

Political Science 110  
American Political Systems  
Fall 2007

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**Office Hours: M, W, F 10:00 – 11:00; T, Th 11:00 – 12:00 and by appointment**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This course is an introduction to the institutions, processes and policies of the American political system. This introduction strives for three basic goals. First, the course attempts to develop the students' basic understanding of the fundamental characteristics of American political institutions and the forces that influence the decisions of elites who direct those institutions. Second, the course tries to introduce students to a critical evaluation of the performance of those institutions and elites and to encourage the student to examine the achievements of the political system in comparison to the ideals of democracy. Third, the course aims to offset the cynicism and privatism prevalent in the American political system and to help students recognize the positive and necessary role that politics play in the health of any democratic political system. It is assumed that each of these goals represents a necessary condition for participation in a democratic polity.

## **ATTENDANCE**

Students are required to attend all classes. Attendance will be part of the instructor evaluation grade. Students missing class for legitimate reasons will be excused but the instructor reserves the right to judge the legitimacy of the excuse. Common courtesy also requires that students inform the instructor as soon as when absences will be unavoidable.

## **ACADEMIC HONESTY**

All students should be aware of their obligations under the Academic Honesty Policy published in the Student Handbook.

## **BOOKS**

Edward Greenberg and Benjamin Page, **America's Democratic Republic**, (Pearson Longman, 2005)

William Hudson, **American Democracy in Peril**, (Congressional Quarterly Press, 2004)

Beth Shulman, **The Betrayal of Work**, (The New Press, 2003)

## EVALUATION OF THE STUDENTS' WORK

The student's final grade will be based on a 400 point system.

Mid term exam	100 points
Final exam	100 points
Response to <u>The Betrayal of Work</u>	75 points
Washington Post quizzes	100 points
Instructor evaluation	

### Mid Term Exams

The mid-term will consist of two parts. Part I will include five identification items that will focus on key ideas, terms or concepts introduced during the first half of the course. Each will be worth 10 points and should be explained in three or four sentences. Part II will require the student to choose one of two essay questions to answer. The essay will be worth 50 points.

### Final Exam

The final exam will consist of two parts. Part I will be sixty multiple choice questions that will focus on key ideas, terms or concepts introduced throughout the course. Part II will require the student to choose one of two essay questions to answer. The focus of the essays will be limited to material presented after the mid term exam and will be worth 40 points.

### The Betrayal of Work

Students will submit a book review of Beth Shulman's The Betrayal of Work. This paper should be three to five pages typewritten and should engage the questions such as those listed below. Some of the questions overlap or are otherwise related to each other. As such, students might answer them simultaneously and should not treat them as a series of take home essay questions. Rather, students should write an integrated essay reflecting on what they have read. Students should also be aware that they need not address every question listed below with a distinct answer. This book review is **due 2/5**.

- What is the principal thesis of the book?
- Does the material in the book support the thesis offered by the author? What evidence in the book can be offered to support her conclusions? What examples, data, or illustrations best represent the author's thesis?
- What are the books strengths? What are the books weaknesses? What elements of the book did you find most compelling? What element of the book did you find least compelling? Why?

## Quizzes

Students will be given ten quizzes - one per week for ten weeks - based on materials from the Washington Post National Weekly Edition, which is available, by subscription through the Moravian College Book Store.

## Instructor Evaluation

The instructor will evaluate each student for his or her participation, involvement in and contributions to the course. This portion of the grade will reflect all activities in the course that are not otherwise specified in the syllabus including attendance and participation in class discussion.

## COURSE OUTLINE AND CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
1/15	Introduction	
1/17	Political Economy: Why Structure Matters I	Hudson, Ch. 6
1/19	Political Economy: Why Structure Matters II	
1/22	Politics, Culture and Belief	Greenberg and Page, Ch. 1 and 6
1/24	Theories of Democracy	Hudson, Introduction and Ch. 3
1/26	Theories of Democracy II	
1/29	<b>Washington Post Quiz 1 and class discussion</b>	
1/31	The Political Theory of the Constitution	Greenberg and Page, Ch. 2, <u>Federalist</u> #10 and #51, A-20 to A-26
2/2	<b>NO CLASS</b>	
2/5	Constitutional Structure <b>Washington Post Quiz 2</b>	Hudson, Ch. 1
2/7	Social Class and power	Shulman, <u>The Betrayal of Work</u> , entire

2/9	The Distribution of Income and Wealth	Hudson, Ch. 7
2/12	<b>Washington Post Quiz 3 and class discussion</b>	
2/14	The Functions of the State	Charles Lindblom, “The Market as Prison,” <b><u>ON RESERVE</u></b>
2/16	Economic Policy	Greenberg and Page, pp. 451-466
2/19	Economic Policy <b>Washington Post Quiz 4</b>	
2/21	Social Welfare	Greenberg and Page, pp. 467-477
2/23	<b>Mid Term Exam</b>	
2/26	<b>Washington Post Quiz 5 and class discussion</b>	
2/28	Functions of Parties and Elections	Greenberg and Page, pp. 247-251, 274-282; Hudson pp. 169-175.
3/2	Parties Organization	Greenberg and Page, pp. 256-264, 292-304
3/12	Voting	Greenberg and Page, pp. 282-292; Hudson, Ch. 4
3/14	Party competition	Greenberg and Page, pp. 252-256, 265-270.
	<b>Washington Post Quiz 6</b>	
3/16	Modern political campaigning	Hudson, pp. 175-192, 199-206
3/19	Media	Greenberg and Page, Ch. 7: Hudson, pp. 192-198
3/21	<b>Washington Post Quiz 7 and class discussion</b>	
3/23	Interest Groups formation and activities	Greenberg and Page, pp. 216-232
3/26	Organization costs and incentives	Greenberg and Page, 233-244

- 3/28 **Washington Post Quiz 8**
- 3/30 Congressional representation Greenberg and Page, Ch. 11
- 4/2 Congressional committees
- 4/4 **Washington Post Quiz 9 and class discussion**
- 4/11 Congressional leadership
- 4/13-16 The context of presidential leadership Greenberg and Page, Ch. 12
- 4/18 Presidential resources  
**Washington Post Quiz 10**
- 4/20 - The institutionalized presidency; the executive Greenberg and Page, Ch. 13  
4/23 branch
- 4/25-4/27 The President and Foreign Policy