American Government

Political Science 2051

Fall 2021

Conrad Sharpe

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Tuesday & Thursday at 3:00-4:20PM

Office: Stubbs 308 (Third Floor of Stubbs)

Office Hours: T 4:30- 5:30 or by appointment. (Via Zoom or in Person)

Course Description

This course is dedicated to introducing students to the fundamentals of American government and politics. There are three parts to this course. The first examines the ideological, contextual, and developmental aspects of American politics and government. The second part builds upon this understanding and outlines the exact political processes that help create and participate in American politics. The third part focuses on how policies are introduced, debated, decided, and implemented by the legislative, judicial, and executive branches. Students will be exposed to a variety of material that will showcase, explain, explore, and endeavor to understand American Government and American political behavior.

Required Reading Materials

The textbook for the course is listed below. The e-book version is available for purchase in the bookstore. You may prefer to rent or purchase a physical copy of the book and these are available from on-line vendors. Note that we are using the 18th edition.

"Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy, 2020 Presidential Election edition, 18th Edition" (by George C. Edwards, Martin P. Wattenberg, and William G. Howell, Pearson: ISBN: 9780136966456).

LSU Integrative Learning Core

LSU Integrative Learning Core Integrated learning allows students to make simple connections among ideas and experiences and across disciplines and perspectives. The LSU Integrative Learning Core (ILC) curriculum is designed to develop student abilities to transfer their learning to new situations and demonstrate a sense of self as a learner. A fundamental goal of the ILC is to foster students' practical and intellectual capacities associated with integrative learning in preparation for high competence and functionality in their post-baccalaureate careers. This course fulfills the BOR Area of Social/Behavioral Sciences and provides students experience with the ILC proficiency of Inquiry and Analysis.

Academic Honesty

Students are required to abide by the academic conduct policies outlined in the LSU Code of Student Conduct. Examples of academic dishonesty include, but are not limited to cheating on exams, plagiarizing (from published sources or from fellow students), buying or selling assignments, altering grades, intentional deception, and collaborating with others without permission. Be very careful with the writing

assignments. Use of another person's words without proper citation or copying from another person's work is considered plagiarism. I reserve the right to investigate when I suspect a violation of any of these policies. All violations of the university's academic conduct policies are turned over to the Dean of Students.

How to Contact Me

The best way to contact me is by e-mail. I will make every effort to answer your questions in a timely manner (usually within 24 hours during the normal work week). If you would like to set up a specific time to talk with me directly, e-mail me and we can schedule a time that is mutually convenient to speak by telephone through Zoom or in-person if you would prefer.

Student Evaluations and Policies

The final grade for this course will be determined by a student's performance in the following areas:

Participation: 10%

Practice Chapter Quizzes 18% (1% each)

Exam #1: 20%

Exam #2: 25%

Exam #3 (Final Exam): 27%

Total = 100%

Letter grades are assigned as follows based on a student's final numerical average:

97-100 = A+

93-96 = A

90-92 = A-

87-89 = B+

83-86 = B

80-82 = B-

77-79 = C+

73-76 = C

70-72 = C-

67-69 = D+

63-66 = D

60-62 = D-

(Note: I reserve the right to change the syllabus if circumstances require it. I further reserve the right to review any and all class materials handed in to me for plagiarism.)

Accommodations

Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request.

If you have a disability that may have some impact on your work in this class and for which you may require accommodations, please see a **staff member in Disability Services** so that such accommodations can be considered. Students that receive accommodation letters, please meet with me to discuss the provisions of those accommodations as soon as possible.

Recording Lectures:

There will be no recordings of any of the lectures unless given express permission by the instructor.

Late Assignments. No late assignments will be accepted.

Make-Up Policy: Missing an exam or an assignment will result in a zero grade except under extraordinary circumstances including illness or medical emergency. My expectation is that the student will contact me as soon as possible via email to alert me regarding the emergency. This will ideally be before the student misses the deadline. I reserve the right to make make-up exams or assignments different from the original.

COVID-19 Policy: In compliance with the CDC's guidelines concerning COVID-19 facemasks are still required when teaching in-person. Given the complicated nature of this pandemic, rules and regulations may change and, therefore, so too will teaching to reflect the best interests of student's health."

Part 1: Constitutional Foundations: What is American Government?

Instructor reserves the right to amend the syllabus as needed.

August 24: Introduction to the Course

-Review of Syllabus

-What is American Government?

-What does politics mean?

What to read for August 26th :

Read Chapter 1

August 26: Fundamental aspects of American Government

-Important to Know:

-Scope

-Purpose

-Types of Democracy

Chapter 1 Quiz

August 31 – September 2: NO CLASS (HURRICANE IDA)

September 7th: Revolutionaries and the Importance of Revision

Important to Know:

-The Philadelphia Convention

-The Articles of Confederation

-What it did and what were its flaws

Quiz 1 and Quiz 2 (DUE September 14th)

What to Read for September 9th:

-Continue reading the Constitution and Bill of Rights along with Federalist 10 and 51.

September 9th: Revision and Federalism

Important to Know:

-How did the Constitution construct the Federal system?

-What are the benefits and detrimental effects of Federalism?

What to Read for September 14th

-Read Chapter 2 and Chapter 3

September 14th: The Constitution and Federalism

Important to Know:

-What is Federalism?

-What obligations do states have to one another?

-What are the Different types of Federalism?

(Quiz 3 & 4 begins after class but it will be due on September 21st)

What to Read for September 16th:

Chapter 4

September 16th: Civil Liberties & Their Importance:

Important to Know:

-The importance of tolerance, freedom of speech, equality, and the freedom of association

Things to Know:

-This will be a more open discussion on your ideas of civil liberties.

-We will be going over the seminal supreme court cases from 1919 to 2021.

September 21st: Study Session!

-Completely Optional

September 23rd: First Exam **(Covering Chapters 1-4)**

Part II: People, Policy, and Action

September 28th:

Important to Know:

-Political Involvement

-Political Ideology

-Political Participation

-Chapter 6 Quiz

What to read for September 30th:

-Read Chapter 7

September 30th: Reporting Politics (No Class)

Important to Know:

-The Role of the Media in Politics

-How political information is presented.

-Agenda Setting.

-Complete the Chapter 7 Quiz on your own time but it is due by the end of September 30th.

What to read for October 5th:

-Read Chapter 8

October 5th: Reporting Politics

Important to Know:

-Political Voting Behavior

-Money in Politics

-The Electoral College

-Chapter 8 Quiz

What to read for October 7th:

-Read Chapter 9

October 7th: Parties in the U.S.A

Important to Know:

-The role of Political Parties

-Divided Government (Good or Bad?)

-Politics and Polarization in Parties.

-Chapter 8 Quiz

What to Read for October 12th:

-Read Chapter 9

October 12th: Interests in Politics

Important to Know:

-What makes an Interest Group?

-Are Interest Groups better representations of the People?

-Chapter 10 Quiz

October 13th: Study Session!

-Completely Optional!

October 14th: Exam #2 (Covering Chapters 5-10)

Part 3: Policy Creation, Implementation, and Adjudication

October 19th: Congress and its Importance

Important to Know:

-Congressional Oversight

-Lawmaking Process

-Policy Making in Congress

Chapter 11 Quiz

What to Read for October 21st:

Read Chapter 12

October 21th: The Chief Executive

Important to Know:

-Passion and the Executive

-Presidential Leadership

-The Presidential Veto

Chapter 12 Quiz

What to Read for October 26th:

Read Chapter 13

October 26th: Taxes and the Federal Budget

Important to Know:

-Federal Revenue

-The Income Taz

-How the Government Budgets.

Chapter 13 Quiz

What to do for October 28th:

Read Chapter 14

-Study over the key concepts in the chapter and be prepared to discuss the intricacies of bureaucracy.

October 28st: Fall Holiday (No Class)

-Have a wonderful break! ☺

What to Read for November 2nd:

-Chapter 14

November 2nd: Bureaucracy

Important to Know

-Meritocracy in Bureaucracy

-Regulating and Implementing Policy

-The Power of Bureaucracy.

Chapter 14 Quiz

What to Read for November 9th:

Read Chapter 15

November 9th: The Courts

Important to Know:

-Judicial Review

-Judicial Policymaking

-Why are the Courts Important?

Chapter 15 Quiz

What to Read for November 11th:

Read Chapter 16

November 11th: Social Welfare and its Role

Important to Know:

-What is the core argument to Social Welfare?

-Types of Social Welfare

-What are the limits of Social Welfare in the United States?

Chapter 16 Quiz

What to Read for November 16th:

Read Chapter 17

November 16th: Healthcare, The Environment, and Energy Policies

Important to Know:

-What is the Government's Role in Healthcare?

-Does the Government have a role in Energy production?

-What is EPA?

Chapter 17 Quiz

What to Read for November 18th:

Read Chapter 18

November 18th: Foreign Policymaking and the International Community

Important to Know:

- Does the U.S have obligations to the international community?
- America's Foreign policy,
- The global economy and America's place in it.

Chapter 18 Quiz

November 23rd: OVERVIEW OF CLASS

November 24-29th : THANKSGIVING BREAK

November 30th: Last Class (Wrap up & Study Session!)

FINAL EXAM: DECEMBER 8, 2021 12:30 – 2:30PM