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FALL 2010

POS 2041

AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

Course Objectives:

1. To promote an understanding of the meaning of government, politics, and democracy as they relate to America.
2. To promote an appreciation of the historical development of American government.
3. To promote an understanding of the American system of federalism.
4. To promote an appreciation of the role of civil liberties and civil rights in American society.
5. To promote an understanding of the role of public opinion, interest groups, and mass politics in our political system.
6. To promote an appreciation of the significance of political parties and elections in the American governmental system.
7. To promote an understanding of the office of the Presidency and of the men who have held the position.
8. To promote an appreciation of the legislative branch of government, and of the process of turning bills into laws.
9. To promote an understanding of the judicial branch of government, and of the role of the Supreme Court in American life.

Required Reading for the Course:

Magleby et al, Government by the People, National Version, (23rd edition), Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2009.

Course Requirements:

There will be three examinations during the course, the first and second exams being fifty multiple choice (each exam being worth 25% of the final grade), and the final examination being cumulative, all essays and worth 50% of the final grade.

The Gordon Rule requirement is fulfilled by the taking of the essay final examination.

Attendance is expected and necessary for a student to perform to his full capacity in the course. A maximum of 4 absences is allowed. Class participation is encouraged at all times. A student is expected to be present for the in-class examinations on the day they are given. CELL PHONES MUST BE TURNED OFF IN CLASS. NO VIEWING OR RINGING OR SPEAKING IS ALLOWED AS IT IS A DISTRACTION TO OTHER STUDENTS AND THE INSTRUCTOR.

Unless the student withdraws by the date stated in the college catalog, he or she will receive an F in the course if the course is not completed. The grading system is as follows:

A: 90-100, B: 80-89, C: 70-79, D: 60-69, F: 59 or lower

COURSE OUTLINE

TOPIC 1: Introduction to Government, Politics and Democracy
(Magleby, Chapter 1)

TOPIC 2: The Historical Development of American Government
(Magleby, Chapters 1 + 2)

TOPIC 3: The American System of Federalism
(Magleby, Chapter 3)

TOPIC 4: Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, and Inequality
(Magleby, Chapters 15, 16, 17)

FIRST EXAMINATION ON TOPICS 1-4 (TUESDAY, OCTOBER 12)

TOPIC 5: Public Opinion, Interest Group Politics, and Mass Politics
(Magleby, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 8, 10)

TOPIC 6: Political Parties and Elections
(Magleby, Chapters 7 + 9)

TOPIC 7: The Executive Branch: The American Presidency
(Magleby, Chapter 12)

SECOND EXAMINATION ON TOPICS 5-7 (TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23)

TOPIC 8: The Legislative Branch: The Congress
(Magleby, Chapter 11)

TOPIC 9: The Judicial Branch: The Federal Court System
(Magleby, Chapter 14)

FINAL EXAMINATION ON TOPICS 1-9 DUE (TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, 8 AM-2 PM)