

**PLEASE NOTE: The instructor for the class is a liberal.<sup>1</sup> If this is a problem, then drop the course.**

Political Science 1100-003  
U.S. NATIONAL GOVERNMENT  
Spring 2008

Instructor

Lauren Holland  
302 OSH, 581-4910

Office Hours: T, 2-3pm, TH,  
12:05-1:05 & by appointment.  
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l-holland@hotmail.com\*\*

**This is a large class. It is up to you to contact the instructor and/or graduate assistants during office hours or by e-mail if you need help.**

Teaching Assistants/ Supplemental Instructor

Lars Moleni (TA)  
309 OSH, 581-4420  
[larsmoleni@gmail.com](mailto:larsmoleni@gmail.com)  
Office Hours: T, 8-9 a.m.  
Discuss/review:  
Th, 8-9 a.m.

Amanda Clark (TA)  
311 OSH, 581-6047  
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Office Hours: M, 10-11 a.m.  
Discuss/review: W, 1:30-2:30.

Chris Stocking  
[lcstocking@lycos.com](mailto:lcstocking@lycos.com)  
323 SSB  
Office Hours:  
Discussion sessions to be arranged

This class is an introductory survey course designed to acquaint students with the institutions, politics, and policies of the American political system, and the mechanics of citizenship. An underlying assumption of this course is that each individual is an indispensable part of the governmental system, a status that carries important rights and responsibilities. The objective of the course is the empowerment of each student; that is, to enable students to make their own political decisions. As such, a range of ideological positions is introduced including ones that will offend those who are attached to a rigid set of opinions

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<sup>1</sup> "One who is open-minded or not strict in the observance of orthodox, traditional or established forms or ways." *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*.

(i.e., a dogma). *If you are not prepared to entertain both negative and positive positions on affirmative action, free speech, abortion, the Iraqi War, gun control, and gender equality, then take a different section of PS 1100.*

### Required Text

Edward S. Greenberg and Benjamin I. Page, *America's Democratic Republic*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2007)

John T. Rourke, ed., *You Decide 2008: Current Debates in American Politics* (2008).

In addition, each student is required to read a daily newspaper such as the *Salt Lake Tribune*, *Deseret News*, or *New York Times*. All three papers are freely available to students on campus. The editions on the internet are NOT complete ones so relying upon this source is a liability for the news quizzes. **The questions for the news quizzes are taken from the *Salt Lake Tribune*.**

### Course Requirements

Examinations: There will be four examinations. The dates of the examinations are listed below in the syllabus. None of the exams is comprehensive. Each exam will include a couple of short answer/essay and twenty (20) multiple-choice, true-false, and/or short identification questions. Make-up exams are given only to students who cannot attend due to illness or an athletic or debate commitment, *and who have contacted the instructor in advance*. **Under no circumstances will late exams be given to students who cannot attend due to family or work commitments, including weddings, family vacations or job interviews out of town. If this course conflicts with your work schedule or family responsibilities, then drop the class.**

News Quizzes: There will be five (5) news quizzes formatted to test students' understanding of current events in national, state and local government, and in foreign affairs in which the United States government is involved. Only four (4) quizzes will be counted towards your final grade. This means that everyone can afford to miss at least one quiz, or your lowest quiz score automatically will be dropped. Each quiz will include five (5) short answer questions. The quiz will be comprehensive for the two (2) or three (3) weeks preceding each quiz excepting the morning of the test. **There is no early, late or make-up option for quizzes.** The exceptions are athletes or debate members who provide documentation of game or meet conflicts during the first full week of class. The dates of the quizzes are listed below on the syllabus.

Films: Students are required to watch two films during the semester. You will be tested on information about the film on an examination as indicated in the syllabus. Both films are available in DVD/VHS formats.

- *Crash*<sup>2</sup>
- *Why We Fight*

Journals: Each student is required to keep a journal during the semester. Please purchase an appropriate booklet or folder. If you do not wish to purchase a booklet, we will provide re-cycled ones. The purpose of the journal is to provide a regular (but private) opportunity for students to record their reactions to the material in the course. For example, material that angered, informed, impressed, confused, enlightened, and/or depressed you could be recorded. Also, questions that you would like to have addressed and/or information clarified would be appropriate journal entries. You are required to record at least twice a week, preferably after class. Each journal entry should fill at least one page of a standard size booklet. Journals will be collected at the end of the semester. **To receive credit for the journal exercise, you must have complete (one full page) entries for each day of class and be in attendance on the day that the journals are collected. NO EXCEPTIONS.**

Class Participation: Student participation is strongly encouraged. Given the sometimes controversial and challenging nature of the material in the class, students are invited to ask questions for clarification or make pertinent contributions to a class lecture.

Students are expected to arrive to class on time (9:10 a.m.) and stay until the class has been formally dismissed (10:30 a.m.). Eating, talking and/or walking in and out during the lecture period are prohibited and may affect your grade.

Four Examinations (20 points)	80 points
News Quizzes (5 points each)	20 points
Journal	10 points

*There are no extra-credit options for this course other than those indicated on this syllabus.*

Grading: Students are credited with points for the amount of correct information that is provided on the exams and quizzes. **Letter grades are assigned on a curved basis beginning with the student with the highest number of points.** Thus, if 92 out of a 100 is the top score, then the grades are distributed

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<sup>2</sup> This movie is rated R for content and language neither of which is gratuitous but critical to the film's message of intolerance.

accordingly with 92 (not 100) beginning the As. Final grades are computed on a point basis, with the top score once again beginning the distribution. Consideration will be given to students who attend class and review sessions regularly. **University regulations limit an incomplete to exceptional cases and students who have completed at least 80% of the course work.**

Teaching Assistants and Supplemental Instructor: There are two graduate students and one undergraduate supplemental instructor assigned to this course. The TAs are instructed to help students with anything related to the class such as preparing for exams and news quizzes. The TAs also will hold weekly review/discussion sections, and office hours. The responsibility of the Supplemental Instructor is to hold weekly review/discussion sections. The office hours and/or discussion sections of the TAs, SI and instructor have been staggered to provide ample opportunity for every student in this class to receive personal attention if he/she takes the initiative.

Discussion Sections: Voluntary weekly discussion sections have been scheduled throughout the semester to provide an opportunity for students to review material in a small forum with a teaching assistant or the instructor. The days and times of the review sessions held by the teaching assistants are listed below. You do NOT need to attend the same session each week.

Wednesday, 1:30-2:30 p.m., OSH 113 (Clark)  
Thursday, 8-9 a.m., OSH 111 (Moleni)

WebCT: Announcements, study guides, the syllabus, hints for news quizzes and grades will be posted on WebCT. The discussion option also will be activated.

Course Outline and Reading Assignments: It is suggested that you complete the assigned readings either prior to or immediately following the class lecture.

Week One\*:

January 8: Overview of the class.

- Greenberg & Page, Preface.

January 10: Why be interested and involved in government and politics? How does a society that is divided by race, culture, ethnicity, religion, and socioeconomic status avoid implosion? Is America a democracy? What core values define America as a democracy?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 1 & *The Declaration of Independence* (appendix)
- Rourke, Ch. 5, "Immigration."

Week Two\*:

January 15: Why did the Founders replace the Articles with the Constitution? What challenges confronted those attending the constitutional convention in 1787? What are the main features of our constitution? Were the Founders selfless patriots or selfish elites? How did the Founders resolve controversies over slavery and states' rights? Is the U.S. Constitution still viable today?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 2, *The U.S. Constitution* (appendix), and *Federalist Papers #10 & #51* (appendix)

January 17: The unique nature of American Federalism. What are the constitutional foundations of state and federal governmental powers? What factors and forces are responsible for changes in state-federal relations? What are the major features of federalism today? Is the current arrangement among federal, state and local governments conducive to solving America's problems?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 3
- Rourke, Ch. 2, "Medical Marijuana."

Week Three\*:

January 22: Federalism, contd.

January 24: **News Quiz #1.** Review for Exam #1.

Week Four\*:

January 29: **Exam #1.** In class.

January 31: Politics and the People: public opinion, political learning and the media. What constitutes public opinion? How is public opinion formed? What role does public opinion play in policymaking? What happens when the "public" doesn't agree and there are various "opinions"? How do we learn our political beliefs and attitudes? What role do the mass media play in a democracy? Is a free and open press critical to democracy?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapters 6 & 7 (only sections relevant to lecture topics).

Week Five\*:

February 5: Interest Groups. What sorts of people join interest groups and why? What tactics do interest groups employ to influence government and politics? Why are some interest groups more successful than other ones? Do interest groups perform functions that are critical to or do they actually undermine democracy? Is government responsive to interest groups in ways that skew policies towards certain groups at the expense of the public interest?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 8

February 7: Political Parties. What is a political party? What do political parties do? Do political parties contribute to or undermine democracy?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 9

Week Six\*:

February 12: Elections & Citizen Participation: an historical perspective. **News Quiz #2**

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 10
- Rourke, Ch. 9, "Hillary Clinton."

February 14: What constitutes political participation? Who participate/votes and why? Who doesn't participate/vote and why? Does it matter? What role does money play in elections & political participation? Does mass participation contribute to or undermine democracy?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 10

Week Seven\*:

February 19: **Review for Exam #2.**

February 21: **Exam #2.** In-class.

Week Eight\*:

February 26: Congress. How is the U.S. Congress organized? What functions are performed by members of Congress? What explains congressional behavior and output?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 11 & *Presidents and Congresses, 1789 -2005* (appendix)

February 28: Congress, contd.

Week Nine\*:

March 4: The Presidency. What powers do presidents hold and what functions do they perform? Is America's president too strong or too weak? What prevents presidential malfeasance?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 12 & *Presidents and Congresses, 1789 -2005* (appendix)

March 6: Presidency, contd. How do war powers illustrate the dynamic relationship between Congress and the Presidency? What role is performed by the federal bureaucracy? **News Quiz #3.**

- Rourke, Ch. 24, "Iraqi War," available on-line at [www.ablongman.com/YouDecide/](http://www.ablongman.com/YouDecide/)

- See the movie, *Why We Fight*.

Week Ten\*:

March 11: **Review for Exam #3.**

March 13: **Exam #3.** In-class.

**Spring Break= No class. March 17-21.**

Week Eleven\*:

March 25: How is the federal judiciary organized? What functions are performed by federal judges and justices? How does the process for making judicial decisions differ or resemble that for making political ones? What important changes has the Supreme Court of the U.S. undergone?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 14, *Federalist Paper #78* (appendix), & *Chief Justices of the Supreme Court, 1789-2004*
- Rourke, Ch. 14, "Ideology of the Court."

March 27: Courts, contd. **Quiz #4.**

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 14
- Rourke, Ch. 1, "Guns."

Week Twelve\*:

April 1: Civil Liberties: freedom of expression. What does it mean to have freedom of expression? What happens when my expression of speech, press, religion, protest or assembly violates the constitutional rights of others?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 4
- Rourke, Ch. 3, "Under God," Ch. 7, "Violence on T.V."

April 3: Civil Liberties: due process of law. What does it mean to be guaranteed due process of law?

- Rourke, Ch. 15, "Fleeing Vehicles," Ch. 16, "Death Penalty."

Week Thirteen\*:

April 10: Civil Liberties: privacy, abortion and gay rights. What does our right to privacy cover? Is it a constitutional right?

April 12: Civil Rights: "[t]he test of the moral quality of a civilization is its treatment of the weak and powerless." Judge Jerome Frank. How would Judge Frank evaluate America using this standard?

- Greenberg & Page, Chapter 5.
- Watch the movie *Crash*.

Week Fourteen\*:

April 17: Civil Rights, continued.

- Greenberg & Page, Ch. 10, re-read relevant pages.

April 19: Civil Rights, continued. **Quiz #5.**

Week Fifteen\*:

**April 22: Review for Exam #4.**

**April 25: Exam #4. 8:00-10:00 a.m. In-class.**

- \*An asterisk indicates the approximate nature of the dates. This may affect the content and/or scheduling of the examinations. Students who do not attend class regularly and rely on this syllabus may be insufficiently prepared for the exams and news quizzes.
- \*\*There sometimes is a compatibility problem between csbs (poli-sci) and AOL, MSN and hotmail. If I do not respond to your e-mail within 24 hours, please contact me through my hotmail account.
- Persons with disabilities requiring special accommodations to meet the expectations of this course are encouraged to bring this to the attention of the instructor as soon as possible. Written documentation of the disability should be submitted during the first full week of the semester along with the request for special accommodations. Please contact the Center for Disabled Student Service, 160 Union Building, 581-5020.
- NOTE: Any student caught cheating on an exam or news quiz will receive a failing grade for the entire class.