

PLS 1193 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT (HONORS)

Spring 2009

Professor: Dr. Barbara L. Poole

Office Hours: MTWF: 10:00-10:50 or by appointment

Office Phone: 581-6963

E-Mail: blpoole@eiu.edu

COURSE OBJECTIVE:

- The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the fundamental concepts of the American political system. This course is designed in such a manner so as to provide the student with a basic knowledge of the institutions and procedures of American politics. Contemporary political events will be used from time to time in order to illuminate topics which will be covered in class.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

- Please turn off **all** cell phones before entering the classroom.
- Arrive to class on time. Habitual lateness is rude, and will make me grumpy!
- You may and should question the opinions of others in the class (including the professor), but do so in a respectful way.

DISABILITIES

- Students with a disability that requires special arrangements should notify me during the first week of the course. I will do my best to accommodate your needs.

TEXTBOOKS

- Lasco, Joseph, and Baker, Ralph. 2008. *AMGOV*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- Barbour, Christine and Streb, Matthew. 2007. *Clued in to Politics: A Critical Reader in American Government*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- The student is responsible for all reading assignments as well as all lecture and class discussion materials. In addition, students should be aware of current political events and issues. Students will also be expected to actively participate in class discussions.

READING RESPONSES

- Each student will be required to prepare several (four) brief (one page, single spaced, typed) reading responses. These papers will reflect on the assigned readings from Barbour and Streb. You should choose one of the readings from each assignment for your reading response. No more than one half of the paper should be a summary. The remainder of the paper should analyze the reading. Each paper will be worth ten points each. **No late papers will be accepted!**
- Reading response #1 – 1.1;10.1 – January 19
- Reading response #2 – 4.1;4.3;5.1;5.2 – February 6
- Reading response #3 – 10.2;13.1;13.2; 2.3; 12.1 – March 2
- Reading response #4 – 11.1;11.2;14.1;14.2 – March 25
- Reading Response #5 – 6.2; 6.3; 6.4; 7.2; 7.3 – April 11
- Reading Response #6 – 8.1;8.2;8.4;9.3;15.1 – April 24
- Each student will be responsible for discussing several of the responses even if you did not write about the particular essay. This will affect your participation grade.
- Announcements will be made in class regarding dates of discussion.

EXAMS (300 POINTS)

- There will be three examinations. Each exam will count as 100 points. Each test will cover assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions. Each test will consist of short and long essay questions. Study guides will be given to you to help you prepare for the exams
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- Make up exams will only be given in accordance with University policy. **I retain the right to modify both the content and format of all make-up exams.**

TENTATIVE EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

- Exam I – February 13
- Exam II – March 27
- Exam III – Final exam week
- **I reserve the right to change the dates of the first two exams.**

- **POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION PAPER**

- Each student will be required to write a six to eight double spaced page paper where you analyze the political socialization process of a relative, friend, professor, fellow worker, etc. (The individual you choose obviously must be willing to discuss their political socialization and views.) Included in this analysis will be an examination of the time period in which the individual being analyzed was developing their political views. Additional information will be given in class.
- A minimum of five different sources must be cited. The paper must include appropriate citations and a reference page.
- The paper is due in class on **April 17**. One grade will be deducted for each day the paper is late.

CLASS INVOLVEMENT

- The final 20 points of your grade will be based on class involvement: participation in class discussions and group exercises.

GRADING: Grades will be based on three exams (100 points), four reading responses (ten points each), the required paper (100 points) and class involvement (30 points).

423-470=A
376-422=B
329-375=C
282-328=D
281 and below=F

READING OUTLINE

Day	TOPIC	Losco	Barbour
Jan 12	INTRO/	1	1.1;10.1
Jan 19	CONSTITUTION/FEDERALISM	2,3	
Jan 26	CIVIL LIBERTIES	4	
Feb 2	CIVIL LIBERTIES	4	4.2;5.4
Feb 9	CIVIL RIGHTS	5	5.1;5.2;5.3
Feb 16	PUB. OP. & POL SOC	6	10.2
Feb 23	POLITICAL PARTICIPATION	7	13.1;13.2
Mar 2	INTEREST GROUPS	8	2.3;12.1
Mar 9	PARTIES AND CAMPAIGNS	9	11.2
Mar 16	SPRING BREAK!!!		
Mar 23	MEDIA	10	14.1;14.2
Mar 30	CONGRESS	11	6.2;6.3;6.4
April 6	PRESIDENCY	12	7.2;7.3
April 13	BUREAUCRACY	13	8.2;8.4
April 20	COURTS	14	9.3
April 27	PUBLIC POLICY	15	

ANNOUNCEMENTS MADE BE MADE IN CLASS REGARDING CHANGES IN READING OUTLINE OR DUE DATES FOR EXAMINATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS!