

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN POLITICS

FALL 2006

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Office Hours: MW, 3:00-4:30 or by appointment

Course: Political Science 101
Section: 006
Location: Rm. 133 BHS
Time: MW, 7:00-8:45 PM

Description: This course is an introduction to the political institutions and processes of the United States and Nevada. Successful completion of this course satisfies UNLV's U.S. and Nevada Constitution requirements. During the course we will examine political, economic and social issues as they relate to political institutions and processes.

Required Texts:

Government by the People, Sixth Edition (Teaching and Learning Classroom Edition), Magleby, O'Brien, Light, Burns, Peltason and Cronin

Sagebrush State, Nevada's History, Government and Politics, Second Edition, Michael W. Bowers

Optional Text:

Coursepack: Outline of required texts and lectures

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for Political Science 101.

Attendance: Roll will not be taken; however, students will be responsible for all material, including that presented in class. Some questions on each test will be derived only from lecture material. Therefore, regular class attendance is strongly advised.

Academic Misconduct: Academic integrity is a legitimate concern for every member of the campus community; all share in upholding the fundamental values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness, responsibility and professionalism. By choosing to join the UNLV community, students accept the expectations of the Academic Misconduct Policy and are encouraged when faced with choices to always take the ethical path. Students enrolling in UNLV assume the obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with UNLV's function as an educational institution.

Examples of academic misconduct include plagiarism (using the words or ideas of another, from the internet or any source, without proper citation of the sources) and cheating. Any attempt to cheat on an examination will be subject to the most severe penalty the University allows.

Copyright and Fair Use Laws: The University requires all members of the University Community to familiarize themselves with and to follow copyright and fair use requirements. YOU ARE

INDIVIDUALLY AND SOLELY RESPONSIBLE FOR VIOLATIONS OF COPYRIGHT AND FAIR USE LAWS. THE UNIVERSITY WILL NEITHER PROTECT NOR DEFEND YOU, NOR ASSUME ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR EMPLOYEE OR STUDENT VIOLATIONS OF FAIR USE LAWS.

Violations of copyright laws could subject you to federal and state civil penalties and criminal liability as well as disciplinary action under University policies. To familiarize yourself with copyright and fair use policies, you are encouraged to visit the following website:

<http://www.unlv.edu/committees/copyright/>.

Class Conduct and Interruptions: In accordance with UNLV's student conduct code and student expectations, it is important to maintain a class atmosphere conducive to listening, learning and concentration. Cell phones and pagers should be turned off and put away during class. Late arrivals, early departures, leaving and returning, eating in class, "side-bar" conversations and other inattentive behavior during class interrupt the flow of discussion and concentration of other students, and should be avoided. Polite intellectual discourse and inquiry, with respect for the views and opinions of each other, will be the norm in class. No tape recording of class sessions is permitted, as it can inhibit class participation.

Disabilities: The Disability Resource Center (DRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities. The DRC is the UNLV office that reviews and maintains disability documentation for students and provides them with an official Academic Accommodation Plan to present to the faculty if an accommodation is warranted. According to the DRC, faculty should not provide students with accommodations without being in receipt of this plan.

UNLV complies with the provisions set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, offering reasonable accommodations to qualified students with documented disabilities. If you have a documented disability that may require accommodations, you will need to contact the DRC for the coordination of services. The DRC is located in the Student Services Center (SSC), Room 137, and the contact numbers are: VOICE (702) 895-0866; TTY (702) 895-0652; FAX (702) 895-0651. For additional information, please visit

<http://studentlife.unlv.edu/disability/>.

Assignments and Grading:

Exams

There will be three closed-book exams consisting of multiple choice, true-false and short answer essay questions. You will need to bring a Scantron form, a pencil and an exam book to each exam. The results of each exam will comprise one-third of your grade.

Students will be graded on knowledge and understanding of textbook reading assignments and class lectures. Reading assignments and exam dates are set forth in the schedule below. The exams are not cumulative. Material from the readings not included in the lectures may be the basis of exam questions. Written study guides for the exam will be provided preceding the exam.

Electronic dictionaries are not permitted to be used during exams.

Make-up Exams and Early Exams

Religious Holidays: If you miss an examination because of a religious holiday that you observe, you will have the opportunity to make up the examination shortly thereafter. You must notify the instructor by September 6 if you anticipate missing an examination because of observance of a religious holiday so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Official Extracurricular Activity: If the date of any of the examinations conflicts with your participation in an official extracurricular activity, you will have the opportunity to make up the examination shortly thereafter. You must provide official written notification no less than one week prior to the examination so that alternative arrangements can be made.

Extraordinary Circumstances: Ordinarily, make-up exams will not be given except for the reasons cited above. However, if extraordinary circumstances require you to miss an examination you will have the opportunity to make up the examination on the last day of scheduled classes only (December 6).

There will be no make-up exam for the third exam, which will be given during exam week.

Early exams will not be given.

Class Discussions of Current Events

Discussions of current events related to U.S. and Nevada government and political activities will enhance your understanding of material covered in the text and the lectures. You should become familiar with current political events and trends through regular reading of newspapers and/or internet news sites, and through watching or listening to television and radio news and discussion shows.

Extra Credit

There are no extra credit opportunities in this class.

Grade Percentages

90%-100% = A

80%-89% = B

70%-79% = C

60%-69% = D

Below 60% = F

Students in the B, C and D ranges whose final percentages approach the next higher grade may receive a B+, C+ or D+. No minuses will be given.

COURSE SCHEDULE

August 28, 30

Introduction; Syllabus; Ungraded Pre-Assessment
Constitutional Democracy

Magleby – Chapter 1

September 6

American Federalism
Nevada History and Statehood

Magleby – Chapter 2
Bowers – Chapters 1 and 2

September 11, 13

Political Culture and Ideology

Magleby – Chapter 3

September 18, 20

American Political Landscape

Magleby – Chapter 4

September 25, 27

Political Parties and Interest Groups

Magleby – Chapter 5

October 2

First Exam

October 4

Public Opinion, Voting and Elections
Nevada Political Parties and Elections
Nevada Interest Groups and Lobbying

Magleby – Chapter 6
Bowers – Chapters 4 and 5

October 9, 11

The Media and American Politics

Magleby – Chapter 7

October 16, 18

U.S. Congress
Nevada Legislature

Magleby – Chapter 8
Bowers – Chapter 6

October 23, 25

U.S. Presidency
Nevada Executive

Magleby – Chapter 9
Bowers – Chapter 7

October 30, November 1

U.S. Federal Bureaucracy
Nevada City and County Governments
Nevada State and Local Finance

Magleby – Chapter 10
Bowers – Chapters 9 and 10

November 6

Second Exam

November 8

U.S. Judiciary
Nevada Judiciary

Magleby – Chapter 11
Bowers – Chapter 8

November 13, 15

First Amendment Freedoms

Magleby – Chapter 12

November 20, 22

Equal Justice Under The Law
Civil Rights and Liberties in Nevada

Magleby – Chapter 13
Bowers – Chapter 3

November 27, 29

Making Economic and Social Policy

Magleby – Chapter 14

December 4

Making Foreign and Defense Policy

Magleby – Chapter 15

December 6

Make-up examinations

December 11 (8:10 pm)

Ungraded Post-Assessment
Third Exam