

**Introduction to American Government
PSCI 210-01
University of Montana**

COURSE SYLLABUS

Instructor Information	Course Information
Instructor: Ray Curtis	Term: Fall 2017
Office: LA 405, hours immediately after each class	Class Meeting Days: M,W, F
Phone: 406-360-0762	Class Meeting Hours: 9:00-9:50
Email: ray.curtis@mso.umt.edu	Class Location: McGill 210 then LA 11
TAs: Haley Anderson (office hours: M, W, F 11-12) Marc Lewandowski (office hours: T, Th 11-12:30)	haley4.anderson@umconnect.umt.edu marcianne.lewendowski@umontana.edu

I. Course Description

Students will explore the nature, purpose, and forms of the American government; relationship between function and structure; dynamics of political change; governmental problems of modern society; emphasis upon constitutional principles, political processes of the national government, public opinion, interest groups, political parties, elections, Congress, the Presidency and the Courts.

II. Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Describe American political values, culture, institutions, and processes
- Analyze what is distinct and significant about American political experience and legacy
- Participate meaningfully and effectively in the American political system

III. Course Prerequisites

None

IV. Course Credits

3

V. Required Texts and Materials

O'Connor, Karen; Sabato, Larry J.; Yanus, Alixandra B. : *American Government Roots and Reform*, Twelfth Edition, 2014 Elections and Updates Edition ISBN 9780133913309

You will be expected to read the chapters in the text as they correspond to their respective current class topic.

Occasionally I will assign an article to read that you will be able to access via Moodle.

VI. Grades

If people were perfect assigning grades would not be necessary but, as Madison wrote, we are not. Therefore, you will be assigned a grade based upon your performance on the tasks listed below. It is not a perfect system although it is rather traditional. It is possible for you to earn 1000 points.

Assessment	Points possible
Random in class participation assignment, 15 times x 10 pts, One must be in attendance to earn these points	150
1 st Midterm Exam, October 6	200
2 nd Midterm Exam, November 8	200
Paper, "A More Perfect Union", due November 20	150
Final Exam, December 14 at 8 AM	300
	1000

Grading Scale (%)	
100-94	A
90-93	A-
87-89	B+
84-86	B
80-83	B-
77-79	C+
74-76	C
70-73	C-
67-69	D+
64-66	D
60-63	D-
0 - 59	F

VII. Course Policies

Late Work Policy: Late work is unacceptable unless there are extenuating circumstances. Please speak with me if that is the case. If granted an exemption expect a 10% deduction from your overall grade for that assignment.

Extra Credit Policy: There will be a few extra credit assignments offered in this course. These assignments provide you an opportunity to improve upon your grade total. Consider this a way to make up for a missed participation assignment or low test grade.

Grades of "Incomplete": The current college policy concerning incomplete grades will be followed in this course. Incomplete grades are given only in situations where unexpected emergencies prevent a student from completing the course and the remaining work can be completed the next semester I am the final authority on whether you qualify for an incomplete. Incomplete work must be finished by the end of the subsequent semester or the "I" will automatically be recorded as an "F" on your transcript.

VIII. Course Policies and Student Expectations

Disability Access: UM is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities.

If you have a disability that adversely affects your academic performance, and you have not already registered with Disability Services, please contact Disability Services in Lommasson Center 154 or 406.243.2243. I will work with you and Disability Services to provide an appropriate modification.

Attendance Policy: As stated previously, students can earn up to 150 points for random in class participation assignments.

Professionalism Policy: I do not expect any behavior that disrupts the learning environment. Please arrive on time for all class meetings.

Academic Conduct Policy: Please refer to the Student Conduct Code which “embodies and promotes honesty, integrity, accountability, rights, and responsibilities associated with constructive citizenship in our academic community at the University of Montana.”

<http://www.umt.edu/vpesa/documents/Student%20Conduct%20Code%20PDF-%20FINAL%208-27-13.pdf>)

Any student involved in academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action imposed by the instructor up to and including administrative withdrawal or a failing grade for the course. Academic integrity includes a commitment to not engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception. Such acts of dishonesty include cheating or copying, plagiarizing, submitting others’ work as your own, using Internet sources without citation, having another student take your exam, tampering with the work of another student, facilitating other students’ acts of academic dishonesty, etc. Depending on the severity of the offense, disciplinary action may range from an “F” grade on an assignment or test to an “F” in the course. Severe cases and/or repeat offenses of academic dishonesty may also result in more severe disciplinary actions up to and including administrative withdrawal.

I. Proposed Course Sequence and Related Chapter Readings (Subject to Modification)

Foundations of American Government: Chapters 1, 2, and 3

Legislative Branch: Article I and chapter 6

Executive Branch: Article II and chapter 7

1st Exam

Bureaucracy and Policy: Chapters 8, 16, 17, and 18

Judicial Branch, Civil Liberties and Rights: Article III and Chapters 9, 4, and 5

Socialization: Chapter 10

2nd Exam

Political Parties: Chapter 11

Elections: Chapter 12 and 13

Reform Paper

Media: Chapter 14

Interest Groups: Chapter 15

Final