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PSC 200.01: American Government - Issues and Policy Making

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THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA
Department of Political Science

PSc 200 American Government:
Issues and Policy Making
Spring 1997

M. Laslovich
Office: LA 415
Hrs: M 10:10-11:00,
W 10:10-11:00, 1-2:00,
and by app't (4901)

Course Description

An introduction to the practice of the American national public policy-making process. Selected current issues will be incorporated into class lectures to enhance the understanding of U.S. government and politics.

Text

Students are required to read the following texts which are available at the University Bookstore:

Kingdon, John W. Agendas, Alternatives, and Public Policies. 2th edition. New York: Harper Collins, 1995, and
Craig, Barbara Hinkson and David M. O'Brien. Abortion and American Politics. Chatham, New Jersey: Chatham House, 1993.

Course Requirements - Students will be evaluated upon the following basis:

Exam 1 (March 3) Topics I-III	30%
Exam 2 (April 14) Topics IV-VII	35%
Final Exam (Mon., May 12, 10:10-12:00) Topics VIII-IX	35%

Drop/Add and Grading Change Deadlines

February 14 - Last day to drop and add courses by phone. LAST DAY TO RECEIVE A PARTIAL REFUND FOR CLASSES DROPPED.

March 10 - Last day to drop and add courses, or change letter grade option. FEES WILL NOT BE REFUNDED AFTER THE ABOVE FEBRUARY 14 DEADLINE.

Makeup Exam Policy

Students excused from a scheduled exam may write a makeup exam. In fairness to all students, exam absences must be approved by the instructor.

The Classroom Learning Environment (authored by Dr. Ronald Perrin, Professor of Political Theory)

Wherever the learning process takes place (for example, in the library or the seclusion of one's study) it does so best when there are a minimum of distractions. This requirement poses special challenges for the learning that takes place in the lecture hall or the classroom, where the possibility of distractions is the greatest.

In order to establish and maintain a supportive learning environment for my students I will not tolerate the few individuals who might be prone to a) come to class late or leave early, b) carry on private conversations during class, or c) use the lecture hall/classroom as an opportunity to read material, such as the Kaimin, that is not relevant to the subject matter under consideration.

The Classroom Learning Environment (continued)

The only exception to these conditions concern students whose work schedules or unanticipated appointments require them to arrive for class late or leave early. In these instances I would appreciate knowing of the circumstance before it occurs and, in all such instances, request that students do so as unobtrusively as possible. Thank you.

Lecture Topics and Readings

- I Introduction - Policy Formation
Kingdon, chapter 1.
- II Government Participants - "Insiders" and "Outsiders"
Kingdon, chapters 2 and 3.
- III Public Policy Models
Kingdon, chapter 4.
- IV The "Problem Stream" - Agenda Setting
Kingdon, chapter 5.
- V The "Policy Stream" - Generation of Policy Proposals
Kingdon, chapter 6.
- VI The "Political Stream"
Kingdon, chapter 7.
- VII Convergence of the Policy Streams
Kingdon, chapters 8 and 9.
- VIII The Politics of Gun Control
Craig and O'Brien.
- IX Conclusion
Kingdon, chapter 10.

- felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas -