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PSC 210S.01: Introduction to American Government

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AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SYLLABUS

PSCI 210 Section 01 / Fall 2009

T/Th 12:40 p.m. - 2 p.m. in SS #352

Professor: Jeffrey Greene

Office: LA 356 / Telephone: 243-6181 / Office Hours: 2-2:30 (T, Th) and 3:30 - 4 p.m. (M)

Text: *American Government: The Essentials*, 11/e by Wilson & Dilulio

Students can use any edition of Wilson & Dilulio including *The Essentials* or full editions from the 9/e through the 11/e. Please note that some of the chapters are in a different order in the earlier editions. Also, the full edition contains a number of additional chapters on public policies.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PSCI 210 is intended to introduce students to the fundamentals of **American National Government**. The course includes an examination of basic American political principles and practices, the Constitution, major institutions, and civil liberties. The objective of this course is to acquaint students with the complexities of the American political system.

Grade Weights

Test 150% October 29 (Thursday) *The exam covers Chapters 1-11*

Test 2 50% December 8 (Tuesday) *The exam covers Chapters 12-17*

Test 3 (Optional)**TBA** (*Test #3 covers Chapters 1-17*) You are NOT required to take this exam and must sign up for the exam on December 10.

The **University of Montana** now uses a version of the **Plus/Minus** grading system and a **Credit/No Credit** system (the CR/NCR replaces the Pass/Fail system used in the past). *General education courses must be taken using the traditional letter grade to count toward one's general education requirements.*

To accommodate the Plus/Minus system a new grading scale will be used. In **PSCI 210** grades will be assigned based on the following grading scale. This scale and system is more complex than the system used in the past but rewards As only to those students whose performance in the class is "exceptional."

Grade	Point Scale	Point Range	GPA
A	93-100	8 points	4.00
A-	90-92	3 points	3.67
B+	87-89	3 points	3.33
B	83-86	4 points	3.00
B-	80-82	3 points	2.67
C+	77-79	3 points	2.33

C	73-76	4 points	2.00
C-	70-72	3 points	1.67
D+	67-69	3 points	1.33
D	63-66	4 points	1.00
D-	60-62	3 points	.067
F	59 or lower	N/A	0.00

EXAMS: All exams will be objective tests (true/false and multiple choice). Students should bring a standard Scantron form (the exact form is Form **F-289**, which is available in the UC bookstore). The length of Exam #1 and Exam #2 vary from 50 to 100 questions.

Test 3 is **OPTIONAL**, based on your satisfaction with your grade after Test 2. Test 1 and Test 2 **are not** comprehensive; **Test 3 will be comprehensive (that is, include specific material from the entire semester)**. If you select to take **Test 3**, each test is weighted as *one-third*. The final exam typically consists of 200 questions. It should be noted that very few people ever take Exam #3.

MAKE-UP EXAM POLICY: All students are expected to take the exams at the times specified above. Make-up exams will be given in the event of extenuating circumstances. Students must make prior arrangements by calling either the Political Science Department office **(243- 5202)** or my office **(243- 6181)** and leaving a message. You can also send a message by e-mail to jeffrey.greene@umontana.edu
Make-up exams will not be the same tests given during the scheduled time.

Exam Rules and Expectations

All students are on the “honor system” while taking exams. The tests are “closed book” exams. That is, you cannot use notes. If caught using notes, your grade on the exam will be **zero** and therefore you will fail the course. Book bags and other items should be zipped closed. Everyone is expected to be quiet (no talking or noise) while taking exams. All exams given in class use **Scantron Form F-289**.

The **last day that students can drop a class or change a grading option** is **October xx by 4:30 p.m.** **(The exact date will be added when it is available)** This is the last day to change a section of a class, change from credit/no credit to traditional letter grade or visa-versa.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: There is not an attendance policy for this class. Students are expected to attend most classes. There is a direct correlation between attendance and grades.

Holidays at UM during the Fall Semester

September 7 (Labor Day)

November 11 (Veteran's Day) *No class*

November 25, 26, and 27 (Thanksgiving Break) *No class on November 26*

TEACHING ASSISTANT: The teaching assistant for this section of PSCI 210 is Zoe O'Neill.

ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The University of Montana requires that this statement be placed on all syllabuses.

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.

All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: <http://www.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/page/1321>

POLITICAL SCIENCE WEB SITE: <http://www.cas.umt.edu/polsci>

ONLINE VERSION OF THE SYLLABUS:

<http://www.cas.umt.edu/polsci/faculty/greene/psc100/2102009Fall.htm>

COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS

Part I -- The Basics of the American Political System

This section examines the fundamentals and basic concepts of the American political system, such as the Constitution, federalism, political culture, public opinion, political parties, and interest groups. (Part II examines the core institutions, such as Congress, the presidency, the courts, and the bureaucracy). Test 1 only includes the material covered in Part I; Test 2 only includes the material covered in Part II plus the chapter on the media.

Please note that specific dates are not provided on a class-by-class basis because some areas take several classes to cover while other subjects take only a single class.

Introduction: What is Politics? Citizenship and Our Changing Society (Tuesday, September 1)

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 1

The Founding Period, The Constitution and the Foundation of Citizen's Rights

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 2 + ***The Constitution & Federalist #10*** (included in the back of the textbook)

Federalism

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 3

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapters 5 and 6

Political Culture and Public Opinion

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapters 4 and 7

Political Participation

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 8

Political Parties, Campaigns, and Elections

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 9 and 10

Interest Groups

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 11

TEST #1 Thursday, October 29 (*The exam covers 11 chapters*)

The Media

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 12

Part II -- The Institutions of American Government and Public Policy

The chapters covered during the second half of the semester are about the major institutions of American government (Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, etc.).

Congress

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 13

The Presidency

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 14

The Bureaucracy

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 15

The Judiciary

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 16

Public Policy

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 17

TEST #2 Tuesday, December 8 (*The exam covers Chapters 12-17). Exams will be returned on Thursday, December 10. Students need to determine if they want to take Exam 3 and must notify the instructor on December 10.*)

TEST #3 TBA in SS 352 (*Test #3 covers Chapters 1-17*)

(TEST #3 will be COMPREHENSIVE and is OPTIONAL! Students are not required to take the exam)

[FEDERALISM TIME LINE TRANSPARENCY](#) (This is in Adobe Acrobat format and is printer friendly)

STUDY GUIDES (For study guides and help preparing for exams, students are advised to visit the textbook website)

[ORGANIZATIONAL CHART OF THE UNITED STATES](#) (In Adobe Acrobat format)

[SOCIAL STRATIFICATION MODEL](#) (In Adobe Acrobat format)

[SOURCES OF VALUES](#) (In Adobe Acrobat format)

[CHARACTERISTICS OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY](#) (Microsoft Word Document)

[DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE HOUSE AND SENATE](#) (In Adobe Acrobat format)

HOW A BILL BECOMES LAW: [House](#) [Senate](#) (These files are in Adobe Acrobat format)

[GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS](#) (Adobe Acrobat format)

[POLITICAL CULTURE and POLITICAL IDEOLOGIES](#) (This is an Adobe Acrobat file)
[SUMMARY OUTLINE OF TEXTBOOK, CHAPTER-BY-CHAPTER](#)

Federalism

This website is an excellent source of information about the history of federalism.

http://www.cas.sc.edu/poli/courses/scgov/History_of_Federalism.htm

STUDY GUIDES

For study guides and help preparing for exams, students are advised to visit the textbook website.

There is a [complete study guide](#) in Adobe PDF format; this file is also available on the textbook website.

Textbook Website

Cengage provides numerous resources on the Internet, including practice exams, outlines, chapter summaries, learning objectives, etc. [Click here to access these resources](#) and then click **Student Version**. Or, the direct URL is

http://college.cengage.com/polisci/wilson/am_gov/11e/resources/wilson_11e_sg.html

The link to the Student website is

http://college.cengage.com/polisci/wilson/am_gov/11e/student_home.html

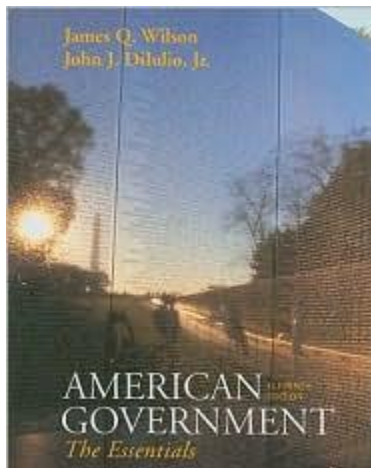


Image of Wilson and DiIulio, 11/e

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This version was posted on June 4, 2009 (The final syllabus is subject to some modifications)