

Introduction to American Government and Politics
MTWRF 8:40-10:50
Summer 2014

May 28, 2014

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Office Hours: M/W 11:30 - 1:00
By Appointment

1 Course Description

This course is a college level introduction to American government. Students develop the body of knowledge necessary for informed civic participation and learn about democratic principles, the institutions in American government, and the role that ethnicity, race, gender, class, culture, and the economy play in shaping the political landscape in America. By the end of the course students will understand:

1. what the fundamental characteristics of American government are and how the U.S. Constitution affects the organization of government, the relationship between national and state governments, and the relationship between government and citizens.
2. human political behavior as it is expressed individually, collectively, and in groups.
3. how the executive, legislative and judicial branches are organized and the role that they play in the policy-making process.
4. how to effectively use this knowledge as thoughtful citizens participating in civil society.

2 Course Requirements and Graded Evaluation

2.1 Exams

There will be three exams in this class. The two midterm exams are worth 150 points each and will cover distinct units identified on the course schedule. The final exam will be comprehensive and is worth 250 points. Every exam will have two parts: 1) a set of multiple choice questions and 2) an essay.

2.2 Participation

About one-third of class time will be spent talking about current events and reading assignments. This portion of the grade will be worth 150 points. The following scale explains how I grade participation:

- A** Active in class; has working knowledge of reading and current events; is respectful, but offers opinions; asks questions in class.
- B** Usually active in class; demonstrates familiarity of reading and current events, but lacking details; is respectful, but offers opinions; asks questions in class.
- C** Sometimes is active in class; has uneven familiarity of reading and current events; offers opinions; asks questions in class.
- D** Only active in class when called on and then is reluctant; has little familiarity of reading and current events; rarely offers opinions or asks questions.
- F** Rarely active in class, even if called on; demonstrate no familiarity with reading and/or current events; does not offer opinions or ask questions.

2.3 Attendance

I will periodically take attendance in class. Students who are more than five minutes late, will be marked absent that day. After the class is over, I will calculate the percent of classes you attend, which I will then multiply by 100 for an attendance score.

2.4 Assignment Schedule

Test #1	150 points	June 16
Test #2	150 points	June 24
Test #3	250 points	July 3
Participation	150 points	Daily
Attendance	100 points	Daily
Total	800 points	

3 Class Policies

3.1 Absences

You are expected to attend every class. If you arrive after attendance is taken, you will be considered absent for the day. If you must miss class for some reason, you can receive an excused absence by contacting me **in advance**. I reserve the right to see documentation for your absence or to decide what constitutes a reasonable excuse. If you must miss class, you are responsible for finding out what you missed.

3.2 Makeup Exams

There will be no make-up exams. If you miss an exam, you will receive a zero. If you are late to an exam, you must take it in the time that remains when you arrive. See “Problems and Emergencies” for the only exceptions to this rule. Any student who legitimately excused from an exam will write a ten page research paper in lieu of taking a make-up exam.

3.3 Cheating and Academic Misconduct

Any student engaging in academic misconduct will receive an F in the course and be reported to the Dean of Liberal Arts for further disciplinary action outlined in the *University Code of Student Conduct*. If you have any questions about constitutes cheating, academic misconduct, or plagiarism, examine the university policy and/or ask the instructor **prior** to turning in any assignment. It is *your* responsibility to familiarize yourself with university policy.

3.4 Problems and Emergencies

If a problem or emergency arises that prevents you from attending an exam or coming to class, you should contact Professor McClurg as soon as possible. The best way to contact me is via email (mcclurg@siu.edu). If you do not hear back from me within a reasonable amount of time you may call me. Students contacting me **prior** to missing an assignment or class receive greater leniency. Examples of excuses that do **not** qualify as problems and emergencies include, but are not limited to, the following: oversleeping, taking too much medication, being incarcerated, or having a cold. You are welcome to clarify what I consider to be an acceptable excuse at any point in the semester.

3.5 Grading Policies and Standards

Graded material is returned as promptly as possible. When students receive an exam or assignment back and are dissatisfied with their grade, they must wait at least two days before asking for a review. To request such a review, the student must submit a single-spaced, one paragraph note explaining why the original grade is inappropriate. All assignments submitted for review can be graded up or down by the Professor.

3.6 Disability Policy

It is the policy of this university and professor to help disabled students succeed in the classroom. The student is responsible for notifying the professor and university of any special problems or needs as soon as possible. The professor and university responsible for doing whatever they can within university policy to accommodate that student’s needs. It is in your best interest to notify the professor and university **immediately** so that arrangements can be made as soon as possible.

3.7 Contacting the Instructional Staff

I am happy to help you however I can. If you have questions, please send an email to the professor and I will reply as soon as possible (usually within 24 hours). If your question requires a lengthy explanation, please come to office hours or make an appointment. Whenever you contact me, it is important to be professional, meaning that written communication must be properly addressed

and follow common rules of English grammar. If an email or note does not meet the following criteria, you will **not receive** a response.

1. It respectfully addresses the professor or teaching assistant.
2. It clearly identifies the student and class.
3. It has capital letters, periods, and appropriate grammar.
4. It includes information on how we can best reply with an answer to your question.

3.8 Policy Acknowledgment

To ensure that everyone understands these policies and to help the class function smoothly, I will **not record grades** for any student who does not read and sign the policy acknowledgment attached to this syllabus. To be clear, you will receive **no credit** in this course for work turned in **before we have your policy acknowledgment** on record.

4 Following Political Developments in the Media

The study of American government cannot be divorced from current events. I strongly recommend you monitor politics regularly through the national media. Along with any local papers you read, *The New York Times* and *the Washington Post* have high quality, free versions of their papers on-line.

5 Reading Assignments

I choose reading assignments that I feel build on the analytic foundation I provide via class lecture. In other words, I will **not simply repeat** what is in the reading assignments. You should therefore make every effort to stay current with the reading schedule. If you have any difficulty obtaining the assigned book, please notify me as soon as possible. Unfortunately, I cannot place copies on reserve at the library and cannot loan out my personal copy.

- Bianco, William T. and David T. Cannon. *American Politics Today*. Core Edition. New York: Norton, 2009.

6 Course Schedule and reading Assignments

6.1 History and Framework of American Government

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn the fundamental characteristics of democracy.
- Students will learn how the Constitution affects the organization of government, the relationship between state and national governments, and the relationship between government and citizens.
- Students will learn the fundamental political principles underlying the U.S. Constitution.

Topics and Reading Assignments

Date	Topic	Assigned Reading
June 9	Introduction	None
June 10	Politics and government	Chapter 1
June 11	U.S. Constitution	Chapter 2, pages A1-A2, A16-A11
June 12	Federalism	Chapter 3
June 13	Civil liberties and rights	Chapters 4 and 14
June 16	Test #1	None

6.2 Mass Politics: Citizens and Linkages to their Government

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn the ways in which citizens participate in public affairs.
- Students will learn how each of these linkages fits into the government process.
- Students will learn how cultural, economic, and social factors influence participation.

Topics and Reading Assignments

Date	Topic	Assigned Reading
June 17	Representation and public opinion	Chapter 5
June 18	Elections	Chapter 8
June 19	Political parties	Chapter 7
June 20	Interest groups	Chapter 9
June 23	Media and politics	Chapter 6
June 24	Test #2	None

6.3 American Governing Institutions

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn how the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government are organized, what responsibilities they have, and what roles they play in the policy-making process.
- Students will learn how the branches of government interact with the general public.

Date	Topic	Assigned Reading
June 25	Law-making	None
June 26	Congressional politics	Chapter 10
June 27	Presidential politics	Chapter 11
June 30	Bureaucracy	Chapter 12
July 1	Judicial politics	Chapter 13
July 2	<i>No class</i>	None
July 3	Test #3	None

Policy Acknowledgment

I, _____ (print your name), acknowledge that I have read and understand the following information about Political Science 114 “Introduction to American Government and Politics” with Professor McClurg. I understand that this information and these policies apply to me in the context of this course. I also understand that this syllabus represents a plan for the semester and that the instructor reserves the right to change the requirements, policies, and schedule of topics for the course as deemed necessary for instructional purposes.

- ___ Instructor Office Hours
- ___ Instructor Emails
- ___ Course Requirements
- ___ Attendance Policy
- ___ Make-Up Exam Policy
- ___ Problems / Emergency Policy
- ___ Grading Policy Standards
- ___ Disability Policy
- ___ Contacting the Instructor Policy
- ___ Reading Assignments

_____ (signature and date)

"We emphasize student achievement and success because achievement and success are essential if we are to shape future leaders and transform lives." ¹

<http://pvcaa.siu.edu/>

IMPORTANT DATES *

Full Session Courses Begin	06/09/2014
Last day to add a class (without Dean's permission):	06/15/2014
Last day to withdraw completely and receive a 100% refund:	06/22/2014
Last day to drop a course using SalukiNet:	07/13/2014
Final examinations:	07/31–08/01/2014
Commencement:	Ceremonies now held only in May & December

Note: For outreach, internet, and short course drop/add dates, visit

Registrar's Academic webpage <http://registrar.siu.edu/>

FALL SEMESTER HOLIDAYS

Independence Day Holiday 07/04/2014

WITHDRAWAL POLICY ~ Undergraduate only

Students who officially register for a session may not withdraw merely by the stopping of attendance. An official withdrawal form needs to be initiated by the student and processed by the University. For the proper procedures to follow when dropping courses and when withdrawing from the University, please visit <http://registrar.siu.edu/pdf/ugradcatalog1314.pdf>

INCOMPLETE POLICY~ Undergraduate only

An INC is assigned when, for reasons beyond their control, students engaged in passing work are unable to complete all class assignments. An INC must be changed to a completed grade within one semester following the term in which the course was taken, or graduation, whichever occurs first. Should the student fail to complete the course within the time period designated, that is, by no later than the end of the semester following the term in which the course was taken, or graduation, whichever occurs first, the incomplete will be converted to a grade of F and the grade will be computed in the student's grade point average. *For more information please visit:*

<http://registrar.siu.edu/grades/incomplete.html>

REPEAT POLICY

An undergraduate student may, for the purpose of raising a grade, enroll in a course for credit no more than two times (two total enrollments) unless otherwise noted in the course description. For students receiving a letter grade of A,B,C,D, or F, the course repetition must occur at Southern Illinois University Carbondale. Only the most recent (last) grade will be calculated in the overall GPA and count toward hours earned. *See full policy at*

<http://registrar.siu.edu/pdf/ugradcatalog1314.pdf>

GRADUATE POLICIES

Graduate policies often vary from Undergraduate policies. To view the applicable policies for graduate students, please visit

<http://gradschool.siu.edu/about-us/grad-catalog/index.html>

DISABILITY POLICY

Disability Support Services provides the required academic and programmatic support services to students with permanent and temporary disabilities. DSS provides centralized coordination and referral services. To utilize DSS services, students must come to the DSS to open cases. The process involves interviews, reviews of student-supplied documentation, and completion of Disability Accommodation Agreements.

<http://disabilityservices.siu.edu/>

PLAGIARISM CODE

http://pvcaa.siu.edu/_common/documents/Plagiarism/Guide%20to%20Preventing%20Plagiarism.pdf

SALUKI CARES

The purpose of Saluki Cares is to develop, facilitate and coordinate a university-wide program of care and support for students in any type of distress—physical, emotional, financial, or personal. By working closely with faculty, staff, students and their families, SIU will continue to display a culture of care and demonstrate to our students and their families that they are an important part of the community. For information on Saluki Cares: (618) 453-5714, or siucares@siu.edu,

<http://salukicare.siu.edu/index.html>

EMERGENCY PROCEDURES

Southern Illinois University Carbondale is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. We ask that you become familiar with the SIU **Emergency Response Plan** and **Building Emergency Response Team (BERT)** programs. Emergency response information is available on posters in buildings on campus, available on BERT's website at www.bert.siu.edu, Department of Safety's website at www.dps.siu.edu (disaster drop down) and the Emergency Response Guideline pamphlet. Instructors will provide guidance and direction to students in the classroom in the event of an emergency affecting your location. *It is important that you follow these instructions and stay with your instructor during an evacuation or sheltering emergency.*

INCLUSIVE EXCELLENCE

SIU contains people from all walks of life, from many different cultures and sub-cultures, and representing all strata of society, nationalities, ethnicities, lifestyles, and affiliations. Learning from and working with people who differ is an important part of education as well as an essential preparation for any career. *For more information please visit:* <http://www.inclusiveexcellence.siu.edu/>

MORRIS LIBRARY HOURS

<http://www.lib.siu.edu/about>

LEARNING AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Help is within reach. Learning support services offers free tutoring on campus and math labs. To find more information please visit the Center for Learning and Support Services website:

Tutoring : <http://tutoring.siu.edu/>

Math Labs http://tutoring.siu.edu/math_tutoring/index.html

WRITING CENTER

The Writing Center offers free tutoring services to all SIU students and faculty. To find a Center or Schedule an appointment please visit <http://write.siu.edu/>

AFFIRMATIVE ACTION & EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

Our office's main focus is to ensure that the university complies with federal and state equity policies and handles reporting and investigating of discrimination cases. *For more information visit:*

<http://diversity.siu.edu/#>

Additional Resources Available:

SALUKINET: <https://salukinet.siu.edu/cp/home/displaylogin>

ADVISEMENT: <http://advisement.siu.edu/>

PROVOST & VICE CHANCELLOR: <http://pvcaa.siu.edu/>

SIU ONLINE: <http://online.siu.edu/>

¹ Southern Illinois University Carbondale, (2013). *Pathways to Excellence: A Strategic Plan*. Retrieved from http://chancellor.siu.edu/_common/docs/A_Strategic_Plan.pdf