

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT
POLS 1010
Fall 2007

Class time: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 11:00 a.m.—11:50 a.m.

Classroom: Speight 129

Instructors: Dr. Jody C Baumgartner, Dr. Peter L. Francia, and Dr. Jonathan S. Morris

COURSE OBJECTIVES AND STRUCTURE

This course is an introduction to the institutions and processes of American national government. It covers four major topics: (1) the foundations of American democracy (topics include the basics of the United States Constitution, federalism, and civil rights and liberties); (2) an overview of American elections (topics include public opinion, voting behavior, interest groups, political parties, and political campaigns); (3) the role of the mass media and institutions in American democracy (topics include political news coverage and reporting, the U.S. Congress, the presidency, and the judiciary); and (4) the basics of public policy (topics include domestic policy, international policy, and national security policy).

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

(1) Stephen J. Wayne, G. Calvin Mackenzie, and Richard L. Cole. *Conflict and Consensus in American Politics* (Thomson-Wadsworth, 2007).

(2) Jody C Baumgartner and Peter L. Francia. *Conventional Wisdom and American Elections: Exploding Myths, Exploring Misconceptions* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2008).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- (1) An exam on September 14, 2007. The exam is worth 15% of your grade.
- (2) An exam on October 12, 2007. The exam is worth 20% of your grade.
- (3) An exam on November 9, 2007. The exam is worth 25% of your grade.
- (4) A final exam on December 10, 2007. The exam is worth 30% of your grade.
- (5) Class attendance and participation is worth the remaining 10% of your grade.

CLASS ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION

All students must attend class. Arriving to class excessively late or leaving class early will negatively affect your class attendance and participation grade. We will excuse absences only for an incapacitating or contagious illness, unavoidable surgery, a death in the immediate family, or if you are a member of an ECU athletic team that requires you to travel and miss class. You must present one of us with some form of verification if you wish to have your absence excused. We expect all students to complete the assigned readings before each class and to be ready to participate in each class discussion. Some your participation in class will involve the use of the “RF clicker” that comes packaged with your textbook, *Conflict and Consensus in American Politics*. Please remember to bring your clicker to every class.

EXAM ATTENDANCE

Failure to be present in class for an exam will result in an automatic grade of “0” on the test. On all exam dates, you are required to have an exam booklet and to be present in class at 11:00 a.m. If you cannot attend the exam, you must contact one of us before we have administered the test. We will grant make-up exams only for extraordinary circumstances. If you have questions about a possible school closing due to severe weather or other reasons, please call the University Emergency Phone Number at 252-328-0062.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

We will strictly enforce the university code of academic integrity in this course. According to the East Carolina University Honor Code, violations of academic integrity include the following:

- (1) Cheating. Unauthorized aid or assistance or the giving or receiving of unfair advantage on any form of academic work.
- (2) Plagiarism. Copying the language, structure, ideas, and/or thoughts of another and adopting same as one’s own original work.
- (3) Falsification. Statement of any untruth, either spoken or written, regarding any circumstances relative to academic work.
- (4) Attempts. Attempting any act that if completed would constitute an academic integrity violation as defined herein.

For more information about university policies concerning academic integrity, please visit the web at http://www.ecu.edu/cs-hhp/Academic_integrity.cfm. If you violate the Honor Code, we will report the matter to the Academic Integrity Board for disciplinary action. The penalties for violating the university code of academic integrity range from failure in the course to expulsion from the university.

CLASSROOM RULES

The classroom is a learning environment. We expect all students to observe some basic rules of courtesy, which include the following: (1) arrive to class on time and do not leave before class is dismissed; (2) turn off cell phones; (3) do not check e-mail or access the Internet during class; (4) no eating during class; (5) do not read the newspaper, listen to music through headphones, etc., during class; (6) do not sleep during class; (7) do not carry on private conversations with others in the classroom while someone else is speaking; and (8) please be courteous to your classmates and respectful of your fellow students’ views, comments, and questions. Failure to follow these rules will negatively impact your class attendance and participation grade.

DISABILITY SERVICES

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students requesting accommodations based on a covered disability must go to the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138 to verify the disability before any accommodations can occur. The telephone number is 252-737-1016.

OFFICE HOURS

Dr. Baumgartner holds his office hours every Monday and Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 10:45 a.m., and every Tuesday and Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. His office is located in Brewster A-114. If you need to reach him, his office telephone number is 252-328-2843 and his e-mail address is jodyb@jodyb.net.

Dr. Francia holds his office hours every Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday from 3:15 p.m. to 4:45 p.m. His office is located in Brewster A-119. If you need to reach him, his office telephone number is 252-328-6126 and his e-mail address is franciap@ecu.edu.

Dr. Morris holds his office hours every Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. His office is located in Brewster A-121. If you need to reach him, his office telephone number is 252-328-1067 and his e-mail address is morrisj@ecu.edu.

COURSE OUTLINE

Week 1. Conflict and Consensus in American Politics

August 22, 2007. Overview of the course; basics of American politics

August 24, 2007. American political beliefs and values

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 1, pp. 1-11; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapter 2)

Week 2. The Constitution: A Framework for Conflict Resolution

August 27, 2007. Democratic theory

August 29, 2007. The American Revolution and the Articles of Confederation

August 31, 2007. The U.S. Constitution

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 1, pp. 12-31, and Chapter 2)

Week 3. Federalism in Theory and Practice

September 3, 2007. **NO CLASS** (LABOR DAY).

September 5, 2007. National versus state's rights

September 7, 2007. Devolution and modern-day federalism

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 3)

Week 4. Issues of Freedom, Equity, and Justice

September 10, 2007. Freedom of speech, expression, and religion

September 12, 2007. Civil rights and civil liberties

September 14, 2007. **Exam # 1** (covers *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapters 1-3)

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 4)

Week 5. Political Socialization, Public Opinion, and Participation

September 17, 2007. Political socialization and political belief systems

September 19, 2007. Public opinion and polling

September 21, 2007. Political participation and voting laws

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 5; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapter 6)

Week 6. Political Interest Groups

September 24, 2007. The rise of interest groups in American politics

September 26, 2007. Interest group electoral activity

September 28, 2007. Interest group lobbying

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 6)

Week 7. Political Parties

October 1, 2007. Party systems

October 3, 2007. Parties and elections

October 5, 2007. Parties and governance

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 7; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapter 8)

Week 8. Campaigns and Elections

October 8, 2007. Voter turnout

October 10, 2007. Voting behavior

October 12, 2007. **Exam # 2** (covers *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapters 1-7)

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 8, pp. 277-297; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapters 1 & 3)

Week 9. Campaigns and Elections

October 15, 2007. **NO CLASS (FALL BREAK).**

October 17, 2007. Modern campaigns

October 19, 2007. Campaign strategies and tactics

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 8, pp. 298-322; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapters 4-5)

Week 10. Media and Politics

October 22, 2007. History of the news media

October 24, 2007. Media bias

October 26, 2007. The effects of the media

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 9; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapter 7)

Week 11. Congress

October 29, 2007. The institution and organization of Congress

October 31, 2007. Congressional lawmaking and oversight

November 2, 2007. Congressional elections

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 10; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapter 10)

Week 12. The Presidency

November 5, 2007. The powers of the presidency

November 7, 2007. Presidential leadership and policymaking

November 9, 2007. **Exam # 3** (covers *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapters 1-10)

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 11)

Week 13. The Presidency and the Judiciary

November 12, 2007. Presidential elections

November 14, 2007. Judicial politics

November 16, 2007. The Supreme Court

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 13; *Conventional Wisdom*, Chapters 9 & 11)

Week 14. Domestic Policy

November 19, 2007. Making policy

November 21, 2007. **NO CLASS** (THANKSGIVING BREAK).

November 23, 2007. **NO CLASS** (THANKSGIVING BREAK).

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapters 14, pp. 532-546)

Week 15. Domestic Policy, and International and National Security Policy

November 26, 2007. Education, health, and social welfare policy

November 28, 2007. Environmental and energy policy

November 30, 2007. National security policy

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapter 14, pp. 547-577, and Chapter 15, pp. 578-597)

Week 16. International and National Security Policy

December 3, 2007. Foreign relations and international policy

December 5, 2007. Review for the final exam

(Readings: *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapters 15, pp. 598-615)

December 10, 2007. Final Exam (covers *Conflict and Consensus*, Chapters 1-11 and 13-15; *Conventional Wisdom*, all)

The final exam is scheduled from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in Speight 129.