and assignments will be returned in class in a timely manner. If you are not in attendance and do not receive your work, I will keep it through the fourth week of the next semester. After the semester you are welcome to pick up your work or review your grades during posted office hours, or contact me via phone or e-mail to make other arrangements.

UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

The Writing Room, 327 Briggs Library; 320-589-6299, writroom@morris.umn.edu. The Writing Room offers students the opportunity to consult with a trained tutor (either a student or an English instructor) about their writing. Tutors can work with students on specific papers/assignments or on their writing in general. The goal of the Writing Room is not to edit students' papers, but to provide them with useful feedback on their writing to allow them to become confident, independent, and effective writers. You may visit their website at http://www.morris.umn.edu/academic/writing_room/ to see their hours. You can call to set up an appointment, sign up on the sheet on their door, or e-mail them to schedule a meeting.

Academic Assistance Center, 363 Briggs Library; 320-589-6179. The Academic Assistance Center offers tutoring, study tables and courses to help you succeed in your courses at UMM. You may also e-mail the center’s coordinator, Kathryn Gonier Klopfleisch, at gonierkr@morris.umn.edu.

Class Schedule and Readings

Part I: Ideas, Ideals and Frameworks

| WEEK 1 | | | |
|--------|---|-----------------|---|
| Date | Topic | Readings | Due |
| 8/29 | First Day of Class, Introductions, Syllabus, Survey | None | Issue Portfolio Survey (handed out and filled out in class) |
| 8/31 | U.S. Democratic Republic; | Chapter 1 – GP; | |

| | | | |
|---------------|---|--|--|
| | form Issue Groups; form TA Section groups | Federalist 10 | |
| 9/2 | Constitution Time to work on Issue Assignment | U.S Constitution (Arts. 1-3, 5, Bill of Rights); Chapter 2 – GP | |
| WEEK 2 | | | |
| 9/5 | Labor Day, No Class | | |
| 9/7 | No Class | | |
| 9/9 | TA Section: Deliberative Democracy Simulation Meet in designated TA Section rooms. | Read Campaign Reform issue on publicagenda.org (in bottom right corner click on issues, campaign reform). Read issue overview and detailed discussion guide perspectives and anything else you're interested in! | |
| WEEK 3 | | | |
| 9/12 | Deliberative Democracy Simulation | Fishkin, Chapter 1 (reserve) | |
| 9/14 | Federalism/Separation of Powers/American Political Culture | Chapter 3 – GP; Federalist 51; Almond & Verba, Choices | |
| 9/16 | TA Section: Constitutional Reform | | |
| WEEK 4 | | | |
| 9/19 | Constitution/Constitutional Convention | | Issue Portfolio Assignment 1: Define the Issue |
| 9/21 | Civil Rights | Chapter 5, GP | |
| 9/23 | Quiz | | Quiz 1 – Part 1 of course |

Part II: Political Institutions and Political Representation

| WEEK 5 | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|---|---|
| Date | Topic | Readings | Due |
| 9/26 | Political Representation | Antifederalist: Brutus, Letter 3 (access this at: http://www.constitution.org/afp/brutus03.htm); Hamilton's Federalist 60 (access this at: http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/federal/fed60.htm); Riordan and Kirchoff, Choices | (in class – complete rubric of views of rep – federalists/anti's, types of rep. Also: comparative rep. across countries I did in PFF) |
| 9/29 | Congress | Miller & Stokes, Choices; Chapter 11 - GP | |
| 9/30 | Congress | Mayhew, Choices; | |

| | | | |
|---------------|--|---|--|
| | | Fenno, Choice | |
| WEEK 6 | | | |
| 10/3 | The Executive, Presidential Powers | Neustadt, Choices; Chapter 12 - GP | |
| 10/5 | The Executive, Presidential Personality OR Electoral College? | Barber, Choices | |
| 10/7 | The Courts | Chapter 14, GP; Federalist 78 (GP) | |
| WEEK 7 | | | |
| 10/10 | The Courts | Johnson and Martin, 1998 (JSTOR) | |
| 10/12 | The Supreme Court, How Cases are Selected and Decided; Midterm Evaluation of course | | |
| 10/14 | TA Section: Representation <i>Meet with your Issue Group, not your normal TA Section.</i> | | Issue Portfolio Assignment 2: Congress or Courts |
| WEEK 8 | | | |
| 10/17 | No Class – Fall Break! | | |
| 10/19 | Interest Groups & Pluralism | Chapter 8, GP; Olson, Choices; Schattschneider, Choices | |
| 10/21 | Wrap Up Section II | | Quiz 2 – Part 2 of course |

Part III: Linking Mechanisms Between Citizens and Government

| | | | |
|----------------|---|--|---|
| WEEK 9 | | | |
| Date | Topic | Readings | Due |
| 10/24 | TA Section: Political Socialization/Ideology | Take the “World’s Smallest Political Quiz” at: http://www.theadvocates.org/quiz.html | Jot down some notes about the quiz/your score |
| 10/26 | Political Socialization/Ideology | Miller and Shanks, Choices | |
| 10/28 | Political Parties – Purposes and Goals | Aldrich, Choices | |
| WEEK 10 | | | |
| 10/31 | Political Parties | Chapter 9 - GP | |
| 11/2 | Campaigns & Elections <i>Jigsaw about Analytic Paper books</i> | Chapter 10 – GP; Bartels, Choices | Complete reading of book for Analytic Paper |
| 11/4 | TA Section: Campaign Finance | Common Cause, Choices | |
| WEEK 11 | | | |
| 11/7 | Campaigns, Electoral College, Other Voting Systems | Congressional Digest, Choices; | |

| | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| | | Chapter 10, YD; Petrocik, 1996 (JSTOR) | |
| 11/9 | Public Opinion – Political Information | Chapter 6, GP | Analytic Paper |
| 11/11 | TA Section: Polling | | |
| WEEK 12 | | | |
| 11/14 | Public Opinion – Attitudes | | |
| 11/16 | Public Opinion—Polling | Asher, chapter 10 | |
| 11/18 | Public Opinion and Campaigns & Jigsaw Activity | | Issue Portfolio Assignment 3: Public Opinion or Campaigns |
| WEEK 13 | | | |
| 11/21 | Political Participation: Turnout | Teixiera, Choices | |
| 11/23 | Political Participation & Citizenship | Boyt and Kari, Choices | |
| 11/25 | TA Section: Political Participation | | |
| WEEK 14 | | | |
| 11/28 | No Class | | |
| 11/30 | Media and Politics: Media Ownership | Chapter 7, GP; Patterson, Choices | Issue Portfolio Assignment 4: Participate! |
| 12/2 | Media and Politics: Media Effects | | |
| WEEK 15 | | | |
| 12/5 | New Media and Section Wrap-Up | Graber, Choices | Quiz 3 – Part 3 of course and Analytic Paper books |
| 12/7 | Issue Portfolio Presentations | | |
| 12/9 | Issue Portfolio Presentations | | Group sign-up sheet will be passed around |
| WEEK 16 | | | |
| 12/12 | Issue Portfolio Presentations | | |
| 12/14 | The Semester in Review & Course Wrap-Up! | | |
| 12/16 | No Class, Study Day! | | |
| FINALS WEEK | | | |
| 12/20 (Tuesday) 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. | Class Picnic/Party! (details TBA) | | |

Key: GP = Greenberg and Page Text, Choices = Choices American Government Reader, and YD=You Decide