Spring 2-1-1999

PSC 100S.02: Introduction to Political Science

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Course purpose is to review the constitutional principles, structures, and the political processes of U.S. national government.

Course objectives: Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to demonstrate 1) factual knowledge of the constitutional principles and structure of American national government, 2) an understanding of the political processes of U.S. government, and 3) a familiarity with current political issues.

1. Basic reading for the course will be assigned from:

J.M Burns, et al., Government By the People (Basic Ed., 17th ed.)
Annual Editions, American Government 98/99 (paper)

2. In addition, regular reading of a daily newspaper (and/or weekly newsmagazine) is expected.

3. Your grade will be based upon the best 3-out-of-4 scores from four 100-point grading options, averaged on a 100-point scale (90s=A, 80s=B, 70s=C, 60s=C, 59 & below=F). There will be three 1-hour exams (100 points each) and one discussion-section grade (100 points based upon discussion-section participation and discussion-section quizzes). You may participate in all four, or only three, of the grading options. There will, however, be NO make-up exams or early exams. PLEASE DO NOT ASK FOR MAKE-UPS. The fourth option IS the make-up.

   a. Exam # 1: Feb. 26 (Friday), I-IV
   b. Exam # 2: April 9 (Friday), IV-VII
   c. Exam # 3: May 10 (Monday, 8:00-10:00), VII-IX
   d. Discussion-Section Grade: attendance & participation (20 points), two quizzes (40 points ea.): Quiz # 1 (Friday) Mar. 5; Quiz # 2 (Wednesday) May 5. Quizzes will be held in SS 356; the specific material to be covered in each quiz will be announced in discussion-section.

Course Outline

I. Introduction to the Study of Government & American Political Ideas

Burns AE (Read. #)

1 6-14, 29-33
II. Formation & Substance of the Constitution

III. Federalism

IV. Judiciary (Judicial Review & the Judicial Process)

V. Civil and Political Rights

VI. Interest Groups & Political Parties

VII. Nominations and Elections

VIII. Executive

IX. Legislative

NOTE: MONDAY, MARCH 8 IS THE LAST DAY TO DROP CLASSES OR CHANGE GRADING OPTION