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Political Science 1100–2
Fall Semester 2005
7:30am – 8:50 am
Room 202

I. Course Overview

Public opinion polls show that we Americans actually know very little about our political system. We know who the President of the United States is but a large number of us cannot name the vice president and even fewer of us know the names of our U.S. senators and representatives. We know little about the policymaking process and almost nothing about the federal budget. We are critical when congress and the president bicker and fail to address important issues, not understanding the need for negotiation and compromise in a pluralistic society.

This class is designed to help students get a start in knowing more about the challenges of governing in a democratic system, the structure of our federal government, the relationship of the states to the national government, the powerful influence of the media and interest groups, the importance of civil rights and liberties, and the growing significance of the global economy and international politics. We will also discuss how unique the United States is even when compared to other democracies of the world. And last, we will try to draw some conclusion about what kind of democracy we actually have – pluralist or majoritarian, or maybe an elitist plutocracy.

II. Class Dates

August	25	Introduction to the class
		Chapter 1 Freedom, Order or Equality
	30	Chapter 2 Majoritarian or Pluralist Democracy
September	01	Chapter 3 The Constitution
	06	Chapter 4 Federalism
		Review for Test #1
	08	Test #1: Chapters 1-4
	13	Chapter 5 Public Opinion and Political Socialization
	15	Chapter 6 The Media
	20	Chapter 7 Participation and Voting
		Chapter 8 Political Parties

September	27	Review for Test #2
	29	Test #2: Chapters 5-10
October	04	Chapter 9 Nominations, Elections, and Campaigns
	06	Fall Break – No Class
	11	Chapter 10 Interest Groups
	13	Chapter 11 Congress
	18	No Class – Professor out of town
	20	Chapter 12 The Presidency
	25	Chapter 13 The Bureaucracy
	27	Chapter 14 The Courts
November	01	Chapter 15 Order and Civil Liberties
	03	Chapter 16 Equality and Civil Rights
	08	Review for Test #3
	10	Test #3: Chapters 11-16
	15	Chapter 17 Policymaking
	17	Chapter 18 Economic Policy
	22	Chapter 19 Domestic Policy
	24	Thanksgiving Holiday - no class
29	Chapter 20 Global Policy	
December	01	<u>America the Unusal</u>
	06	<u>America the Unusal</u>
	08	Review for Final Exam
	12	Final Exam from 8:00 to 10:00AM Chapters 17-20 and <u>America the Unusual</u>

III. Books, Tests and Other Important Information

Books: There are two books for the class.

Janda, Kenneth, et.al., The Challenge of Democracy (Houghton Mifflin, eight edition, 2005). This is the textbook. We cover it chapter by chapter as the syllabus indicates. The text has six main parts. Part 1 discusses the purposes of government and the models of democracy. The authors then discuss why they think the United States is a pluralist democracy and not a majoritarian democracy or elitist plutocracy. Part 2 covers the U.S. Constitution and our federal system. Part 3 discusses the role of the media, special interest groups, political parties and other important elements in our participation in the political process. Part 4 deals with the structure of our national government with chapters on each branch and the bureaucracy. Part 5 deals with our civil liberties and civil rights. Part 6 treats the process of making public policy by discussing how public policy is developed

and implemented. Part 6 discusses three major public policy arenas: economic policy, domestic policy, and global policy.

Kingdon, John, *America the Unusual*, (Worth Publishers, 1999). This short monograph gets very good reviews from students in the end of course evaluations. Kingdon writes about how unique the American political system is even among other world democracies. He then writes about why it is so unique and how it came to be that way.

Tests

All tests are a combination of multiple choice, fill in the blank or short answer essays. You are expected to take the tests as scheduled. If circumstances prevent this, and you notify me ahead of the scheduled test, arrangements can be made for a different test time without penalty. Any student missing the test on the scheduled date and who has not notified me ahead of the test may still take a make-up test within a week but will be penalized 15 percent. No test may be made up after a week has passed.

Grading is not done on a curve. Rather grades are based on a straight line scale: 90% and up is an A; 80-89% is a B; 70-79% is a C; 60-69% is a D; and 59% and below is an E. I may make some minor adjustments to this policy based on overall class performance but they would be very minor.

Attendance and Bonus Points

I do not take attendance, but I will always provide bonus point questions for all tests. The bonus point questions and the answers are given in class and can only be obtained by attending the class in which the bonus point question is given. Bonus points can total up to 10% of the total possible points.

Extra Credit

There will be no extra credit reports, papers, etc. other than the bonus points already discussed.

Contacting the Professor

I am an adjunct associate professor and therefore have no campus office or phone. However, I want to be available and accessible. I encourage you to **email** me when you have questions or concerns and I will respond quickly, usually within 24 hours. You can also call me at my home anytime. If I am not there (which is usually the case) leave me a message and I will call you back, usually that evening when I get home from work. If all else fails you may call me at work, but I prefer to have this as a last option. If you miss class, I strongly encourage you to contact me (or my teaching assistant) as soon as possible to see what you missed. Since my work sometimes forces me to change the agenda at short notice, consistent attendance or immediate contact with me after missing a class is to your definite advantage.

Persons with Disabilities

Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations for the class are encouraged to notify me at the beginning of the semester. Written documentation should be provided and the type of accommodations need described. I will do all I can to make the class work for you.

Important Semester Dates

Last day to drop classes	September 2
Labor Day Holiday	September 5
Last day to add classes	September 6
Last day to elect CR/NC	September 6
Tuition payment due	September 6
Fall break	October 6-7
Thanksgiving Holiday	November 24-25
Classes end	December 9
Final exam period	December 12-16
Grades available	December 27