PSC 100S.01: Introduction to American Government

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Course Title: PSC 100 – Introduction to American Government
Semester: Spring 2008
Course Hours: Monday/Wednesday/Friday from 1:10-2:00PM
Course Room: McGill Hall 210
Instructor: Jeffrey Doyle
Office: Liberal Arts 354
Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 1:00 pm-3:00pm or by appointment
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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 Textbooks:

We the People-An Introduction to American Politics-Shorter Sixth Edition
Ginsberg, Lowi, and Weir

Canon, Coleman, and Mayor (CCM)

Expectations, Assignments and Grading
Grading:
Your grade in this course will be based on the following components:
1. Three Exams (60%)
2. Final Exam (40%)

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
Exams:

There will be a three exams and a final exam in this course. Exams are closed book and will contain both multiple choice and true/false questions. All exams will include material covered in course lectures as well as the assigned reading. Each of the three exams will be worth 20% of your final grade. The final exam will be cumulative. The final exam is worth 40% of your final grade.

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; it is your responsibility to come to me 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 at: 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:

January

23rd  Introduction to Course
      Discuss Syllabus

25th  American Political Culture
      Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 1
                 CCM, Chapter 1, Readings 1-3

28th  American Political Culture Continued
      Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 1
                 CCM, Chapter 1, Readings 1-3

30th  The Founding and the Constitution
      Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 2
                 CCM, Chapter 2, All
February

1st  The Founding and the Constitution Continued
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 2
          CCM, Chapter 2, All

4th  Federalism
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 3
          CCM, Chapter 3, Readings 12-14

6th  Federalism Continued
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 3
          CCM, Chapter 3, Readings 12-14

8th  Civil Liberties
     Guest Lecturer
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 4
          CCM, Chapter 4, Pages 125-138

11th  Civil Liberties Continued
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 4
          CCM, Chapter 4, Pages 125-138

13th  Civil Rights
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 5
          CCM, Chapter 4, Readings 18-20
          Study Guide #1 Hand Out

15th  Civil Rights Continued
     Guest Lecturer
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 5
          CCM, Chapter 4, Readings 18-20

18th  President’s Day – No Class

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

22nd  Political Participation and Voting
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 8
          CCM, Chapter 10, Readings 50-52

25th  Political Participation and Voting Continued
Readings:  Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 8
          CCM, Chapter 10, Readings 50-52
27th Political Parties
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 9
CCM, Chapter 11, Readings All

29th Political Parties Continued
Guest Lecturer
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 9
CCM, Chapter 11, Readings All

March

3rd Campaigns and Elections
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 10

5th Campaigns and Elections Continued
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 10

7th Public Opinion
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 6
CCM, Chapter 9, Readings 44-45

10th Public Opinion Continued
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 6
CCM, Chapter 9, Readings 44-4
Study Guide #2 Handed Out

12th The Media
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 7
CCM, Chapter 9, Readings 46-49

14th The Media Continued
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 7
CCM, Chapter 9, Readings 46-49

17th Exam #2
***Bring Two #2 Pencils***

19th The Bureaucracy
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 14
CCM, Chapter 7, Readings 34-35

21st The Bureaucracy
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 14
CCM, Chapter 7, Readings 34-35

24th, 26th, and 28th Spring Break – No Class
31st  Interest Groups  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 11  
CCM, Chapter 12, Readings All  

April  

2nd  Interest Groups Continued  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 11  
CCM, Chapter 12, Readings All  

4th  No Class  

7th  No Class  

9th  Federal Courts  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 15  
CCM, Chapter 8, Readings 39-41  
Study Guide #3 Handed Out  

11th  Federal Courts Continued  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 15  
CCM, Chapter 8, Readings 39-41  

14th  Federal Courts Continued  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 15  
CCM, Chapter 8, Readings 39-41  

16th  Exam #3  
***Bring Two #2 Pencils***  

18th  Congress  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 12  
CCM, Chapter 5, Readings All  

21st  Congress Continued  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 12  
CCM, Chapter 5, Readings All  

23rd  Congress Continued  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 12  
CCM, Chapter 5, Readings All  

25th  Presidency  
Readings: Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 13  
CCM, Chapter 6, Readings All
28th **Presidency Continued**
Readings:    Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 13
             CCM, Chapter 6, Readings All
             Final Exam Study Guide Handed Out

30th **Presidency Continued**
Readings:    Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, chapter 13
             CCM, Chapter 6, Readings All

May

2nd  **Final Exam Review and Course Wrap Up**

5th  **Final Exam**
3:20-5:20 – McGill Hall 210
***Bring Two #2 Pencils***