

University of Montana

ScholarWorks at University of Montana

University of Montana Course Syllabi

Open Educational Resources (OER)

Spring 2-1-2007

PSC 100S.02: Introduction to American Government

Christopher P. Muste

University of Montana - Missoula, christopher.muste@umontana.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

Recommended Citation

Muste, Christopher P., "PSC 100S.02: Introduction to American Government" (2007). *University of Montana Course Syllabi*. 6937.

<https://scholarworks.umt.edu/syllabi/6937>

This Syllabus is brought to you for free and open access by the Open Educational Resources (OER) at ScholarWorks at University of Montana. It has been accepted for inclusion in University of Montana Course Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks at University of Montana. For more information, please contact scholarworks@mso.umt.edu.

PSC 100, SECTION 2 – INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Spring 2007

MWF 11:10-12:00, Social Science 352

Professor Christopher Muste

Office: 416 Liberal Arts

Office Hours: Monday 3-5; Wednesday 12-1 and 3-4; and by appointment

Political Science Department - 350 Liberal Arts; phone 243-5202

Phone: 243-4829

e-mail: christopher.muste@umontana.edu

Teaching Assistant: Jill M. Hanson

Office: Corbin 345

e-mail: jill.hanson@umontana.edu

Office Hours: Monday 12-1; Wednesday 10-11

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The purpose of this course is to introduce you to the study of government and politics in the United States, to enable you to better understand political events and processes as they occur, and to provide you with information you can use to become more involved and effective in the political process. We will emphasize the roles played by the people in national politics, the different values and interests people have, and people's influence on political decisions. Exploring the roles people play in politics – as we study the fundamental elements of American government, dynamic political processes, and political institutions – we can understand politics in greater depth, better evaluate how well our political system functions, and more accurately understand the U.S. political system's strengths and potential for improvement.

In addition to addressing these topics, this course satisfies the General Education Social Sciences (S) requirement. The goal of this requirement is to enable you to 1) describe the nature, structure, and historical development of human organizations and/or relationships, 2) comprehend the role of theory in explaining social phenomena, 3) generate and/or interpret social science data, 4) assess and evaluate the significance of social science phenomena.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

This course builds on the knowledge gained from each part of the course, which means that your investment in keeping up with the course material will pay off in terms of how much you will learn and how interesting class will be for you. This requires that you do the readings before each class that you're prepared to contribute to class discussion and questions – even in a large class such as this one, intelligent questions and discussions are important to learning.

It is also very important to keep up with political events, which helps in understanding the course material. The best way to do this is to read news coverage of politics in a major national newspaper on a daily basis. The *New York Times* and *The Washington Post* are two of the best for political news coverage, and both have free websites. The *Wall Street Journal* has somewhat less political news, and is only available free online at Factiva, through the UM Mansfield Library website.

There will be two midterm exams (each worth 25% of the course grade) and a third exam during finals week (worth 30% of the course grade), as well as one research and analysis paper (worth 20% of the course grade) which will be due after spring break.

Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

A = 93-100	B+ = 87-89.9	C+ = 77-79.9	D+ = 67-69.9	below 60=F
A- = 90-92.9	B = 83-86.9	C = 73-76.9	D = 63-66.9	
	B- = 80-82.9	C- = 70-72.9	D- = 60-62.9	

- * Makeup exams will be permitted only if I have been notified prior to the missed exam and only if I agree that the absence was necessitated by a serious, documented emergency.
- * All three exams and the research paper must be completed in order to pass the course.
- * Check your calendar now to make sure you do not have anything that conflicts with the exams.

COURSE SCHEDULE: DATES SUBJECT TO CHANGE BY PROFESSOR

<u>DATE</u>	<u>TOPIC</u>	<u>READINGS</u>
<u>Part I. Foundations of American Politics</u>		
January 22-26	A. American Political Culture	Chapter 1
January 29 - Feb. 2	B. The Founding & Constitution	Chapter 2, Appendix pp. A3-A25 (Declaration of Independence, Articles of Confederation, Constitution of the U.S. and Amendments, Federalist Papers #10 and #51)
February 5 -7	C. Federalism	Chapter 3
February 9 - 14	D. Civil Liberties	Chapter 4, Appendix pp. A16-A20 (Amendments to the Constitution)
Feb. 16 - 23	E. Civil Rights	Chapter 5
February 19, Monday	NO CLASS TODAY DUE TO PRESIDENTS DAY HOLIDAY	

FEBRUARY 26 - MONDAY (TENTATIVE DATE) EXAM #1 – BRING SCANTRON

Part II. Politics, Dynamic Forces, and Political Processes

Feb 28 - March 5	A. Public Opinion	Chapter 6
March 7 - 12	B. The Media	Chapter 7
March 14 - 16	C. Political Participation	Chapter 8
March 19 - 23	D. Political Parties	Chapter 9
March 26 - 30	NO CLASS DUE TO SPRING VACATION	
April 2 - 6	E. Campaigns and Elections	Chapter 10

APRIL 9 - MONDAY (TENTATIVE DATE) EXAM #2 – BRING SCANTRON

April 11 - 16	F. Groups and Interests	Chapter 11
---------------	-------------------------	------------

Part III. Formal Institutions

April 18 - 23	A. Congress	Chapter 12
---------------	-------------	------------

MONDAY, APRIL 23, RESEARCH PAPER DUE IN CLASS

April 25 - 30	B. The Presidency	Chapter 13
May 2 - 4	C. Federal Courts	Chapter 15

FINAL EXAM: WEDNESDAY, MAY 9, 10:10 A.M. – BRING SCANTRON