

University of Maryland
GVPT 170, Sections 0200-0212
American Government and Politics
Spring 2010

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Required Texts

- O'Connor, Karen and Larry J. Sabato. *American Government: Roots and Reform*. Alternate ed. NY: Pearson, 2009.
- Course Documents (available on Blackboard).

Course Outline and Reading Assignments

American Ideology: Philosophical Origins & Contemporary Attitudes

Monday, January 25th

Reading Assignment

- Read Course Syllabus
- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 1, pp. 2-29.

Wednesday, January 27th:

Reading Assignment

- Thomas Hobbes' *The Leviathan*, (excerpts in course documents)
- John Locke's *Second Treatise on Government*, (excerpts in course documents)

Discussion Sections: Thursday, January 28th & Friday, January 29th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Monday, February 1st

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Appendix 1, pp. 596-597 (Declaration of Independence)
- Articles of Confederation, (course documents)

The Founding Era and Principles of the United States Constitution

Wednesday, February 3rd & Monday, February 8th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 2, pp. 30-63.
- O'Connor and Sabato, pp. 64-93 (Annotated U.S. Constitution)

Discussion Sections: Thursday, February 4th & Friday, February 5th

Reading Assignment

- *Federalist* 51 (O'Connor and Sabato, Appendix III, pp. 601-602)

NB: Friday, February 5, 2010 is the last day UMD allows for schedule adjustments.

Wednesday, February 10th

Reading Assignment

- *Federalist* #10 (O'Connor and Sabato, Appendix II, pp. 598-600.)
- *Federalist* #84 (course documents)

Discussion Sections: Thursday, February 11th & Friday, February 12th

Reading Assignment

- *Federalist* #78 (course documents)

Monday, February 15th

Reading Assignment

- *Marbury v. Madison* (1803) (course documents)

The Judicial Branch

Wednesday, February 17th & Monday, February 22nd

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 10, pp. 334-375.

Paper #1 is due at the beginning of class on Wednesday, February 17th.

Discussion Sections: Thursday, February 18th & Friday, February 19th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Civil Rights

Wednesday, February 24th & Monday, March 1st

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 6, pp. 192-233.
- *Plessy v. Ferguson*, (1896) (course documents)
- *Brown v. Board of Education*, (1954) (course documents)
- *Brown v. Board of Education II*, (1955) (course documents)

Discussion Sections: Thursday, February 25th & Friday, February 26th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Civil Liberties

Wednesday, March 3rd and Monday, March 8th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 5, pp. 152-191.
- *Roe v. Wade* (1973) (excerpts in course documents)
- *Schenck v. United States* (1919) (course documents)
- *Texas v. Johnson* (1989) (excerpts in course documents)

Discussion Sections: Thursday, March 4th & Friday, March 5th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Wednesday, March 10th: Midterm Exam

Discussion Sections:

**Discussion sections on Thursday, March 11th and Friday, March 12th
will NOT meet!**

SPRING BREAK

Monday, March 15th – Friday, March 19th

Federalism

Monday, March 22nd

Reading Assignment

- *McCulloch v. Maryland* (1819) (course documents)

Wednesday, March 24th & Monday, March 29th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 3, pp. 94-121.

Discussion Sections: Thursday, March 25th & Friday, March 26th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Congress

Wednesday, March 31st, Monday, April 5th & Wednesday, April 7th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 7, pp. 234-271.

Discussion Sections: Thursday, April 1st & Friday, April 2nd

**** Discussion sections on Thursday, April 1st and Friday, April 2nd will NOT meet.**

Discussion Sections: Thursday, April 8th and Friday, April 9th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Paper #2 is due at the beginning of class on Monday, April 12th.

The Presidency

Monday, April 12th, Wednesday, April 14th & Monday, April 19th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 8, pp. 272-305.

Discussion Sections: Thursday, April 15th and Friday, April 16th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Political Socialization, Public Opinion and Media

Wednesday, April 21st

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 11, pp. 376-403.
- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 15, pp. 530-565.

Discussion Sections: Thursday, April 22nd & Friday, April 23rd

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

NB: Friday, April 9, 2010 is the last day to drop a course with a "W."

Voting, Elections and Campaigns

Monday, April 26th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 13, pp. 444-491.

Wednesday, April 28th & Monday, May 3rd

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 14, pp. 492-529.

Discussion Sections: Thursday, April 29th & Friday, April 30th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Political Parties & Interest Groups

Wednesday, May 5th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 12, pp. 404-443.

Discussion Sections: Thursday, May 6th & Friday, May 7th

Reading Assignment

- Same as lecture

Monday, May 10th

Reading Assignment

- O'Connor and Sabato, Chapter 16, pp. 566-595.

FINAL EXAM: Monday, May 17th from 1:30PM – 3:30PM

Course requirements: Your course grade will be based on your performances on two papers, a midterm exam, a final exam, and class participation in your discussion sections. The first paper assignment will be due on **Wednesday, February 17, 2010 and will be worth 20% of your course grade.** The midterm exam will be held on **Wednesday, March 10, 2010, and it will be worth 20% of your course grade.** The second paper assignment will be due at the beginning of class on **Monday, April 12, 2010 and will be worth 25% of your course grade.** **The final exam for this class has been scheduled for Monday, May 17, 2010 from 1:30PM-3:30PM.** The final exam **will be worth 25% of your course grade.** The remaining **10% of your course grade** will be based on your **performance in your discussion sections.** Your TA will tell you more about how this portion of your grade will be determined in your discussion section. *Please note that participation in your discussion section is mandatory.*

Extra Credit: In fairness to everyone, there will be **no extra credit assignments given to anyone** in this course. If you are unhappy with your performance in the class at any point in the semester, please put your energy into preparing for upcoming assignments and exams in an effort to improve your course grade.

Religious Observance: If I have indicated a date on this syllabus that you are unable to make due to a specific religious observance, you must provide me with a request for a make up exam or paper extension *in writing*. You must provide me with this written request **by Friday, February 5, 2010**. Please refer to the Online Undergraduate Catalog Policy on Religious Observance.

Paper Assignments: There will be two paper assignments in this course. In grading your essays, we will consider whether you have (a) developed a clear and thoughtful thesis, (b) supported your thesis with a well-reasoned and well-organized discussion, (c) taken into account opposing points of view, (d) demonstrated your familiarity with course materials, and (e) followed the rules of proper grammar and spelling.

If you have difficulty with writing, I recommend that you consider making an appointment at the University's Writing Center, which provides individual instruction to students. For more information about scheduling an appointment, please consult the Writing Center's website at <http://www.english.umd.edu/writingcenter>.

Paper Format: The paper assignments must be typed, double-spaced and have one-inch margins. Only 10-12 point fonts may be used. Please staple or use a paper clip to keep your essay intact. You do not need to put your paper in a fancy folder. Before you turn in your papers, be sure that you have a copy of it. If you claim that you turned in a paper and we cannot find it, then it will be your responsibility to give us another copy.

Paper Deadlines: Paper assignments must be turned in *at the beginning of class* on their specified due date. Papers that are *turned in on the due date* but *after the beginning of class* will receive a 1/3 grade penalty (i.e. If the paper would have been an "A," it would now be an "A-."). A paper handed in *after the due date* will receive a penalty of *one full letter grade* for every day it is late (i.e. If you turn in an "A" paper on Wednesday, but the paper was due on Monday of the same week, your paper is now worth a "C."). No allowances will be made for last minute problems with computers or printers. If you want to avoid last-minute problems, then finish the paper before the due date. Extensions on paper assignments only will be considered in the case of *verifiable* medical or family emergencies.

Exams: There will be a midterm and final exam in this course. Study guides will be provided to students at least a week before the exam date. Exams will consist of short answer identifications and/or essays.

Missed Exams and Paper Deadlines: Make-up exams or paper extensions will *only* be considered in the case of *verifiable* medical or family emergencies. Otherwise, a missed exam will result in a "fail" on the assignment, and late paper assignments will be subject to the late paper penalties discussed above. Campus Senate policy requires students who are absent due to illness/injury to furnish documentary support to the instructor. Documentation not presented to me in a timely manner will not be accepted. In addition, if it is found that you have falsified the documentation provided, I will refer you to the University's Student Conduct Office.

Grade Calculations: Grades for this course will be calculated using the 4.0 academic grading scale. In other words, grades are calculated in the following manner: "A" is a 4.0, "A-" is a 3.7, "B+" is a 3.3, "B" is a 3.0, "B-" is a 2.7, "C+" is a 2.3, "C" is a 2.0, "C-" is a 1.7, "D+" is a 1.3, "D" is a 1.0, "D-" is a .7 and a "F" is a 0.

In cases of *truly exceptional work* where an "A+" is warranted, it will be calculated as a 4.3.

Academic Integrity: By enrolling in this course, each student assumes the responsibilities of an active participant in University of Maryland's scholarly community in which everyone's academic work and behavior are held to the highest standards of honesty. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and helping others to commit these acts are all forms of

academic dishonesty, and they are wrong. Any form of cheating, plagiarism or collusion will result in failure of this course. In addition, academic misconduct could result in disciplinary action that may include, but is not limited to, suspension or dismissal. For more information on the University's policy on academic honesty and the University's Honor Pledge, please go to <http://www.jpo.umd.edu/aca/honorpledge.html>.

Blackboard: Important information and documents for this class, including course syllabus, power point slides, course documents, and study guides, will be available on Blackboard. You can access your Blackboard account for this course by going to <http://elms.umd.edu>. (NB: Although the power points slides from each day's lecture will be posted on Blackboard, these slides **are not a substitution for note taking. Students will need to take notes on each day's lecture in order to be properly prepared for paper assignments and exams.**)

Students with Disabilities: I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation form. **This form must be presented to me no later than Friday, February 19th, 2010.** *I am not (nor are your teaching assistants) able to accommodate students who are not registered with DSS or who do not provide me with documentation which has been reviewed by DSS after Friday, February 19, 2010.*

Classroom Courtesy: Before each class period begins, please turn off or silence your cell phones, Blackberries, iPods, and all other electronic devices. During lectures and discussion sections, students should not be texting, checking their e-mail, surfing the web, etc. In this class, students will be allowed to use their personal computers **only to take notes on the lecture.** If students are found to be using *any* personal technology devices in any way that is not specifically related to the day's lecture, then they will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for violating course policy on the use of personal computers and technology in the classroom.

Also, students are expected to treat each other with respect. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to show civility with one another, the teaching assistants, or myself will be subject to being referred to the Office of Student Conduct or the Campus Police. You are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct.

Summary of Important Dates to Remember for this Course:

- Last Day of Schedule Adjustment: Friday, February 5th
- Last Day to Submit Requests Due to Religious Observance: Friday, February 5th
- **First Paper Assignment Due: Wednesday, February 17th**
- Last day to Present Documentation Reviewed by DSS for Disability Accommodations: Friday, February 19th
- **Midterm Exam: Wednesday, March 10th**
- **Second Paper Assignment Due: Monday, April 12th**
- Last Day to Drop Course with a "W": Friday, April 9th
- Last Day to Withdrawal from all classes: Tuesday, May 11th
- **Final Exam: Monday, May 17th from 1:30PM-3:30PM**