

Clark University
Political Science/LAS 050: Introduction to American Government
Office: 308 Jefferson Academic Center
Office Hours: MW 10-10:45am, Th 10-11:00am
Other hours by appointment

Spring 2014
Professor: Mark C. Miller
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Required Books:

O'Connor, Sabato, and Yanus, Essentials of American Govt: Roots and Reform, 2012 ed. Pearson.
Referred to as "Text".
McKenna and Feingold, Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Controversial Pol Issues, 18th ed. 2012.
Dushkin. Referred to as "Reader". (Make sure you have the right edition of this book).
Sidlow, Challenging the Incumbent. 2004. CQ Press.
Spitzer, The Politics of Gun Control, 5th ed. 2011. Paradigm.
Lewis, Gideon's Trumpet. 1964. Vintage.
Baglione, Writing a Research Paper in Political Science, 2nd edition. 2011. CQ Press.

All books are available at the university bookstore and are on closed reserve at Goddard Library.

In addition, students must read daily the New York Times. Current events quizzes will come from the Monday through Friday front sections of the hard copy version of this newspaper. Individual hard copy subscriptions can be purchased from the professor for \$49.00 for the semester. More details about the current events quizzes will be discussed in class.

<u>Exams and Grading:</u>	Current Events Quizzes	10%
	2-3 page paper	10%
	First in-class all-essay Midterm	15%
	Second in-class all-essay Midterm	20%
	10-15 page research paper	20%
	Two Hour Final Examination	25%

EXPECTATIONS OF STUDENTS: In order to get their money's worth and have fun with this class, students should want to work hard and think hard. Thus I assume all students will always attend class and complete all reading and paper assignments on time. Since this course transfers as 4 semester hours, students should expect to spend at least 180 hours on this class over the course of the semester, including the time when the class actually meets. Students must **contact the professor BEFORE the due date** concerning any late papers or problems with exams. Late papers will be penalized 5 points per day. Hard copy papers must be turned in; no emailed papers will be accepted. **No electronics in class** without permission.

Class participation and attendance will weigh heavily in deciding borderline grades. Make-up exams or quizzes will be given only under extraordinary circumstances. **Leave a voicemail or email** if you can't reach me in person concerning any problems with the class. I only respond to email during normal business hours. I often respond to voicemails more quickly than emails.

Reading and other Assignments:

What is Democracy? — January 13, 15, 17

Text: Chpt 1 and pp 409-418

Reader: Issue 1

Reserve Reading: Islam in Two Americas

Reserve Reading: Americans More Pessimistic

The Constitution — January 22, 24

Text: Chpt 2

Reader: Issue 15

Ideology: Modern American Liberals and Conservatives — January 27, 29, 31

Text: pp 259-263

Reader: Intro Portion and Issues 3, 14

Reserve Reading: Two Parties Place Political Focus on Inequality

Public Opinion and the Media — February 3, 5

Text: Chpt 10

Political Socialization Paper: 2–3 page paper due Friday February 7

Voting and Elections — February 7, 10, 12, 14

Reserve Reading: California Democratic Party v. Jones

Text: Chpt 12

Reader: Issues 17, 4

Sidlow: **ALL**

Reserve Reading: House GOP Trims Agenda, Looking to Avert Election-Year Trouble

Reserve Reading: Who Owns the GOP?

Reserve Reading: Turning the Political Map Into a Partisan Weapon

Political Parties and Interest Groups — February 17, 19

Text: Chpt 11

Reader: Issues

Reserve Reading: Republicans Turn Judicial Power to Campaign Issue

Reserve Reading: Tangled Role in GOP War Over Tea Party

Reserve Reading: Keeping Score

Reserve Reading: Many D.C. Think Tanks Now Players in Partisan Wars

First Midterm — Friday, February 21 (tentative date)

Federalism — February 24, 26

Text: Chpt 3

Reader: Issue 18

Reserve Reading: Access to Abortion Falling as States Pass Restrictions

Library Research Presentation on Term Papers and other Research – Friday Feb 28

Report to the reference desk on the second floor of the library instead of going to the classroom and bring your laptops to the library for the presentation.

Congress — March 10, 12, 14, 17, 19

Text: Chpts 6, 13

Reader: Issues 7, 12, 20

Spitzer: **ALL**

Reserve Reading: Congressman Pushes Staff Hard, or Out the Door

Reserve Reading: Lawmakers' Own Expectations Modest for 2014

Kansas District Shuns Compromise

Lawmaker Finds New Realities in Return to Congress

Reserve Reading: Polar Opposites Test Senate GOP

The Presidency — March 21, 24, 26

Text: Chpts 7, 14

Reader: Issues 5, 13

Final Draft of 10-15 page research paper due — Friday March 28

See Baglione book for assistance

Monday March 31 – no class because of trip to the U.S. Supreme Court (by application only)

The Permanent Federal Bureaucracy — March 28, April 2

Text: Chpt 8

Reader: Issue 21

Second Midterm — Friday April 4 (tentative date)

The Judiciary — April 7, 9, 11, 14, 16

Text: Chpt 9

Reader: Issues 6, 8, 9

Lewis: **ALL**

Reserve Reading: Three Justices Bound by Beliefs, Not Just Gender

Reserve Reading: Roberts Pulls Supreme Court to the Right Step by Step

Reserve Reading: Real John Roberts Emerges

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties — April 18, 21, 23, 25, 28

Text: Chpts 4, 5

Reader: Issues 16, 19, 10, 11

Reserve Reading: Dissent by Scalia is Criticized as Political

Reserve Reading: Court to Decide if Lawyers Can Block Gays From Juries

Reserve Reading: Cost of Compromise

Final Examination — Monday May 5 from 6:30pm-8:30pm