

INTRODUCTION TO UNITED STATES POLITICS
Lafayette College
Spring 2013

Government 101, Section 03

Tues. & Thurs.
11:00 a.m.- 12:15 p.m., K 104
Kirby Hall of Civil Rights

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Office Hours: Tues & Thur - 10:00-11:00 a.m., 2:30-3:15 p.m., and by drop-in and appointment.

Rationale

This course seeks to introduce you to the ideas, practices, and institutions that constitute the government and politics of the United States. The aim of the course is not merely to show how the U.S. political system operates but also to place the study of U.S. politics in the broader context of political science and a liberal arts education.

The course will introduce the basic vocabulary of government and politics, which includes such terms as politics, power, and human nature; constitutionalism, federalism, intergovernmental relations, separation of powers, judicial review, and checks and balances; democracy, liberty, equality, justice, due process of law, and civil rights and liberties; liberalism, pluralism, conservatism, and radicalism; socialization and civic education; and participation, political community, representation, and leadership.

We will examine the nature, origins, development, and operation of the three constitutional branches of the federal and state governments: legislative (the Congress and state legislatures), executive (the presidency and governorships), and judicial (the federal and state courts). We also will examine other components of the U.S. political system: parties and elections; interest groups and lobbying; media and public opinion; race, ethnicity, language, sex, and religion; protest movements; bureaucracies; taxation and spending; and domestic and foreign policy.

We will not only explore substantive matters but also promote the development of critical thinking. Intellectual curiosity as a disposition to question clearly, deeply, and broadly will be encouraged. Classroom discussions and other course activities and requirements will seek to promote more effective intellectual dialogue, based on rigorous examination of texts and other course materials. You will be introduced to the variety of approaches to the study of U.S. politics. In addition, you will be introduced to the use of the library and resource materials.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, if you have attended classes, participated in classroom activities, asked questions, analyzed ideas, read all assigned books and articles, visited with the professor when necessary, paid attention to news about government and politics, and studied diligently, you will be able to, among other things,

- Explain key provisions of the Declaration of Independence and U.S. Constitution
- Identify, analyze, and critique a research article in a scholarly political science journal
- Write an analysis of a political science research article
- Analyze the impacts of political ideas on political action
- Employ rational arguments and empirical evidence to construct and evaluate policy choices involving questions of political and moral concern such as equal protection of the laws, campaign spending, welfare and personal responsibility, and mutual assured destruction
- Analyze and debate important political ideas and public policies
- Recognize the intergovernmental nature of public policy in the United States
- Distinguish among the key functions of the federal, state, and local governments
- Explain the basic difference between civil liberties and civil rights
- Identify the key provisions of the U.S. Bill of Rights and the multifaceted interpretations of those rights
- Explain how and why a bill becomes a law
- Apply the provisions of Article II of the U.S. Constitution to presidential behavior
- Apply the concepts of patronage, civil service, and reinventing government to public agencies
- Explain the impacts of the U.S. Supreme Court on U.S. government and society
- Analyze the sources of your own opinions about government and politics
- Evaluate public opinion poll information
- Explain the principal policy and demographic differences between Democrats and Republicans
- Apply textbook principles to an actual political campaign
- Evaluate media messages and explain the media's impacts on government and politics
- Describe the key strategies used by interest groups to achieve their objectives
- Outline the principal steps of policy-making
- Propose possible solutions for the financial crises facing key social-welfare programs
- Apply basic principles of taxation to actual tax policies
- Distinguish between monetary and fiscal policy
- Identify diplomatic and military strategies in relation to foreign policy objectives

Required Text

Karen O'Connor and Larry J. Sabato, American Government: Roots and Reform. 2011 ed.; Boston: Longman, 2011. [O&S]

Please also read a daily newspaper (e.g., New York Times, Philadelphia Inquirer, or Washington Post) and/or a weekly news magazine (e.g., Newsweek, Time, or U.S. News and World Report).

Class Reading and Discussion Schedule

T: Jan. 29	Introduction of course, participants, and requirements.
TH: Jan. 31	Foundations: O&S, Ch. 1, pp. 2-27.
T: Feb. 5	Founding and Constitution: O&S, Ch. 2, pp. 28-61.
TH: Feb. 7	The Constitution of the United States of America: O&S, pp. 62-89.
F: Feb. 8	Deadline for dropping and adding courses and conversion to pass/fail.
T: Feb. 12	The Federal Constitution and Constitutional Issues: O&S, pp. 62-89.
TH: Feb. 14	Federalism: O&S, Ch. 3, pp. 90-115 and pp. 642-651.
T: Feb. 19	State and Local Government: O&S, Ch. 4, pp. 116-147.
TH: Feb. 21	Civil Liberties: O&S, Ch. 5, pp. 148-163.
T: Feb. 26	Civil Liberties: O&S, Ch. 5, pp. 163-185
TH: Feb. 28	Civil Rights Issues: O&S, Ch. 6, pp. 186-225 / Test 1
T: Mar. 5	The Legislative Branch: O&S, Ch. 7, pp. 226-243. Paper 1 due in class.
TH: Mar. 7	The Legislative Branch: O&S, Ch. 7, pp. 243-263.
T: Mar. 12	The Executive Branch: O&S, Ch. 8, pp. 264-278.
TH: Mar. 14	The Executive Branch: O&S, Ch. 8, pp. 279-295.
T: Mar. 19	The Bureaucracy: O&S, Ch. 9, pp. 296-321.
TH: Mar. 21	The Judicial Branch: O&S, Ch. 10, pp. 322-344.
March 25-29	Spring Study Break

- T: April 2 The Judicial Branch: O&S, Ch. 10, pp. 344-361.
- TH: April 4 Public Opinion and Socialization: O&S, Ch. 11, pp. 362-385.
- M: April 8 **Preregistration** begins today for Fall 2013 classes.
- T: April 9 Political Parties: O&S, Ch. 12, pp. 386-417 / **Test 2**
- TH: April 11 Elections and Voting: O&S, Ch. 13, pp. 418-449.
- M: April 15 **Deadline** for dropping courses without grade penalty (WD).
- T: April 16 The Campaign Process: O&S, Ch. 14, pp. 450-479.
- TH: April 18 The News Media: O&S, Ch. 15, pp. 480-507.
- T: April 23 Interest Groups: O&S, Ch. 16, pp. 508-533.
- TH: April 25 Domestic Policy: O&S, Ch. 17, pp. 534-550.
- T: April 30 Domestic Policy: O&S, Ch. 17, pp. 550-567.
- TH: May 2 Economic Policy: O&S, Ch. 18, pp. 568-601.
- T: May 7 Foreign & Military Policy: O&S, Ch. 19, pp. 602-639.
- TH: May 9 Course catch up, wrap up, and final exam points. **Paper 2** due in class today or on the day of the final exam. Persons who hand in their paper on May 9 will receive three extra points on the paper grade. A late paper will be regarded as one handed in after the Test 3 day.
- May 13-20 **Test 3** (Date to be Announced by the College).
- May 21 Senior Grades due to Registrar
- May 25 Commencement
- May 28 All Grades due to Registrar

Research and Writing Assignments

[Please type or computer print in 12 pt. font all writing assignments double spaced on 8.5" x 11" white paper with 1" margins on all sides.

Do not put paper in a covering binder; just staple it in the upper left-hand corner. Do not add a cover page; just left-justify your paper title at the top of the first page and left-justify your name under the title.

Print your paper on both sides of the paper if you can do so.]

Paper 1. The first writing assignment, due no later than **March 5, 2013**, is to read and review one article of your choice from one of the following five political science journals. The article must deal entirely or primarily with American government (e.g., Congress, presidency, Supreme Court), politics (e.g., American political parties, voting behavior), and/or public policy (e.g., U.S. social welfare, environmental protection, defense). Do not choose a book review, introduction, research note, or editorial. (If in doubt about anything, consult the instructor.) In selecting an article, stay within the years 2008-2013. All of the journals are available through the Kirby Library. Hand in a hard paper-copy of the article with your paper. The hard copy can be the one you read and marked up. The length of the paper should be about 900 words; it can be longer if you wish to say more. Failure to select an article from one of the journals below, to choose an article relevant to this course, or to choose a substantive article will result in a grade of 0 with no option to re-do the paper.

American Journal of Political Science
American Political Science Review
Journal of Politics
Polity
Publius: The Journal of Federalism

After reading the article, kindly do the following in your paper:

- Summarize the main idea and findings or conclusions of the article in 625-675 of your own words so as to demonstrate that you really understood the article. The reader of your paper should not have to read the article in order to get all of its key points and to understand it. Your summary should be sure to cover, among other things, (a) the main purpose of the article, (b) the key question the author is answering in the article, (c) the most important information and findings in the article, and (d) the main conclusions of the article. Then, in another 225-275 words:
- What important facts or data does the author use to support his/her main idea or conclusions?
- Discuss any examples of bias, faulty reasoning, or unsupported assertions you found in the article.
- Discuss the implications of the author's findings or conclusions for American government or politics.

- Explain what you learned from reading the article.

You do not need full endnote or reference citations of the article you are reviewing. If you refer to a portion of the article or quote from the article, simply provide the page number in parentheses at the point in your paper where you refer to a portion of the article or quote from it. However, provide full citations of any other articles or books you use in writing your paper.

Paper 2. The second writing assignment, due no later than **May 9, 2013** or on the **day of Test 3**, is to write a 2,500 – 3,000-word, double-spaced paper arguing for or against one of the following propositions:

1. The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act’s mandate that every American must purchase health insurance is unconstitutional.
2. Like many state legislators, members of the U.S. House of Representatives should be limited to 6 two-year terms, and members of the U.S. Senate should be limited to two six-year terms.
3. Adding a balanced budget amendment to the U.S. Constitution is essential for the future fiscal and economic well-being of the United States.
4. The U.S. Supreme Court’s 2010 ruling, *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, which overturned the McCain-Feingold ban on corporate and labor-union funding of electioneering ads, will bias elections in favor of the rich and subvert our democracy.
5. We should abolish the electoral college and allow the president of the United States to be elected by a direct national vote of the people.
6. Justices on the Supreme Court and judges on the federal circuit and district courts should continue be nominated by the president and confirmed by the Senate, but, like many state judges, after six years of service, they should be required to stand for a retention election and, if retained, then stand for retention elections every 12 years thereafter.
7. Illegal immigrants in the United States should be allowed to become U.S. citizens.
8. A person should be required to show a photo ID in order to be able to vote in any federal, state, or local election.
9. An amendment should be added to the Constitution of the United States to prohibit anyone from burning or desecrating the flag of the United States of America.
10. According to former U.S. Senator Rick Santorum: “If the Supreme Court says that you have the right to consensual sex within your home [e.g., gay and lesbian sex], then you

have the right to bigamy, you have the right to polygamy, you have the right to incest, you have the right to adultery. You have the right to anything."

11. The initiative and referendum, which are used in many states, should be added to the U.S. Constitution so that the American people as a whole can amend the U.S. Constitution, enact federal laws, and require Congress to put certain measures to a vote of the people.
 12. Physician-assisted suicide should be a fundamental right under the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, thereby making it legal everywhere in the United States.
 13. The U.S. Supreme Court should have abolished affirmative action in *Grutter v. Bollinger* (2003) rather than opining that it should continue for at least another 25 years.
 14. Social Security should be reformed so as to allow individuals to invest 50% or more of their Social Security contributions in CDs, stocks, bonds, and other regulated investments.
 15. The President should be permitted to kill U.S. citizens who live outside the United States if he believes they are engaged in terrorist activities.
- XX. You may formulate and address, with the instructor's approval, a proposition of your choice.

You must conduct scholarly research on your proposition by reading and citing relevant scholarly books and scholarly articles on your subject, as well as court cases when relevant. These sources must be of high scholarly and intellectual quality. Do not rely only on journalistic or non-scholarly internet sources. All sources used and/or quoted in your paper must be cited properly. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, citation format, and so on will all count as part of grading your paper.

General Style

All sources used and/or quoted in your papers must be cited properly according to the Author-Date style found in the Chicago Manual of Style. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, citation format, and so on will all count as part of your paper grade.

Course Requirements and Grading

You are expected to complete all reading and other assignments on time before class and to participate actively in class discussions. The readings assigned for each class day should be read before that class day. On most class days, two students will be expected to explain the most new or interesting thing they learned from the reading. If you are absent or unresponsive, four days' attendance will be subtracted from your record. Your final course grade will be based on the following distribution:

Class Attendance	2%	A = 94-100	C = 73-76
Class Participation	8%	A- = 90-93	C- = 70-72
Paper 1	18%	B+= 87-89	D+= 67-69
Paper 2	24%	B = 83-86	D = 63-66
Test 1	16%	B- = 80-82	D- = 60-62
Test 2	16%	C+= 77-79	F = 00-59
Test 3	16%		

Attendance is expected at each class. Students in attendance at classes during which the instructor takes roll will earn points toward their final course average under Class Attendance. During the semester, there may be opportunities to earn additional attendance points for attending extracurricular academic events.

Cheating on an exam will result in a grade of zero on that exam.

Classroom Decorum: You are expected to arrive on time for class sessions, remain in the classroom for the duration of each class session, refrain from wearing caps in the classroom, and abstain from talking to your neighbors during class sessions.

Early Papers: The paper deadlines in this syllabus are final deadlines. You are free to hand in a paper to the instructor before a deadline.

Electronics: The use of cell phones, blackberries, ipods, and the like is not permitted during class and exam sessions. Videotaping of class sessions is not permitted, although tape recording is acceptable. Use of a computer to take notes during class sessions is acceptable, but computers and calculators are not permitted during exam sessions.

Extra Credit: Please concentrate on the assigned work for the course. Do not expect extra credit to compensate for a low grade on an exam or paper.

Late Papers: Two points will be subtracted from the grade of a paper for each day it is late, including the day it's due (if delivered after class) and Saturdays and Sundays. This penalty will not be waived for any reason.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism on any written assignment or examination will result in an F grade for the course, no matter what your other assignment or exam grades, and a recommendation to the College for expulsion or other disciplinary action. The instructor reserves the right to make the sole determination of plagiarism by one of the following two methods: (1) producing the original source for the plagiarism or (2) examining the student orally at a time and place of his discretion. If, in the instructor's judgment, the student does not demonstrate understanding and mastery of his/her own writing assignment, the instructor will make a final determination of plagiarism.

Recommendation Letters: The instructor will be happy to write recommendation letters for prospective employers, graduate schools, law schools, or medical schools.

Rewriting Papers: If you receive an unsatisfactory grade on a paper, permission will not be given to rewrite the paper for a better grade. It is the student's responsibility to be clear about the assignment and to consult the instructor in advance about any questions or problems with the assignment.

Syllabus Disclaimer: The instructor reserves the right to change or deviate from the syllabus during the semester and to expect students to know material that cannot be covered in class sessions.

Syllabus Reference: Please keep this syllabus for your reference. Reading assignments are to be completed by the dates indicated on the syllabus.

Test Policies: You are expected to take all tests at their scheduled times (**February 28, April 9, and final exam week TBA, 2013**). Make-up tests will be scheduled at the convenience of the instructor, and will consist of 2-3 essay questions different from questions used on the regularly scheduled test. The final Test 3 will be given only on its College-appointed date; no provisions will be made for early final tests for individuals. Please plan your summer schedule accordingly. Failure to take the regularly scheduled final Test 3 or to arrange for a make-up with the instructor on or before May 25, 2013, will result in a final course grade based on the work completed as of that date.

Academic Honesty Rules

Please review closely and follow in letter and spirit the principles expressed in the Student Handbook and in the departmental statement distributed with this syllabus. The instructor should be consulted if there is any ambiguity about the rules for any assignment. All matters of academic honesty will be treated with utmost seriousness.



LAFAYETTE COLLEGE

Department of Government and Law ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is a fundamental condition for the achievement of the College's goal of liberal education.

The rigorous development of intellectual capacity, the growth of mature and purposive individuality and the preparation for a career of success, satisfaction and service all require adherence to norms of personal integrity and responsibility. The Department rejects the argument that dishonesty is an acceptable strategy in an educational and societal environment marked by intense competition. Academic dishonesty degrades the college experience by reducing it to a shortsighted and selfish game; "losing" produces the adverse judgment of the community about the individual's character and serious consequences for the individual's academic standing; "winning" entails the waste of personal potential for excellence and development, the unfair acquisition of advantage over one's colleagues and the pollution of the educational atmosphere.

The Department requires, therefore, strict and complete compliance with the standards of academic integrity. Each instructor is responsible for the clear communication of the conditions and restrictions applicable to course requirements and for the maintenance of such conditions and restrictions as would be supportive of academic integrity. It is the responsibility of each student to make timely inquiries and comments to the instructor regarding ambiguities or other problems in this regard.

Academic integrity in prepared written work requires complete and explicit acknowledgement of the student's use of and sources for: (1) the actual words of others, (2) the ideas of others, even if restated in the student's own words, (3) factual data which is not commonly known and (4) background materials used generally in preparation. (Elaboration of this and following standards may be found in the College's statement "The Preparation of Written Work" reprinted in the Student Handbook.)

Academic integrity requires that all work presented in fulfillment of course requirements be the personal product of the student who submits it as his or her own.

Academic integrity requires that no published or previously prepared materials be used in examinations except as specifically directed by the instructor.

Academic integrity requires that all work presented in fulfillment of course requirements must be the independent and original product of the student for such course except that work produced by two or more students, work produced and used previously by the student, and work produced to fulfill the requirements of two or more courses may be submitted with the explicit and prior permission of the instructor(s) and with the full acknowledgement of such special conditions.