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PSC 471.01: Constitutional Law I - Federalism and Separation of Powers

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PSc W471
Con Law I: Federalism and Separation of Powers
Fall 1995

The course deals with governmental power in the American political system, especially concerning its source, nature, and conflicts. Two constitutional principles provide the critical perspectives: separation of powers and federalism. The discussion of separation of powers will treat national governmental powers in terms of legal and political relationships between federal courts, Congress, the president, and the bureaucracy. Examples of topics are judicial review, delegation of legislative power, legislative investigations, and presidential war power. The discussion of federalism will cover the powers of the states with emphasis on tensions resulting from distribution of powers between the central and state governments. Important themes will be state police powers and state regulation and taxation of interstate commerce. Opinions of the United States Supreme Court will serve as the basis of class discussion.

INSTRUCTOR: Jim Lopach, LA416, 243-4829

CLASS FORMAT: Students are expected to complete reading assignments prior to class meetings. In class, students will be called upon to present analyses of Supreme Court opinions. The instructor will lead discussion and lecture as required. Class discussion will concentrate on the meaning and significance of case principles, evolution of doctrine, and related contemporary problems of a practical nature.

READING ASSIGNMENT: Seven to ten pages per class meeting.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT: Each student will write four essays on topics central to the course. The essays will be typewritten, no more than two pages in length, and assigned several days prior to their due date. Grading will be based upon content (clarity and validity of argument) and correctness of writing (grammar, syntax, and logical development).

EXAMINATIONS: The midterm examination date will be announced one week in advance. The final examination, which will cover material from the midterm to the end of the course, is scheduled for Thursday, December 21, 8:00-10:00.

GRADE:

Class attendance and participation	- 10%
Essays	- 30%
Midterm Examination	- 30%
Final Examination	- 30%

HOLIDAYS: Friday, November 10
Wednesday-Friday, November 22-24

TEXT: Mason and Stephenson, American Constitutional Law, 10th Edition

DROP DEADLINE: October 9 is the last day to drop a course or change the grading option.