AMERICAN GOVERNMENT SYLLABUS

PSCI 210 Section 01 / Fall 2014
T/Th 3:40 p.m. - 5 p.m. in CHCB 131

Professor: Jeffrey Greene

Office: LA 356 / Telephone: 243-6181 / E-mail: jeffrey.greene@umontana.edu
Office Hours: 2-3 p.m. (T, Th) and 3 - 4 p.m. (M)

Text: American Government: The Essentials, 14/e by Wilson & Dilulio

Students can use any edition of Wilson & Dilulio including The Essentials or full editions from the 9/e through the 14/e. Please note that some of the chapters are in a different order in the earlier editions. Also, the full edition contains a number of additional chapters on public policies.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

PSCI 210 is intended to introduce students to the fundamentals of American National Government. The course includes an examination of basic American political principles and practices, the Constitution, major institutions, and civil liberties. The objective of this course is to acquaint students with the complexities of the American political system.

Grade Weights

Test 1 .....................50% October 23 (Thursday) The exam covers Chapters 1-12  
Test 2 .................... 50% December 2 (Tuesday) The exam covers Chapters 12-17  
Test 3 (Optional).....TBA (Test #3 covers Chapters 1-17) You are NOT required to take this exam but you must sign up for the exam on December 4.

The University of Montana now uses a version of the Plus/minus grading system and a Credit/No Credit system (the CR/NCR replaces the Pass/Fail system used in the past). General education courses must be taken using the traditional letter grade to count toward one’s general education requirements.

To accommodate the Plus/Minus system a new grading scale will be used. In PSCI 210 grades will be assigned based on the following grading scale.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Point Scale</th>
<th>Point Range</th>
<th>GPA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>3.67</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>3 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>4 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76</td>
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<tr>
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EXAMS: All exams will be objective tests (true/false and multiple choice). Students should bring a standard Scantron form (the exact form is Form F-289, which is available in the UC bookstore). The length of Exam #1 and Exam #2 vary from 50 to 100 questions.

Test 3 is OPTIONAL, based on your satisfaction with your grade after Test 2. Test 1 and Test 2 are not comprehensive; Test 3 will be comprehensive (that is, include specific material from the entire semester). If you select to take Test 3, each test is weighted as one-third. The final exam typically consists of 200 questions. It should be noted that very few people ever take Exam #3.

MAKE-UP EXAM POLICY: All students are expected to take the exams at the times specified above. Make-up exams will be given in the event of extenuating circumstances. Students must make prior arrangements by calling either the Political Science Department office (243-5202) or my office (243-6181) and leaving a message. You can also send a message by e-mail to jeffrey.greene@umontana.edu. Make-up exams will not be the same tests given during the scheduled time.

Exam Rules and Expectations

All students are on the “honor system” while taking exams. The tests are “closed book” exams. That is, you cannot use notes. If caught using notes, your grade on the exam will be zero and therefore you will fail the course. Book bags and other items should be zipped closed. Everyone is expected to be quiet (no talking or noise) while taking exams. All exams given in class use Scantron Form F-289. Students must provide this form.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: There is not an attendance policy for this class. Students are expected to attend most classes. There is a direct correlation between attendance and grades.

Accessibility

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, contact me at the beginning of the semester so that proper accommodations can be provided. Please contact Disability Services for Students if you have questions, or call Disability Services for Students (DSS) for voice/text at 406.243.2243. You may also fax the Lommasson Center 154 for more information at 406.243.5330.

Holidays at UM during the Fall Semester

September 1 (Labor Day)
September 25 (No class – I will be out of town)
November 4 (Election Day)
November 11 (Veteran's Day)
November 25 (No class)
November 26, 27, and 28 (Thanksgiving Break) No class on November 27

TEACHING ASSISTANT: This section of PSCI 210 does not have a teaching assistant.

POLITICAL SCIENCE WEB SITE: http://www.cas.umt.edu/polsci

ONLINE VERSION OF THE SYLLABUS:

There is an online version of the syllabus posted on Moodle for PSCI 210-01.
COURSE OUTLINE and READINGS

Part I -- The Basics of the American Political System

This section examines the fundamentals and basic concepts of the American political system, such as the Constitution, federalism, political culture, public opinion, political parties, and interest groups. (Part II examines the core institutions, such as Congress, the presidency, the courts, and the bureaucracy). Test 1 only includes the material covered in Part I; Test 2 only includes the material covered in Part II plus the chapter on the media.

Please note that specific dates are not provided on a class-by-class basis because some areas take several classes to cover while other subjects take only a single class.


Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 1

The Founding Period, The Constitution and the Foundation of Citizen's Rights

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 2 + The Constitution & Federalist #10 (included in the back of the textbook)

Federalism

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 3

Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapters 5 and 6

Political Culture and Public Opinion

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapters 4 and 7

Political Participation

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 8

Political Parties, Campaigns, and Elections

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 9 and 10

Interest Groups

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 11

TEST #1 Thursday, October 23 (The exam covers 12 chapters)

The Media

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 12
Part II -- The Institutions of American Government and Public Policy

The chapters covered during the second half of the semester are about the major institutions of American government (Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, etc.).

Congress

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 13

The Presidency

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 14

The Bureaucracy

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 15

The Judiciary

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 16

Public Policy

Wilson and Dilulio: Chapter 17

TEST #2 Tuesday, December 2 (The exam covers Chapters 13-17). Exams will be returned on Thursday, December 4. Students need to determine if they want to take Exam 3 and must notify the instructor on December 4.

TEST #3 TBA (Test #3 covers Chapters 1-17). Normally, students make arrangements to take Exam 3 since it is an optional exam. It should also be noted that few students take Test #3.

(TEST #3 will be COMPREHENSIVE and is OPTIONAL! Students are not required to take the exam)

STUDY GUIDES and PowerPoint slide shows are located on Moodle

Study guides are located on Moodle for this class. All PowerPoint presentations and many other materials are also posted on Moodle under PSCI 210-01.

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