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PSCI 210S.01: Introduction to American Government

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Introduction To American Government
PSCI 210 S
McGill Hall, Room: 210
Fall Semester 2022

PURPOSE AND VISION STATEMENT:

Welcome to American Government! This course will begin with the philosophical underpinnings of the U.S. Constitution and the document itself. Some of the topics to be considered include: the role and growth of institutions, the three branches of government, public opinion, U.S. foreign policy, education in the United States, elections and current events and the way they are covered in the domestic media as well as internationally. We will continually ask the question through the semester “What must be present to have a democracy and is the United States becoming something other than what the founders of the country envisioned? This course will be both quantitatively and qualitatively based, and theories and hypotheses will be introduced as a constructive mechanism for framing and thinking about our society and government. It is the primary goal of this course to facilitate an informed awareness of the importance of understanding the U.S. political system as well as how our representative democracy can be preserved. This class respects **ALL** perspectives and a premium is placed on keeping an open mind, and always showing respect for those who voice opinions. It is not important what you think, it is important that your opinion is well reasoned and that you can defend your ideas with substantive arguments.

Required Readings:

Text: Lowi, Theodore, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepslie, Stephen *American Government Power & Purpose*. Sixteenth Edition. New York: W.W. Norton, 2019, Orwell, George Harcourt.

The Declaration of Independence (See appendix of Lowi text)

The Federalist Papers (Appendix of Lowi text).

John Locke (Second Treatise of Govt.)

The Economist (Subscription for this semester)

See Also, University of Virginia Miller Center for selected topics
millercenter.org

YOU WILL NEED 4 BLUE BOOKS FOR EXAMS!! (one extra for the final)

E.C for a letter to the editor or guest column

GRADING: The following 1000-point scale will be used to grade the student:

93% and above **A** (930-1000)
90%-92% **A-** (900-920)
87%-89% **B+** (870-890)
83%-86% **B** (830-860)
80%-82% **B-** (800-820)
77%-79% **C+** (770-790)
73%-76% **C** (730- 760)
70%-72% **C-** (700-720)
67%-69% **D+** (670-690)
63%-66% **D** (630-660)
60%-62% **D-** (600-620)

There will be 1 midterm worth 300 points. Short Answer (possible 250 points). One essay (possible 50 points.)

There will be a **CUMULATIVE** final worth a possible total 400 points. Short Answers 300 points possible) and 1 essay questions (100 points possible).

There will be 4 quizzes each worth 25 points (100 points total possible).

One paper **DUE BEGINNING OF CLASS DEC. 5 !!** (200 points possible).

NO COMPUTERS IN CLASS!!!!

Notes taken by hand. Professor reserves the right to change the syllabus at her discretion.

ABSOLUTELY NO LATE PAPERS, EXAMS, OR QUIZES!!!! THEY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!

FIVE PRINCIPLES OF POLITICS

Monday, Aug. 29. (Introduction)

Wednesday, Aug. 31

Ch. 1, Lowi

Friday, Sept. 2

The Declaration of Independence (Found in the Appendix of Lowi Text or also internet.)

Current Events/Newspaper editorials

THE FOUNDING FATHERS AND THE CONSTITUTION

(Mon.), Sept. 5 **NO SCHOOL**

(Wed.) Sept. 7

Lowi Ch. 2

The Federalist Papers, Madison (No. 10 and No. 51) (See appendix of Lowi or online)

(Fri.) Sept. 9

Articles of Confederation (Agreed to by Congress Nov. 15, 1777: ratified and in force March 1, 1781) (See appendix of Lowi)

Current events (editorial/Missoulain)

The Economist

FEDERALISM AND THE SEPARATION OF POWERS

(Mon.) Sept. 12

Lowi Ch. 3

(Wed.) Sept. 14 Events that illustrate Federalism

(Fri.) Sept. 16 QUIZ #1

Current Events/The Economist

CIVIL LIBERTIES

(Mon.) Sept. 19

Term paper requirements and handout with list of possible topics

Lowi, Ch. 4

The Constitution of the United States of America (Annotated with references to *The Federalist Papers*. See Lowi appendix)

(Wed.) Sept. 21

Civil Liberties/Civil Rights

(Fri.) Sept. 23

Paper Topics Due

Current Events/The Economist

CIVIL RIGHTS

(Mon.) Sept. 26

Lowi, Ch. 5

(Wed.) Sept. 28

Waiting For Superman, documentary

(Fri.) Sept. 30

Quiz #2

Current Events/Editorial Missoulian, NYT's /The Economist

THE CONGRESS/POLITICAL PARTIES

(Mon.) Oct. 3

Lowi, Ch. 6

Public Opinion Poll Data

Driving Issues/

Podcast Episode: *How Three Big Bills in Congress Will Spur Innovation and Competitiveness.*

Adie Tomer and David Dollar (brookings.edu)

Congressional races in Montana

(Wed.) Oct.5

Podcast Episode: *The Climate Bill's Oil and Gas Provisions Are A Worthwhile Tradeoff*

Samantha Gross

Lowi, Ch.12

The Montana Headwaters Legacy Act (Review Senate Bill 2254)

The Northern Rockies Ecosystem Protection Act (H.R. 17556, S.1276)

(Fri.) Oct. 7

Guest Congressional Candidate Speaker

U.S. FOREIGN POLICY

(Mon.) Oct.10 Midterms Returned

Lowi, Ch. 7

When Trade Leads to War, Dale C. Copeland Foreign Affairs, August, 23, 2021

NATO's New Momentum, A conversation with U.S. Ambassador to NATO Julianne Smith.

What Putin Got Wrong About Ukraine, Russia, and the West, A conversation with Stephen Kotkin.

Is a Return to The Iran Nuclear Deal Imminent?/Inside Story, Al Jazeera

(Wed.) Oct. 12

The Arab/Israeli Conflict (Film)

The Abraham Accords:

The Abraham Accords and the New Middle East, YouTube.com

The Abraham Accords One Year Later: Assessing the Impact and What Lies Ahead, Hudson Institute. You Tube.com

(Fri.) Oct. 14

Dictator's Dilemma (Full Episode) North Korea: Inside the Mind of a Dictator, You Tube, National Geographic.

THE PRESIDENCY

(Mon.) Oct. 17

Lowi, Ch. 7

The President's Agenda and international opinion.

(Wed.) Oct. 19

Review for Midterm

(Fri.) Oct. 21 **MIDTERM EXAM**

THE PRESIDENCY CONTI...

(Mon.) Oct. 24

George Washington's Farewell Address

(Wed.) Oct. 26

The U.S. President in the International Press

The Two Presidencies Thesis, Aaron Wildavsky

How is Presidential Decision-Making, In The Foreign Policy Arena, Impacted (Burgoyne Research)

(Fri.) Oct. 28

The Economist/Current Events

PUBLIC OPINION/INTEREST GROUPS

(Mon.) Oct.31
Lowi, Ch.10

(Wed.) Nov. 2
Lowi, Ch. 11
Political ads and the upcoming midterm

(Fri.) Nov. 4
Quiz #3
Current Events/The Economist

ELECTIONS/THE MEDIA

(Mon.) Nov.7
Lowi, Ch. 11

TUESDAY, NOV. 8 ELECTION NIGHT PARTY **TBD.**

(Wed.) Nov.9
Election Recap

(Fri) Nov. 11 **VETERANS DAY NO SCHOOL**

THE FEDERAL COURTS

(Mon.) Nov. 14
Lowi Ch. 9

(Wed.) Nov. 16 Review Of Supreme Court Decisions/Ways the Supreme Court could be changed

(Fri.) Nov. 18 Guest Lecture

IS THIS A DEMOCRACY?

(Mon.) Nov. 21
1984, Orwell, George
Part 1&2

Thanksgiving Break Nov.23-25

(Mon.) Nov.28
1984, Orwell George, Part III

(Wed.) Nov. 30
Is Democracy Dead?

(Fri.) Dec.2
Quiz #4
Current Events/The Economist
(Mon.) Dec. 5
Papers Due

(Wed.) Dec. 7 Final Exam Review

(Fri.) Dec. 9 **BURGOYNE'S LAST LECTURE ON LIFE**

FINAL Tuesday, Dec. 13 8:00-10:00 (Same Classroom)