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### PSC 100S.01: Introduction to American Government

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# AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SYLLABUS

**PSc 100 Section 1 / Fall 2006**

**T/Th 12:40 p.m. - 2 p.m. in LA #11**

**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](mailto:jeffrey.greene@umontana.edu)**

**Text: *American Government: The Essentials, 10/e*, by Wilson and DiIulio**

## 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 1 .....50% October 19 (Thursday) *The exam covers Chapters 1 - 10*

Test 2 ..... 50% December 7 (Tuesday) *The exam covers Chapters 11 - 16*

Test 3 (Optional) .....**Friday, December 15 in LA #11 at 10:10 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.** (*Test #3 covers Chapters 1-16*) You are NOT required to take this exam and must sign up for the exam on December 7.

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	.667
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](mailto:jeffrey.greene@umontana.edu) *Make-up exams will not be the same tests given during the scheduled time.*

The **last day that students can drop a class or change a grading option** is in early **October**. This is the last day to change a section of a class, change from credit/no credit to traditional letter grade or visa-versa. This date will be added to the syllabus prior to the beginning of the fall semester.

#### **Holidays at UM during the Fall Semester**

November 7 (Election Day)  
November 11 (Veteran's Day)  
November 23-25 (Thanksgiving Break)

**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>*

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

#### **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.

*Please note that these subjects correspond to chapters in the textbook, but not necessarily specific weeks. For example, the founding period usually takes three classes to cover and federalism typically takes two class periods. The class will begin with Chapter 1 on August 30 and we will cover Chapters 1-10 between August 28 and October 19 -- the date of Exam 1. The same is true for Exam 2, which will cover Chapters 11-16 between October 25 and December 7.*

### **Introduction: What is Politics? (August 28)**

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

### **Public Opinion**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 5

### **Participation**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 6

### **Political Parties**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 7

### **Campaigns, and Elections**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 8

### **Interest Groups**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 9

### **The Media**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 10

**TEST #1 Thursday, October 19** (*The exam covers Chapters 1-10*)

## Part II -- The Institutions of American Government

With the exception of civil rights and civil liberties, all of the chapters covered in Part II are about the major institutions of American government (Congress, the presidency, etc.)

### **Congress (October 24)**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 11

### **The Presidency**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 12

### **The Bureaucracy**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 13

### **The Judiciary**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapter 14

### **Civil Liberties and Civil Rights**

Wilson & DiIulio: Chapters 15, 16

**TEST #2 Thursday, December 7** (*The exam covers Chapters 11-16. Exams will be returned on Tuesday, December 12.*)

**TEST #3 Friday, December 15 in LA #11 at 10:10 a.m. - 12:10 p.m.** (*Test #3 covers Chapters 1-16*)

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

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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.

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*This version was posted in April 2006*