Honors American Government POS 2041H

Dr. Aubrey Jewett	**Session: Spring 2013 T & R**
Office: Phillips Hall 302 E	**Credit Hours: 3**
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Office Hours: T&R 8:00 -8:50 am & 1150-1:00 pm & online by email or in person by appointment	

Course Description

Politics can be defined as deciding who gets what, when and how in society. In **Honors American National Government** we look at politics in America. We examine the major political participants: non-governmental actors like voters, interest groups and party activists; and governmental ones like the president, congressional representatives and federal judges. We analyze the constitutional and federalist structures that characterize American national government. We focus on the institutions that make up the American political system including the executive, legislative and judicial branches and the processes involved in political decision making like public opinion, voter participation, agenda setting and campaigns. We survey the public policy outcomes that emerge from political debate that affect civil liberties and rights, the economy, and social welfare.

Goals

1. Factual Knowledge – Students will learn basic facts and concepts about American government, politics and policy.
2. Diversity – Students will explore the role of diversity in American government focusing on contemporary minority American culture as defined by race, ethnicity, gender, social and economic class, age, sexual orientation and physical ability.
3. Critical Thinking – Students will discuss, write and think critically about politics, policy and politicians.

Required Texts

1. Thomas R. Dye and Ronald Keith Gaddie, *Politics in America 2012 Election*, 10th ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2014.
2. CQ Researcher, *Issues for Debate in American Public Policy*, 13th ed. Washington DC: CQ Press, 2013.
3. Lou Frey and Aubrey Jewett, Eds. *Political Rules of the Road*, University Press of America: Lanham, MD. 2009.

Evaluation

60% Three Examinations - Closed book consisting of multiple choice questions on information from the Dye book, and short answers from the CQ readings. Please bring a brown scantron and a #2 pencil on test day.

15% CQ Critiques (3) – You will be assigned three dates on which your papers will be do. Each paper will summarize and analyze the policy issue we cover in the CQ Researcher selections on a particular day. You are expected to complete each summary and bring it to class on the day we are scheduled to cover that topic in class and participate in the discussion we have on these issues and turn it in at the end of class. Using 12 point Times New Roman Font with 1 inch margins, write 1500-2500 words for each article (you may go a little longer – on the title page include an appropriate title and the word count). Use the following format to organize each paper (and use subheadings for each section): Start with a brief introduction to your topic. Next you will have four sections coinciding with the four yes/no questions. For each of the yes/no questions do the following: 1. List the question and write a balanced answer that has both the yes and no response for each (label one "Yes" and cover that side of the argument and then label one "No" and cover that side). 2. Use the internet to update that question (label it "Update"). List a development that has occurred since publication of the article. Cite the source or sources for your information at the end of your update section. 3. Explain how you think about this question and why. Finally at the end of the paper conclude with a brief summary of what you have covered and learned.

15% *Political Rules of the Road* Compare and Contrast Paper (2) – You will be assigned two dates on which your papers will be due based on rules found in the chapter from your assigned day. Using 12 point Times New Roman Font with 1 inch margins write a 2500-4000 word (you may go a little longer – on the title page include an appropriate title and the word count) paper comparing and contrasting at least seven rules from seven different people found in your chapter (you may include more rules/people). Organize your paper using the following format (use subheadings for each section). Start with an introduction to your topic and identify the rules and their proponents (use a separate line for each rule/person). Next compare and contrast the rules on the following 4 criteria (have a separate subheading listed for each criteria): how do the rules apply to the dual nature of Congress (making good policy in DC versus helping reelection back home); coherence (do the rules fit together or are they at odds with one another); how easy they are to follow and if it seems that most members follow them; and one additional criteria of your choice (make it clear what that criteria is – pick something interesting/challenging – you must pick something different for your 1st & 2nd paper). You do not have to compare and contrast each rule with all the others rules on each criteria (although you can). You should try and give some specific examples from real congressional behavior as possible (from anecdotes included in the rules book, from other readings and from online sources as appropriate). Finish with a conclusion about your views of the rules and what you learned overall. Cite your sources at least every paragraph and give full references at the end including full web site address for any specific material you use.

10% Two Current Events/ Class Participation – Two current event presentations from an opinion piece concerning national politics or policy written by a columnist who has signed his or her name. The opinion piece should have appeared within one week of

your due date. Presentation should be brief (about one-two minutes) and include title, author, source, a summary of the piece and a brief evaluation of the substance of the article (not the style) – for instance do you agree or disagree and why. Choose a column from the website www.realclearpolitics.com which pulls many columns each day from around the country. You must use a different source from within realclearpolitics.com for each presentation. Class discussion will count half of your participation grade.

Policies

1. Attendance is strongly encouraged and is part of your participation grade. I take roll every class. Students who have perfect attendance in all classes preceding an exam are eligible for a bonus of from 1-3 points on the exam.
2. In fairness to students who show up for exams, make up exams are given only when the student contacts the professor before or on the day of the exam and a verifiable extenuating circumstance exists (such as illness with a physician's note or an accident with a police report). Make up exams for other reasons are at the discretion of the professor and are subject to a full letter grade penalty.
3. Late assignments are accepted up to one week from the due date but will incur a ten-point penalty.
4. This class is on a ten point grading scale with no plus/minus grades: A 100-90; B 89-80; C 79-70, D 69-60, F 59-0.
5. Disabled students registered with Disability Services should inform the professor of needed accommodations.
6. I expect professional and ethical behavior from my students in class and on tests and assignments. I enforce the UCF policies pertaining to academic honesty and students should familiarize themselves with the Golden Rule. Also please be courteous to fellow students by being on time (be unobtrusive if you are late), turning off cell phones (no texting), paying attention and staying on task if you have a laptop (not random browsing and emailing), and by staying quiet except when participating.

Course Outline

This outline may change during the semester. It is your responsibility to come to class and keep informed.

Day	Date	Assignment	Day	Date	Assignment
T	1/8	Introduction; D 1 Politics	T	3/5	**Spring Break – Use SPF 15 or higher!**
R	1/10	D 2 Political Culture	R	3/7	**Spring Break – Use SPF 15 or higher!**
T	1/15	D 2 Political Culture & D 3 The Constitution CQ 14 Immigration Conflict	M	3/11	**Withdrawal Deadline.** Last day to withdraw without grade penalty
R	1/17	D 3 The Constitution CQ 10 Student Debt	T	3/12	D 11 President CQ 1 Rising Tensions Over Iran
T	1/22	D 4 Federalism CQ 4 Water Crisis in the West	R	3/14	D 11 President CQ 5 Space Program
R	1/24	D 4 Federalism & D 5 Opinion & Participation F & J Preface, Introduction & 1	T	3/19	**Midterm Exam 2**
T	1/29	D 5 Opinion and Participation CQ 3 Fracking Controversy	R	3/21	D 13 Courts
R	1/31	D 6 Mass Media F & J 2	T	3/26	D 14 Civil Liberties CQ 11 Youth Volunteerism
T	2/5	D 6 Mass Media CQ 6 Financial Misconduct	R	3/28	D 14 Civil Liberties F & J 5
R	2/7	**Midterm Exam 1**	T	4/2	D 15 Civil Rights CQ 15 Preventing Disease
T	2/12	D 7 Political Parties	R	4/4	D 15 Civil Rights & D 16 Economy CQ 8 Attracting Jobs
R	2/14	D 7 Political Parties & D 8 Campaigns CQ 12 "Occupy" Movement	T	4/9	D 16 Economy F & J 6
T	2/19	D 8 Campaigns & Elections F & J 3	R	4/11	D 17 Social Welfare CQ 13 Child Poverty
R	2/21	D 9 Interest Groups CQ 9 Digital Education	T	4/16	D 17 Social Welfare & D 18 National Security
T	2/26	D 10 Congress F & J 4	R	4/18	D 18 National Security CQ 2 Foreign Aid and National Security
R	2/28	D 10 Congress CQ 7 Reviving Manufacturing	T	4/30	**Final Exam 8:00 am – 9:50 am**