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PSC 100S.01: Introduction to American Government

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AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SYLLABUS

PSc 100 Section 01 / Fall 2008

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)

E-mail: jeffrey.greene@umontana.edu

Text: *American Government: The Essentials, 11/e*, by Wilson and DiIulio

Students can use any edition of *American Government: The Essentials, 9/e, 10/e, or 11/e* by Wilson and DiIulio or the full version of this text, *American Government* for this class.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PSc 100 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. Specific learning objectives are included on the link at the bottom of the online syllabus.

Grade Weights

Test 150% October 23 (Thursday) *The exam covers Chapters 1-12*

Test 2 50% December 2 (Tuesday) *The exam covers Chapters 13-17*

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 4.

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 **PSc 100** 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 6 by 4:30 p.m.** This is the last day to change a section of a class, change from credit/no credit to traditional letter grade or visa-versa.

Holidays at UM during the Fall Semester

September 1 (Labor Day)

November 4 (Election Day) *No class*

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

November 26, 27, and 28 (Thanksgiving Break) *No class on November 27*

TEACHING ASSISTANT: There is not a teaching assistant for this section of PSc 100.

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>

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, interest groups, and the media. (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 in covered in Part II.

Introduction: What is Politics? (August 26)

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 1

The Founding and The Constitution

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 2 + *The Constitution & Federalist #10*

Federalism

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 3

Political Culture

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 4

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapters 5 and 6

Public Opinion

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 7

Participation

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 8

Political Parties

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 9

Campaigns, and Elections

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 10

Interest Groups

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 11

The Media

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 12

TEST #1 Thursday, October 25 (*The exam covers 12 chapters; Chapters 1-12*)

Part II -- The Institutions of American Government

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 & DiIulio: Chapter 13

The Presidency

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 14

The Bureaucracy

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 15

The Judiciary

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 16

Public Policy Overview

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 17

TEST #2 Tuesday, December 2 (*The exam covers Chapters 13-17). Exams will be returned on Thursday, December 4. Students need to determine if they want to take Exam 3 notify the instructor on December 4.*

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)

The links below are available on the online version of the syllabus.

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

[STUDY GUIDE FOR EXAM 1](#) (Study guide, terms and sample questions for Exam 1)

[STUDY GUIDE FOR EXAM 2](#) (Study guide, terms and sample questions for Exam 2)

[TEXTBOOK/LECTURE OUTLINE](#) (Outline of the text, learning objectives, and outlines of the basic lectures)

[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)

Houghton Mifflin provides numerous resources on the Internet, including practice exams, outlines, learning objectives, etc. [Click here to access these resources](#). If you are asked for a login and password to access some of these resources, use **government** for the login and **rules** for the password. This link is for the full text but will work fine for the *Essentials* version.

[Back to Professor Greene's Home Page](#)

[Back to the Department of Political Science's Home Page](#)

PSc 100 / Section 01 / Fall 2008