

Introduction to American Government (Spring 2015)

Political Science 2051(6)
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Tues, Thurs 9:00 – 10:20
Coates 155
Office Hrs: Monday 9-11
Thursday 11-12; by appointment

INTRODUCTION:

This course is designed to give you an overview of American government. We will discuss how the American system of government came to be and the forces that shaped its development. In addition, the basic structure of our governing system and the avenues for participation will be addressed. Examples of public policy are woven throughout the course.

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES:

This course also aims to educate students about our political and social system and to instill a lifelong interest in the topic. Specifically the students will be able to demonstrate mastery of factual knowledge of the subject matter; understand the levels of association, from friends and family, to economy and polity. *LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.*

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

The textbook for the course is *The Basics of American Politics* by Gary Wasserman. The book is published by Pearson (2015, 15th edition). You will need three scantrons (Form No. 882-E).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students should read the chapter under discussion **prior** to the class so that they can participate in class discussion and asked informed questions. There are three exams over the course of the semester. Each exam is worth 100 points and consists of 50 multiple choice questions. The exams are not cumulative in nature. If you miss an exam, you may take a makeup exam. A makeup exam requires a doctor's note, an obituary, etc. When at all possible, please notify me in advance that you will miss the exam. Unless you are unconscious, I must be emailed within 24 hours of the missed exam in order to discuss the makeup.

Class participation is worth 100 points. Participation is assessed through in class quizzes and homework assignments. Over the course of the semester, there will be 7 quiz and/or homework opportunities. Each quiz or homework is worth 20 points. Your five highest grades will be used to calculate your participation grade. This means you have two drops. Most of these quizzes and assignments will focus on extra readings/videos that will be assigned throughout the semester.

The lectures are intended to prepare you for the exam. Material will be presented in the lecture that is not in the textbook and **will be** on the exam. Class begins at 9:00 am. Students should come to class prepared and be attentive and responsive during the lecture **with cell phones off**. Students are expected to attend regularly, **punctually and for the duration of the class**.

Students are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct which can be located at [http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/\\$Content/Code+of+Conduct?OpenDocument](http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/$Content/Code+of+Conduct?OpenDocument). Violators will be referred immediately to the Dean of Students. During exams, **all** electronic devices must be turned off and put away. Failure to abide by this rule is considered cheating.

Readings Schedule and Topic Outline

January 15	Syllabus
January 20	Chapter One
January 22	Chapter One
January 27	Chapter Two
January 29	Chapter Two
February 3	Chapter Three
February 5	Chapter Three
February 10	Chapter Three
February 12	Review
February 19	Exam One
February 24	Chapter Four
February 26	Chapter Four
March 3	Chapter Four
March 5	Chapter Five
March 10	Chapter Five
March 12	Chapter Six
March 17	Chapter Six
March 19	Chapter Six
March 24	Review
March 26	Exam Two
March 31	Chapter Seven
April 2	Chapter Seven
April 14	Chapter Eight
April 16	Chapter Eight
April 21	Chapter Eight
April 23	Chapter Nine
April 28	Chapter Nine
April 30	Chapter Nine
May 5	Exam Three (Final) 10-12