

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Political Science 2051
Louisiana State University
Fall 2016
Tu Th 12:00-1:20

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The aim of this course is to achieve a higher understanding of the political landscape in America. As part of the social sciences LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference. This course will provide a brief summary of American political institutions such as the legislative, judicial, and presidential branches of government. We will also survey other integral parts that make up the American political fabric such as voting and elections, interest groups, and the media at both the federal and state level. However, most of the emphasis in this course will be placed on American politics at the federal level. This is an introductory course that will provide students with an initial review of basic theories, concepts, and analyses in American government. There are many other topics and literature to consider beyond what is covered in this course.

PARTICIPATION

Your success in this course is dependent upon your participation and attendance. You are expected to have read the required materials before each class period and you are expected to be prepared to discuss them in a thoughtful and critical manner. Please bring a copy of the required text to each class meeting for reference during discussions. Failure to participate and be prepared will result in grade reductions.

MAKE-UP DATE

It is understandable that students may need to miss class in the case of an emergency or illness. I have therefore provided students the opportunity to make-up any of the quizzes or the midterm exam on December 1st

are to remain on silent during the entire class. The use of laptops, tablets, and other electronic devices are to be used for the sole purpose of note-taking or class discussion.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. Please review the university policies concerning plagiarism and cheating from the Code of Student Conduct handbook:

http://students.lsu.edu/saa/code_10_1

MOODLE

Login to Moodle through your myLSU account to access readings, other course materials, and grades.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Congress: The Electoral Connection, **second edition** by Mayhew

We the People, **Fifth Essentials Edition** by Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, Tolbert, and Spitzer

Collective Action and the Civil Rights Movement, **second edition** by Chen

GRADING SCALE

A+ = 97-100

A = 93-96

A- = 90-92

B+ = 87-89

B = 83-86

B- = 80-82

C+ = 77-79

C = 73-76

C-

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and participation = 20%

Quizzes = 30%

Midterm Exam = 20%

Final Exam = 30%

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

August 23

August 25

Introduction to American Politics: Part 1

Read Syllabus: Introduction, Class Format, Expectations, and Exams

Chapter 1: The Citizen and Government

Week 2

August 30

September 1

Introduction to American Politics: Part 2

Chapter 2: The Founding and the Constitution

Chapter 3: Federalism

Chapter 4: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Week 3

September 6

September 8

The Presidency

Chapter 10: The Presidency

