

American Government

POLI 101 03

FALL 2013

MAYBANK HALL 111

9-9:50AM MWF

Professor: Matthew Nowlin

Office: 114 Wentworth, #102

Office Hours: Monday 2-4pm; Tuesday 10-12pm; and by appointment

Contact: (843) 953-0279; nowlinmc@cofc.edu. Please allow 24 hours for a response.

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the core concepts of American government and politics. The emphasis of this course will be placed on approaching topics associated with government and politics as *social scientists*, therefore this course will be organized around social science concepts and methods.

The first part of the course will examine the foundation of the American political system including the constitution, federalism, civil liberties, and civil rights. The second part of the course will focus on the fundamental role played by the institutions of American government including, Congress, the President, the bureaucracy, and the courts. The third section focuses on the inputs to governmental institutions such as public opinion, elections, political parties, interest groups, and the media. Finally, the fourth section will cover economic and social policy in the United States.

General Education Student Learning Outcome

Upon completion of this course students should be able to apply social science concepts, models or theories to explain human behavior, social interactions or social institutions. This will be assessed in the short-essay question in the first exam.

Learning Outcomes for the Course

In addition, students should be able to 1) Identify and explain the central principles, institutions, procedures, and decision-making processes of the American political system; 2) Evaluate the basic strengths and weaknesses of the American political system through the application of political concepts and ideas; 3) Relate historical events and/or developments to contemporary political issues, debates, and outcomes in the United States; and 4) Develop an analytical, social science disposition toward American politics. These goals will be assessed through 4 exams, a research paper, and class participation.

Required Texts:

The following text is required and additional readings will be provided on OAKS.

Lowi, Ginsberg, Shepsle, and Ansolabehere. 2012. *American Government: Power and Purpose*. W.W. Norton & Company. 12th Edition

Course Requirements and Grading:

Performance in this course will be evaluated on the basis of 4 in-class exams, a paper, and class participation. Points will be distributed as follows:

Exam 1	100 points (12.5%)
Exam 2	100 points (12.5%)
Exam 3	100 points (12.5%)
Final Exam	200 points (25%)
Paper	200 points (25%)
Attendance & Participation	100 points (12.5%)
Total	800 points (100%)

There are 800 possible points for this course. Grades will be allocated based on your earned points and calculated as a percentage of 800.

A	93 to 100%
A-	90 to 92%
B+	87 to 89%
B	83 to 85%
B-	80 to 82%
C+	77 to 79%
C	73 to 76%
C-	70 to 72 %
D+	67 to 69%
D	63 to 67%
D-	60 to 62%
F	59% and below

Exam 1: Will include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank and short answer questions. It will cover material from the **first** section of the course.

Exam 2: Will include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank and short answer questions. It will cover material from the **second** section of the course.

Exam 3: Will include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank and short answer questions. It will cover material from the **third** section of the course.

Final Exam: Will include a combination of multiple choice, true/false, fill in the blank, short answer, and essay questions. It will cover **all material** from the course.

Paper: For the paper, you will pick a current political topic or issue of interest to you and summarize the issue; discuss the major actors involved in the issue and their views; and analyze the issue through one of the five “principles of politics” discussed in class. You can pick any topic you wish, however you must use a CQ Researcher report as your main source and the topic must be approved by me prior to completing the paper. CQ reports are available on nearly any topic and can be accessed through the library website.

The paper should be 7 to 10 pages of text, 1” margins all around, and 12pt font (Times New Roman). At least 5 sources should be used in addition to the CQ Report.

As noted, paper topics must be approved by me. A short paragraph describing the topic and a copy of the CQ report are due to me by **Friday November 1st**.

Papers will be due on **Monday November 25th**. However, I will be happy to look at drafts of papers and provide feedback if they are turned in to me at least a week before the final paper is due. Turning in a draft is not a requirement, but it may help improve your grade on the paper. Also, consider making use of the Writing Lab available on campus. For more information, <http://csl.cofc.edu/labs/writing-lab>

LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Attendance & Participation: The attendance and participation portion of your grade is based on attendance—which will be taken each class—and in-class discussion.

Schedule

SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Foundations:

Date/Week	Topic(s)	Readings
August 19th	Introduction and Course Overview	Chapter 1
August 26th	The Constitution	Chapter 2 and Federalist #10
September 2nd	Federalism/Civil Liberties	Chapters 3/4
September 9th	Civil Liberties/Civil Rights	Chapters 4/5
September 13th	EXAM 1	

Institutions:

Day/Week	Topic(s)	Readings
September 16th	Congress	Chapter 6
September 23rd	Presidency	Chapter 7
September 30th	Bureaucracy	Chapter 8
October 7th	Courts	Chapter 9
October 11th	EXAM 2	

Democratic Politics:

Day/Week	Topic(s)	Readings
October 14th	<i>Monday (Fall Break: No Class);</i> Public Opinion	Chapter 10
October 21st	Elections	Chapter 11
October 28th	Political Parties	Chapter 12
November 1st	PAPER TOPICS DUE	
November 4th	Groups and Interests / The Media	Chapter 13 /14
November 8th	EXAM 3	

Governance:

Day/Week	Topic(s)	Readings
November 11th	Economic/Social Policy	Chapter 15/16
November 18th	Economic/Social Policy	Chapter 15/16
November 25th	DISCUSS PAPERS PAPERS DUE	
December 2nd	Review for Final	
December 9th	FINAL EXAM: 8-11am	

Students with Disabilities:

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply at the Center for Disability Services located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me at least one week before any accommodation is needed.

Cheating or Plagiarism:

A grade of zero will be given to anyone cheating on any exam, homework assignment or committing plagiarism in a paper. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as ones own ideas, the words, writings, music, graphs/charts, etc that were created by another. In accordance with this definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you have the permission of that person. It does not matter from where the material is borrowed a book, article, material off the web, another students paperall constitute plagiarism unless the source of the work is fully identified and credited. Plagiarism is cheating and a violation of academic and personal integrity and will not be tolerated. It carries extremely serious consequences. To avoid plagiarism it is necessary when using a phrase, a distinctive idea, concept or sentence from another source to reference that source in your text, a footnote, or end-note. Please contact me if you need assistance in citing a source.

Religious Holiday Policy:

It is the policy of the College to excuse absences of students that result from religious observances and to provide without penalty for the rescheduling of examinations and additional required class work that may fall on religious holidays. Please see me immediately if you will need to miss class any time during this semester.