

Political Science 110
American National Politics
Fall, 2007

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Course Description: The general focus of the course will be on the interactions between the institutions of government and the citizenry. We will look at how citizens can initiate change in the political process, and we will discuss why so few citizens actually try to make such changes occur. We will examine the interdependent relationships between the institutions of government, the citizenry, and external forces and groups, all of whom wish to have their political preferences represented and acted upon.

Due to the introductory nature of the course, we will focus almost exclusively on the national government of the United States, although we will occasionally examine state level government and compare the United States to other nations. The course will be divided into three parts. In the first part, we will examine the foundations of democracy in the United States and consider how these principles have changed over time. For the second part of the course, we will look at the ways in which citizens participate in politics as well as how citizens learn about politics. The third section of the course will focus on the institutions of government and how citizens interact with those institutions.

In order to facilitate your understanding of these topics, you should make every effort to keep up with the national news. This can be done through newspapers, the Internet, or television news. As a general education course, this course helps you develop several of the baccalaureate goals: an ability to inquire, think, and analyze; to write, read, speak, and listen; an historical consciousness; an understanding of values; and an understanding of human behavior and institutions.

Textbook:

--Thomas E. Patterson, The American Democracy, 7th ed. (McGraw-Hill, 2005).
--Martin Wattenberg, Is Voting For young People?, 2nd ed. (Pearson, 2008).

--iClicker SRS System Unit

The Patterson text is available through the rental system. An optional study guide for the Patterson text is also available for purchase at the bookstore. All of the readings are listed in the semester outline at the end of the syllabus. You are expected to come to class with the readings completed. The iClicker System unit is available from the bookstore.

E-mail: Students need to get into the habit of checking e-mail on a regular basis. You will receive reminders about exam dates, extra credit notifications, and other information. You will also receive notices if the instructor chooses to post assignments on the web. You cannot receive e-mail from the instructor unless you are registered for the class, so please verify your registration status in the course.

Desire2Learn: Portions of the course materials will be made available through the Desire2Learn system. You must be registered for the course in order to get access to the Desire2Learn materials. We will walk the class through the basics of how to use Desire2Learn. If you need more training, you can contact the BITS office @ 836-5157 or visit their office in OL 1102.

Course Requirements: There are three basic requirements for the course: three examinations and several on-line quizzes/assignments. The grade breakdown is as follows:

Examinations	100 points each (300 total)
Quizzes & Assignments	50 points
SRS Exercises	50 points

The examinations will be consist of 45 two-point multiple-choice questions, drawn from the lecture and the Patterson text, and 2 five-point essay questions drawn from the same material. The examinations are NOT comprehensive. The dates are listed on the semester outline. The instructor reserves the right to change the dates and content as needed for the course. Make-up examinations will be long essay exams given at the discretion of the instructor. Attendance is mandatory for the scheduled exams. Make-up exams will NOT be given unless you contact the instructor prior to the regularly scheduled time AND only if your inability to take the exam on time is for good reason.

The quizzes will be given through the Desire2Learn system. You will be notified of when the materials are available both in class and by e-mail. All of the assignments will be time sensitive—this means that you will have only a limited amount of time to complete them before the Desire2Learn system will deny you access to the assignments. You **cannot** make up missed assignments unless you have a university-approved absence.

Grade Distribution

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	92.0%-100.0%%
A-	90.0%-91.9%
B+	88.0%-89.9%
B	82.0%-87.9%
B-	80.0%-81.9%
C+	78.0%-79.9%
C	72.0%-77.9%
C-	70.0%-71.9%
D+	68.0%-69.9%
D	62.0%-67.9%
D-	60.0%-61.9%
F	0.0%-59.9%

The instructor reserves the right to alter the grade distribution as needed. Such adjustments will only be made to the benefit of the students. These percentages are provided to you so that you may generate an accurate assessment of your progress in the course. These percentages are not negotiable and will never be altered for the benefit of a single student. Any and all changes to the grade distribution will be applied to everyone in the course.

SRS: This class is will make substantial use of Student Response System technology, commonly known as “clickers”. You will be expected to bring your SRS unit to class every day and respond to the questions posed in the class. Your grade for this portion of the course will be determined by the number of correct and incorrect responses given over the course of the semester. The SRS system will be used for in-class quizzes, opinion surveys, and attendance. You are responsible for bringing the SRS unit to class every day. You may NOT send your SRS unit with a friend to respond for you. If you do so, you will lose ALL of the points for the SRS portion of your grade for the semester. SRS points will be updated every week—you are responsible for checking your SRS points to ensure your clicker is working properly.

Attendance: Students are expected to attend class, but attendance will not be taken on a regular basis.. Be warned, however, that failure to attend will result in missed quizzes and in-class assignments. In addition, a substantial portion of the exams will be based on material covered ONLY in lecture. Consistent failure to attend will lower your grade dramatically. You are responsible for ALL information covered in lecture, including changes in the reading assignments, changes in test dates, and in-class homework assignments. Please note that excused absences are only given for university events, verified illnesses, or a death in the immediate family. All other absences are considered unexcused and you will not be allowed to make up missed work. Mentors have been clearly instructed

that they are not to give copies of their notes to anyone without permission from the instructor. If you miss class for a legitimate reason, you **MUST** talk to the instructor before talking to the mentors about notes. I will not make my lecture notes available on-line nor will I e-mail them to students.

Students With Disabilities: Any student who has a disability that will in any way impede his or her completion of the course needs to speak to the instructor as soon as possible about alternative arrangements. All possible arrangements will be made to accommodate students in need of assistance.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Do it and you run the risk of failing the course. This should seem obvious, but it must be made clear--if you are caught cheating, every remedy made available to the instructors on this campus will be pursued. Cheating is defined as attempting to improve your grade through any method considered unethical by the university, including copying another student's test, bringing crib sheets for exams, writing notes on your hands or on the brim of your baseball cap, etc.

Plagiarism is defined as claiming any other author's intellectual work as your own. This can include copying parts of another written work and not giving the original author credit for it; using summaries of work written by others and claiming it as your own, etc. Plagiarism is **NOT** limited to copying another author's work word-for-word. If you use the author's **IDEAS** without giving the author credit for them, you are just as guilty as if you had Xeroxed the statements and put yourself down as author.

STANDARDS FOR GRADING

A: designates work of extra-ordinarily high quality; reflects thorough and comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; arguments are clearly organized with supporting ideas.

B: designates work of high quality; reflects a clearly organized but less than comprehensive understanding of the issues at hand; presents organized arguments that are supported by ideas.

C: Designates work which meets the minimal requirements of the assignment; written work reflects adequate organization and development of ideas, but arguments are communicated in a superficial or simplistic manner.

D: Designates work of poor quality which meets the minimum requirements of the assignment, but demonstrates poor organization of ideas and/or inattention to development of ideas, grammar, and spelling; treatment of material is superficial and/or simplistic; may indicate that the student has not read assignments thoroughly.

F: Designates work of poor quality that does not meet the minimum requirements of the assignment or task; fails to reflect an understanding of the issues at hand; fails to present organized arguments or fails to adequately support arguments with ideas; or which is not handed in on time.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings</u>
9/5	Hand Out Syllabi & SRS	
9/7-9/10	Culture & Democracy	Patterson 1
9/12-9/17	The Constitution	Patterson 2
9/19-9/24	Federalism	Patterson 3
9/26-9/28	Civil Liberties	Patterson 4
10/1-10/3	Civil Rights	Patterson 5

****** Exam One--Tentatively Scheduled For 10/5******

10/8-10/10	Opinion & Socialization	Patterson 6, Wattenberg Intro & Ch. 1
10/12-10/17	Political Parties	Patterson 8
10/19	NO CLASS	
10/22-10/24	Interest Groups	Patterson 9, Wattenberg Ch. 3-4
10/26-10/29	The Media	Patterson 10, Wattenberg Ch. 2
10/31-11/2	Elections and Voting	Patterson 7, Wattenberg Ch. 5-7

****** Exam Two--Tentatively Scheduled For 11/5******

11/7-11/16	Congress	Patterson 11
11/19-11/26	The Presidency	Patterson 12
11/28-12/3	The Supreme Court	Patterson 14
12/5-12/7	The Bureaucracy	Patterson 13
12/10-12/12	Economic Policy	

****** Final Exam—Monday, December 17, 10 AM******