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PSC 100S.01: Introduction to American Government

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Course Title: PSC 100 – Introduction to American Government
Semester: Fall 2007
Course Hours: Tuesday/Thursday from 3:40-5:00PM
Course Room: Gallagher Business Building 122
Instructor: Jeffrey Doyle
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 2pm-3:25pm or by appointment
E-mail: Jeffrey.Doyle@mso.umt.edu
Teaching Assistant: Taylor Cook
TA E-mail: TBA
Course Web-Site: TBA

Course Description:
This course examines the origins, institutions, and processes of American Government. The purpose is to provide students with an introduction to the founding principles of the political system and an understanding of how these principles have been applied in practice. The course will cover such topics as the founding and the Constitution, federalism, separation of powers, national institutions, non-governmental actors, among many others.

Required Course Materials
Assigned Textbook:
We the People- An Introduction to American Politics-Shorter Sixth Edition
Ginsberg, Lowi, and Weir
Various readings from Course Web-site

Expectations, Assignments and Grading
Grading:
Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:
1. Attendance (10%)
2. Four Exams (60%)
3. Final Exam (30%)

Grading scale:
A 100-93.0%
A- 92.9-90.0%
B+ 89.9-87.0%
B 86.9-83.0%
B- 82.9-80.0%
C+ 79.9-77.0%
C 76.9-73.0%
C- 72.9-70.0%
D+ 69.9-67.0%
D 66.9-63.0%
D- 62.9-60.0%
F 59% and below
Attendance:
Your grade in this area will be based purely on your attendance in the class. At the beginning of six classes, I will pass around an attendance sheet. On this sheet you are to sign your name and student ID number. Perfect attendance for this course is if you are in attendance at five out of six attendance days. This means that you can get a tenth of your grade by just showing up to class! But every absence after the first one will cost you 2% off your final grade. Certain circumstance will be excused; such as a university-sanctioned activity, religious holiday, medical emergency, or illness. To be considered excused, you must speak to me after class the day you return. You to speak to me at the end of the semester for a absence in October, the absence will not be excused.

Exams:
There will be a four exams and a final exam in this course. Exams are closed book and will include multiple choice and an essay question. Each of the four exams will be worth 15% of your final grade. The final exam is to be cumulative and will include material covered in course lectures and the assigned reading. The final exam will be worth 30% of your final grade.

Tardiness:
I plan to start class on time and expect that you will be there. Occasionally you may find it necessary to be late. In that case, I would certainly prefer that you come to class late rather than miss the entire lecture. However, tardiness should never develop into a pattern. If you come in and missed the attendance sheet, see me after the class to make sure that you get marked. This is your responsibility as in a class of this size; I cannot know who is coming in to class after I begin my lecture. In short, please be on time.

Make-Up Policy:
Legitimate excuses for absence from an exam (e.g., a university-sanctioned activity, religious holiday, medical emergency, or illness) must be accepted prior to the exam when feasible. If you know you have an event that conflicts with an exam; I is your responsibility to come to be before the exam. A make up exam will occur during my office hours as soon as the student returns to classes. Make-up exams that are not taken within a week of the missed exam date will be graded as a zero.

Academic Honesty and Integrity:
All students in this course are expected to follow the University of Montana’s Student Conduct Code. The code can be located here: http://www.umt.edu/SA/documents/fromWeb/StudentConductCode1.pdf Those found in violation of the code will face academic penalties from the course instructor, the department or the university.

Course Calendar:
August

28th Introduction to Course-Discuss Syllabus
30th No class
September

4th  **American Political Culture**
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 1.

6th  **The Founding and the Constitution**
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 2.
Read Preamble of United State Constitution; review the rest of the Constitution
http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html

11th  **Federalism**
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 3.
Read Article IV of United State Constitution
Http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html

13th  **Civil Liberties and Civil Rights**
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapters 4 & 5.
Read Bill of Rights
http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html

18th  **Review for Exam #1**

20th  **Exam #1**
***Bring Two #2 Pencils***

25th  **Political Participation and Voting**
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 8.
Read Amendments XII, XV, XIX, XXIV, and XXVI
http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html

27th  **Political Parties**

October

2nd  **Campaigns and Elections**

4th  **Review for Exam #2**

9th  **Exam #2**
***Bring Two #2 Pencils***
11th Congress
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 12.
       Read Article I of United State Constitution
       http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html

16th Congress-Continued
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 12.

18th Federal Courts
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 15.
       Read Article III of United State Constitution
       http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html

23rd Federal Courts-Continued
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 15.

25th Review for Exam #3

30th Exam #3
       ***Bring Two #2 Pencils***

November

1st Presidency
       Read Article II of United State Constitution
       http://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/index.html
       Read Federalist Papers #69
       http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/federal/fed69.htm

6th Presidency-Continued

8th The Bureaucracy

13th The Bureaucracy-Continued

15th Review for Exam #4

20th Exam #4
       ***Bring Two #2 Pencils***

22nd Thanksgiving Vacation
27th  **Interest Groups**  
Readings:   Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 11.  
Read Federalist Papers #10  
http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/federal/fed10.htm

29th  **The Media**  
Readings:   Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 7.

December

4th   **Public Opinion**  

6th   **Review for Final Exam and Course Wrap-up**

**Final Exam:**  
December 13\textsuperscript{th} from 3:20 to 5:20 in Gallagher Business Building 122  
***Bring Two #2 Pencils***