

**American National Government**  
**POLI-101-03**

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Office Hours:  
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Fall 2014  
Elizabeth Hall, Room 319  
MW: 12:00pm-1:15pm

**Course Description**

The primary goal of this course is to explore the context, processes, institutions, and structures of political life in the United States. While politics is not the most interesting of topics to many people, we are all influenced by political decisions everyday of our lives. Additionally, the theory of American democracy rests upon the notion of an active citizenry, in which knowledgeable and engaged citizens attempt to influence governmental outputs through their elected representatives. Therefore, a firm grasp of how and why our political system works the way it does (or does not work in some cases) is vital to our understanding of how politics affects the lives of American citizens, and how we as citizens (can) affect governmental outputs. Obviously, we cannot cover every topic relating to the American political system in great detail; however, if I do my job as instructor, and you do yours as student, we should all come away from this course with a general, yet firm, understanding of how our political system works and how it affects our lives. What we do with this knowledge is up to us.

**Required Reading:**

George C. Edwards III, Martin P. Wattenberg, and Robert L. Lineberry. 2007. *Government in America: People, Politics, and Policy*. 13<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: Pearson/Longman.

David T. Canon, John J. Coleman, and Todd Kenneth R. Mayer. 2014. *The Enduring Debate*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. New York: W.W. Norton

Barbara Norrander and Michael Corbett. 2006. *American Government: Using MicroCase Explorit*. 9<sup>th</sup> Edition. Cengage.

This course will use Blackboard as a course foundation. I will communicate with you via Blackboard and thus you must check the page everyday. All written assignments are to be submitted through the course website. Hard copies will not be accepted.

**Strategy**

The course will consist mainly of lectures (accompanied by discussion)taken from the assigned readings. However, much of the lectures will also consist of material not covered in the readings, so class attendance is essential for an understanding of the material presented, as well as good performance on in class examinations. **PLEASE DO THE READINGS BEFORE COMING TO CLASS**, a discussion with only one participant is boring!!

**Class Attendance**

Attendance is required and will be monitored by the professor.(Please see class participation below)

Absences from examinations and late journals will be excused only if the student provides verifiable documentation of accident, illness, or a university legal obligation. Undocumented absences or late journals will result in a score of zero.

### **Incompletes**

No student will be given an incomplete in the course without a verifiable accident, illness, or severe family emergency. If at all possible, these situations must be discussed with the professor prior to the end of the semester, in order for an incomplete to be given.

### **Extra Credit**

There will be no extra credit awarded to any student for any reason. Please don't ask.

### **Class Assignments**

Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%
Written Assignments	20%
MicroCase Exercises	15%
Group Exercises	05%
Class Participation	05%

### **Exams**

There will be two exams in the course. The first exam (25%) will cover material from the first four reading sections. The final exam (30%) will be cumulative and therefore cover material from the entire course. Both exams will be in essay format.

### **Written Assignments**

Twenty percent of your final grade will be comprised of two critical analysis papers. The assignment will be given out by the instructor. The first assignment will be based on material prior to the midterm, and the second assignment will be based on material following the midterm.

### **MicroCase Workbook Assignments**

Fifteen percent of your final grade will be based on weekly assignments from your MicroCase Explorit workbook. In these exercises you will use quantitative data to explore questions related to the current topic of study.

### **Group Exercises**

Five percent of your final grade will be based on group exercises. In the first week of class, I will assign each of you to a permanent group. In the first class period of each reading section, you will meet in groups and work to answer study questions from the current chapter of the main textbook.

### **Class Participation**

Five percent of your final grade will be classroom participation. Attendance is required. Absences from class and examinations will be excused only if the student provides verifiable documentation of accident, illness, or a university or legal obligation. For each reading a required quiz will be posted on Blackboard. The grades from these quizzes will comprise a major portion of your class participation score. Non-participation in these quizzes will result in a failing grade for class participation. Undocumented absences from examinations will result in a score of zero.

### **Grading Scale**

A 93-100    C 73-76

A- 90-92	C- 70-72
B+ 87-89	D+ 67-69
B 83-86	D 63-66
B- 80-82	D- 60-62
C+ 77-79	F 59 and below

Grades represent the instructor's final estimate of the student's performance in a course. The grade of A (+ or -) may be interpreted to mean that the instructor recognizes exceptional capacity and exceptional performance. The grade of B (+ or -) signifies that the student has gained a significantly more effective command of material than is generally expected in the course. The grade of C or C+ is the instructor's certification that the student has demonstrated the required mastery of the material. A student is graded C- or D (+ or -) when his/her grasp of the course essentials is minimal. The F grade indicates failure to master the essentials and the necessity for repeating the course before credit may be earned. **I** = incomplete. This is the grade given when a student cannot complete the work of the course because of illness or other extenuating conditions, and the instructor's academic Dean has approved an extension of time for the completion of a course. The work of the course must be completed two weeks prior to the last day of classes in the next academic session of enrollment (excluding summer term); but in all cases, except graduate thesis courses, it must be removed within 24 months from the date issued regardless of enrollment status; otherwise the **I** becomes an **F**. An **I** grade cannot be removed by repeating the course.

### **Academic Integrity**

As members of an academic community, we are jointly responsible for maintaining intellectual and academic honesty. I expect that all work submitted for this course is your own, that contributions from others are clearly acknowledged, and that unauthorized assistance on exams or papers has been neither given nor received. Stetson's honor pledge applies to all work done in this course. To indicate your commitment to academic integrity, I ask that you write the word "PLEDGED" with your initials or signature on each classroom test and quiz as well as major essays.

*As a member of Stetson University, I agree to uphold the highest standards of integrity in my academic work. I promise that I will neither give nor receive unauthorized aid of any kind on my tests, papers, and assignments. When using the ideas, thoughts, or words of another in my work, I will always provide clear acknowledgement of the individuals and sources on which I am relying. I will avoid using fraudulent, falsified, or fabricated evidence and/or material. I will refrain from resubmitting without authorization work for one class that was obtained from work previously submitted for academic credit in another class. I will not destroy, steal, or make inaccessible any academic resource material. By my actions and my example, I will strive to promote the ideals of honesty, responsibility, trust, fairness, and respect that are at the heart of Stetson's Honor System.*

### **Special Needs**

If a student anticipates barriers related to the format or requirements of a course, she or he should meet with the course instructor to discuss ways to ensure full participation. If disability-related accommodations are necessary, please register with the Academic Success Center (822-7127; [www.stetson.edu/asc](http://www.stetson.edu/asc)) and notify the course instructor of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. The student, course instructor, and the Academic Success Center will plan how best to coordinate accommodations.

The ASC also coordinates free tutoring on campus for students. You can meet with a tutor to review

principles, learn content-specific study strategies, and enhance content area knowledge. To review the tutoring options available and schedules, please see our website

[http:// www.stetson.edu/asc/tutoringschedule.php](http://www.stetson.edu/asc/tutoringschedule.php)

### **Office Hours**

Please take advantage of my office hours. They are strictly for the purpose of helping you understand the material presented in the class. If you can't meet me during office hours I will be glad to set up an appointment so we can meet at a time when both of our schedules allow it. You can also contact me anytime through e-mail to ask a question or to set up an appointment if you have a problem meeting during my scheduled hours.

### **Technology**

The use of cell phones for any purpose is prohibited in class. Please put your phone away prior to the start of class. If you are seen using your phone (texting, email, internet, etc.) you will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class. If you would like to use a laptop to take notes you may certainly do that. If you do choose to use a laptop you must sit in the front row. If you are seen using your laptop for anything other than classroom purposes you will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of class and prohibited from bringing your computer to class for the remainder of the semester.

### **Readings**

1. (August 25-Sept 3) Introduction
  - Government in America*, Chapter 1
  - MyPoliSciLab: Video: The Big Picture
  - Microcase: ExplorIt* : Chapter 1
  - Enduring Debate*, Chapter 1 (Warshawsky and Elazar)
- . (Sept 8-15) Framing the Constitution
  - Government in America*, Chapter 2
  - Federalist Papers*, Numbers 10 and 51
  - Roche\*
  - Dahl\*
3. (September 17-22) Federalism
  - Government in America*, Chapter 3
  - MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 2
  - Madison\*
  - Rauch\*
  - Kettl\*
4. (September 24-29) Civil Liberties
  - Government in America*, Chapter 4
  - MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 4
  - Enduring Debate*, Chapter 4
5. (October 1-6) Public Opinion and Political Participation
  - Government in America*, Chapter 6
  - MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 6
  - Asher\*
  - Putnam and Campbell\*
  - Schudson\*

### **Midterm Exam: October 8**

6. (October 13-15) Political Parties

- Government in America*, Chapter 8  
*MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 9  
*Enduring Debate*, Chapter 11
7. (October 20-22) Interest Groups  
*Government in America*, Chapter 11  
*MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 11  
*Enduring Debate*, Chapter 12
8. (October 27-Nov 3) Voting and Elections **Check change in chapters**  
*Government in America*, Chapter 9 and 10(301-319)  
*MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 8  
*Enduring Debate*, Chapter 10
9. (November 5-10) Congress  
*Government in America*, Chapter 12  
*MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 12  
*Enduring Debate*, Chapter 5  
Mann and Ornstein\*
10. (November 12-17) Presidency  
*Government in America*, Chapter 13  
*Enduring Debate*, Chapter 6  
*MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 13  
Edwards\*
11. (November 19-24) Bureaucracy  
*Government in America*, Chapter 15  
*MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 14  
*Enduring Debate*, Chapter 7
12. (December 1-December 3) The Courts  
*Government in America*, Chapter 16  
*MicroCase Explorit*: Chapter 15  
*Enduring Debate*, Chapter 8

**Final Exam, Tuesday, December 9 at 9:00am**

**While, I will try very hard to keep the course on schedule, the dates on this syllabus are tentative and I reserve the right to change them at any time.**

**Please keep a copy of all of your work until the end of the semester.**