

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT IN A GLOBAL ERA

COURSE TEAM

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Summer Agan (sagan@umd.edu)		sections 0101, 0103, 0106
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COURSE OVERVIEW

Welcome to our American Government and Politics Learning Community! GVPT 170 is a team-taught course that meets twice in a large lecture setting on Mondays and Wednesdays (1-1:50pm) and the third meeting is a 50-minute discussion session on Thursday or Friday. Please consult your schedule for your discussion section that designates time, and classroom location. The course team works closely to coordinate the weekly lectures and discussion readings and assignments. *Be advised that the syllabi topics, readings, guest speakers and special activities, may be subject to change. Consequently, you should regularly check for weekly updates on our course website at <http://www.elms.edu>.*

This course is interdisciplinary in nature and theoretically and current-events driven. The course texts, daily reading of the newspaper, required and suggested viewings and the synthesis provided in lecture and discussion, will facilitate your learning in this course. We invite each of you to engage this semester in a continuous dialogue about the state of American democracy comparatively and globally.

COURSE GOALS

- *an appreciation for competing theoretical perspectives in the study of American government and politics
- *an understanding of American political development from a comparative perspective
- *the capacity to critically evaluate the news of the day especially the coverage of ‘the race for the presidency’ and the Iraq war
- *an understanding of the impacts of culture and media on American political behavior
- *your maturation as a global citizen through a critical understanding of policy issues

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

We ask you in both lecture and discussion to help us create and sustain *a learning community by:*

- * *respecting each other’s points of views*
- * *valuing collaborative learning in lecture, discussion and with special projects/events*
- * *maintaining the highest standards of academic integrity (www.umd.edu/honorpledge)*
- * *acknowledging the special nature of the large lecture classroom*
- * *attending lecture and discussions on a regular basis*
- * *meeting all deadlines and requirements in a timely manner*

You can expect the following of the GVPT 170 course team:

- *to return your assignments and tests in a timely manner
- *to be available for consultation
- *to respect your involvement in the course

COURSE TEXTS AND SUPPORTING MATERIALS

William F. Grover and Joseph G. Peschek, Voices of Dissent: Critical Readings in American Politics, 7th edition.

Chris Hedges, War is a Force that Gives us Meaning free copies distributed in class

Daily reading of an internationally respected newspapers and daily viewing of BBC news

GRADING AND EVALUATION

Your grade in this course is based on the following:

- 20%** discussion group writing exercises and quizzes (both announced and unannounced)
- 20%** discussion group participation
- 30%** 2 hourly examinations
- 10%** first year book activities
- 20%** comprehensive final examination

ATTENDANCE POLICY

A fully functioning *learning community* depends on the presence and contributions of every one of its members in the large lecture class as well as the Thursday and Friday discussion sections.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

UMCP has a nationally recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at UMCP for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, or plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>.

ACCOMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

We are happy to work with you if you need special arrangements. Please note that a written request for accommodations is required. Please have the appropriate paperwork for test taking at DSS given to Dr. Vietri a week prior to all examinations. Thank you. If you have any questions or concerns regarding UMCP disability documentation, please contact Disability Support Services at 314-7682.

SCHEDULE OF LECTURE TOPICS, READINGS, VIDEOS AND OTHER ASSIGNMENTS

Every effort will be made to have lectures posted before class on www.elms.umd.edu

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| September 3 | Welcome, Introductions and Course Expectations
Reading: skim texts and carefully review the syllabus |
| September 4,5 | Discussion group meetings; bring reader to discussions |
| September 8 | Origins of American Political Principles and American Exceptionalism
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, chapter 3, pp. 77-83
View on your own: <i>Andrew Bacevich and the End of American Exceptionalism</i>
http://www.democracynow.org/2008/8/20/the_limits_of_power_andrew_bacevich |
| September 10 | The U.S. Constitution as an Eighteenth Century Document
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, chapter 3, pp. 84-104; 298-302 and appendix |
| September 11,12 | Discussion group topic: The American democracy and the American dream
Reading: Grover and Peschek, pp. 42-54
Hedges, chapter 1 (first year book)
Viewing: http://mefedia.com/entry/susan-faludi-interview/4770885/ |

- September 15** **American Federalism**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- September 17** **Political Culture, Political Socialization and Public Opinion**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.gallop.com
Grover and Peschek, chapter 2
- September 18, 19** **Discussion group topic: Federalism, Citizenship and the 911 response**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. 303-307
- September 22** **The Mass Media**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.poynter.org
Grover and Peschek, pp. 105-128
- September 24** **Interest Groups**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.influenceatwork.com
Grover and Peschek, pp. 8-18
- September 25, 26** **Discussion group topic: The Politics of Mass Media in America**
Reading: Grover and Peschek, pp. 129-145
- September 29** **Social movements and political change**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. pp. 298-302
- October 1** **Political Parties in America**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- October 2,3** **Discussion group topic: interest groups v political parties and the *millenials***
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- October 6** **First examination**
- October 8** **Election Process in America**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, chapter 5
- October 9,10** **Discussion group topic: The race for the 2008 presidency**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- October 13** **Feedback on first exam and course: exams given back etc**
- October 15** **Congress and its Members**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.house.gov
www.senate.gov

- October 16,17** **Discussion group topic: How well does Congress represent us?**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. pp. 176-183; pp. 204-212
- October 20** **Congressional Policymaking**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. 184-203
- October 22** **Evolution of American Presidential Power**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. 213-235
- October 23,24** **Discussion group topic: Congress v the President**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. 236-252
- October 27** **The Wartime Presidency of George W. Bush**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Hedges, continue
Viewing: *Bush's War, Part I* (www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/bushswar/)
- October 29** **Class held at 4pm Hoff Theatre: First Year Book Author Chris Hedges**
Reading: Hedges, continue
- October 30,31** **Discussion topic: the Iraq war and the 2008 elections**
Reading: Hedges complete
Viewing: *Bush's War, Part II* (www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/bushswar/)
- November 3** **Second Examination**
- November 4* *ELECTION DAY*
- November 5** **Assessing the 2008 elections**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.pbs.org
- November 6,7** **Assessing the youth vote**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- November 10** **The Federal Bureaucracy as an Institution**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Assignment: first year book essay due
- November 12** **The Federal Policy Making Process and Future Katrinas**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
<http://www.whitehouse.gov/reports/katrina-lessons-learned>
- November 13,14** **Discussion group topic: policy change from below**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu

- November 17** **The Courts in the America Federal System**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
<http://supct.law.cornell.edu/supct/index.html>
Viewing: *Justice for Sale* (HBK Nonprint: JK 1991.J87)
- November 19** **The Policy Role of the Federal Judiciary**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. 253-268
- November 20,21** **Discussion group topic: civil liberties and civil rights**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
Grover and Peschek, pp. 269-284
- November 24** **Government and the Economy**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.federalreserve.gov
Grover and Peschek, pp. 287-297
- November 26,27,28** **Happy Thanksgiving: no lecture or discussions**
- December 1** **Domestic Policy Management: Health Policy**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.cato.org/research/ss_prjct.html
Viewing: ??*The Other Drug War* (HBK Nonprint HD9666.4.O84)
- December 3** **Domestic Policy Management: Environment and Energy Policy**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- December 4,5** **Discussion group topic: Democracy and Political Economy**
Reading: Grover and Peschek, pp. 19-40
- December 8** **American Foreign Policy**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
www.cdi.org
- December 10** **America in a Global Era**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- December 11, 12** **Discussion group topic: How Democratic is America?**
Reading: www.elms.umd.edu
- DECEMBER 16** **FINAL EXAMINATION IN CLASSROOM@1:30pm**

