Political Science 101
Introduction to American Government
University of Hawai‘i at Hilo

Fall, 2003
Section 1, CRN# 80584
MWF 10:00-10:50 am
UCB 100

Instructor: Dr. Todd Belt
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Office: UCB 355
Office Hours: Mon. 11am-12noon,
Mon. and Wed. 3-5pm,
and by appointment.

Course Overview
What is democracy? How is it practiced in America? Do the formal institutions of American government conform to our expectations for a robust democracy? Are they in need of change? These questions urge us to evaluate the complex and controversial issues in American politics in a manner that places the theoretical idealism of democracy next to the contemporary practice of American politics. The goal of this course is to acquaint the student with the basic theory and practice of American democracy and to teach the student concepts and skills necessary for analyzing institutions, policy, and issues in American politics. These concepts include the “nuts-and-bolts” of American politics: The Constitution, individuals, groups, and institutions which make politics in America unique. This class will also focus on the relationships between individuals, groups, and institutions in terms of influence, process, and outputs in various issue domains.

This course counts toward the Social Sciences General Education Requirement. There are no prerequisite courses, but students will be expected to have adequate writing and grammar skills prior to enrolling in this class.

Goals of the Course
Upon completion of this course, students will be expected to do the following:
- Be able to describe the structure and function of the differing branches of American Government.
- Be able to discuss the theoretical and historical underpinnings of the US Constitution.
- Be able to discuss the evolving history and character of civil rights and civil liberties in America.
- Be able to discuss the nature of several American domestic and foreign policies as well as the assumptions upon which they are based.
- Be able to discuss the influence of mass media, socio-political movements, interest groups, corporations, political parties, campaigns and elections have on American politics.
- Be able to express fundamental concepts associated with American politics in writing.
- Be able to think critically about the theory and practice of American politics, and to express such an analysis in writing.
- Be able to explain as well as demonstrate how individuals can make a difference in their local community and the nation as a whole.
Required Texts

You are required to read from the above texts as part of your coursework (they are available at the bookstore bundled together). I have placed the above readings on reserve in the library, so you need not purchase these books if you do not wish to do so. In addition, handouts distributed in class will be required reading and students are required to follow current political affairs in a national newspaper (The New York Times is suggested and is available on-line).

Student Responsibilities and Requirements
There are three requirements for this course:

1. Participation and Attendance Policy: Participation includes the quality and frequency of individual students’ contributions to classroom discussion as well as attendance. You are expected to attend every class session. Simply reading the texts is not a substitute for classroom discussion and learning. In order to participate well in this class, you must pay close attention to assignments and deadlines (all of which are listed in this syllabus). Disagreement with the instructor and other students during class discussions is welcome as long as it is done respectfully. In all class discussions, you must be courteous and respectful of others. You must complete all assigned readings prior to coming to class. Do not expect to get a good participation grade if you do not contribute to class discussion.

   By enrolling in this class, you are agreeing to attend class during the entire duration of the semester and for the entire class period. To get credit for attending class, you must show up within 10 minutes of the start of class. If you are not in class within the first 10 minutes, you will be marked absent for the day. You will be permitted two unexcused absences. An excused absence is an illness that prevents you from attending class, religious holiday or a death in the family. Do not schedule meetings, banquets, employment, vacations, or work for other classes during our regular class meeting time. Beyond your first two unexcused absences, your participation grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade for every time you are marked absent. For example, if you earned a participation grade of a B+ and had four unexcused absences, you will be penalized two-thirds of a letter grade, and your final participation would be a B-. Similarly, if you had seven unexcused absences and you had earned an A- for your participation grade, you would be penalized for five-thirds of a letter grade, meaning that you would end up with a C for your final participation grade. If you have any concerns regarding your ability to attend class on a regular basis, such as athletic events or employment, please consider dropping the class to make room for someone who can attend on a regular basis.

2. Examinations: There are three examinations (two midterms and a final). The examinations are not cumulative, and they may include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Make-up exams are rarely given and only when a university-authorized excuse is provided. These excuses include illness, religious holiday or a death in the family only. Make-up exams will not include multiple choice questions. You will not be excused from an exam simply because you missed the prior class or because the exam interferes with your work schedule. Do not make plans to leave town before the final exam. Any requests for a makeup exam must be made before the exam is given (call me). You will not be permitted to take a make-up exam if you do not request one before the exam is given. If you wear a hat with a brim on the day of an examination, you will be asked to remove it. If you have a disability that warrants additional consideration for examinations, please inform me so that I can accommodate you (also, see the “Note on Disability Services” below).
3. **Group Project or Term Paper:** Students will be required to either undertake a Group Project or to write a Term Paper.

**Group Project Option:** You will be required to participate in a political activity of your own design and to write a 3-4 page (typed) summary of your activities and what you did and learned. Each student involved in the group project is to write their own summary. In order to participate in a political activity, you must first receive authorization for your idea from the instructor and you may not change it during the semester, so form a group and decide on a project early in the semester. Groups should not include more than five students. Participation includes active involvement in the planning, coordination, and execution of a political action such as a protest or rally, petition circulation, a voter registration drive, or organizing a community meeting – not mere attendance to a previously scheduled event. Your project should not be confined to an on-campus issue or event that only affects and/or is attended only by students. There are many local interest groups and political parties who are involved in ongoing political activities, and the instructor may provide you with some leads if you can not decide what to do (although this should be a last resort, and you should develop a pretty clear idea of what types of issues interest you). It is not necessary that you undertake civil disobedience or break the law. However, you should be aware of what constitutes legal and illegal activity in the context of your particular activity. The *Getting Involved* book is designed to help you with this project.

**Research Paper Option:** If you choose to do the research paper, you will be asked to analyze a contemporary policy issue of your choice in terms of the analytical skills learned during this course. The paper is to be 7-8 pages in length and must include at least five textual (not internet) sources. Do not be afraid of the library. You may cite internet sources, but they must be authoritative and will not count towards your requisite five. You may also cite course texts, but again, they will not count toward the requisite five sources. The paper must:

- be typewritten in 12 point Times Roman font
- be double spaced
- have 1 inch margins on top, bottom, and both sides
- include a title and cover page (do not include a cover, just staple your paper)
- include a bibliography page
- done in the citation style of your choice (footnotes or parenthetical – be consistent)
- include page numbers
- include an introduction, body, and a conclusion

See Academic Integrity Policy and Late Assignment Policy below for additional details regarding Term Paper policies.

**Evaluation Method and Grading Policy**

The instructor’s evaluation of student performance will be guided by the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Exam Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In order to earn an Excellent (A) grade, a student must demonstrate mastery of all of the factual material, be able to apply and in fully integrate theories and concepts, and demonstrate clear organization of ideas and arguments.

In order to earn a Good (B) grade, a student must demonstrate mastery of nearly all of the factual material, demonstrate some application and integration of theories and concepts, and demonstrate clear organization of ideas and arguments.

In order to earn a Satisfactory (C) grade, a student must demonstrate mastery of most of the factual material and demonstrate clear organization of ideas and arguments.

In order to earn a Poor (D) grade, a student must demonstrate mastery of most of the factual material.

In order to earn a Failing (F) grade, a student must not demonstrate adequate knowledge of the factual material, or fail to turn in an assignment, examination or final paper.

Students will be evaluated by the instructor and will receive a letter grade for each of the course requirements:

- Participation: 12%
- Examinations: 66% (22% each)
- Group Project or Term Paper: 22%

Grade weighting method: The grade a student receives for each requirement will be converted to grade points and weighted by the corresponding percentage (see above). The final value will be rounded to the closest Grade Point assignment and the corresponding grade will be recorded as the student’s final grade in the course. Here is an example: Suppose Margaret received a B- for Participation, C+ for her first Midterm Exam, a B for her second Midterm Exam, a B- for her Final Exam, and a B- for her Group Project. Margaret’s final grade would be calculated as follows:

Final Grade = (2.7 \times .12) + (2.3 \times .22) + (3.0 \times .22) + (2.7 \times .22) + (2.7 \times .22)
Final Grade = .324 + .506 + .660 + .594 + .594
Final Grade = 2.678, which is closest to 2.7 grade points, which is equivalent to a B-.

Other Course Policies and Notes

Add / Drop Policy
This class is full. I will start a waiting list. If you do not wish to take this class, please drop it immediately in order to make room for another student. You may add the class prior to 8/29 at 12:00 midnight if you are lucky enough to register after someone has dropped and there is an opening on the computer system. If there are openings available, I will add students at the beginning of the second week (Monday, 9/3). You must be present to add. Seniors and Political Science Majors on the waiting list will be given priority if there are not enough spaces in the class (not those who signed up first on the waiting list). Lying about your academic status or major affiliation will constitute a violation of Academic Integrity and the student will receive an F in the course and may be reported to the administration for disciplinary action.

Grade Options Policy
Students may take this course for Credit / No Credit, but they must exercise this option on or before Friday, 9/12. The last day to withdraw with a “W” is Friday, 10/17. Incompletes are very rarely given and only in
cases of an emergency and provided that the student has completed at least half of the course requirements and is earning a C- or better.

**Student Conduct Policy**
Students who engage in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave class immediately and will be marked absent for the day. Disruptive behavior consists of, among other things, frequent talking with other students during lectures and presentations, eating, and electronic noises. Turn off all pagers, phones and other electronic devices prior to entering the classroom. If you have an electronic device that emits noise during class (even an audible “vibration”), you will be asked to leave and will be marked absent for that day – no excuses and no exceptions. You will be marked absent if you leave class early or if you begin to pack up your belongings before class is dismissed.

**Academic Integrity Policy**
Academic honesty is required of all students. Each student is responsible for understanding and following campus policies on academic honesty. Academic dishonesty defrauds all those who depend on the integrity of University courses and is a serious offense. The UHH Student Conduct Code defines academic dishonesty in the following way:

> “Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, submitting, in fulfillment of an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual’s work without attributing that borrowed portion to the individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation another’s idea and particular phrasing that was not assimilated into the student language and style or paraphrasing a passage so that the reader is misled as to the source; submitting the same written or oral material in more than one course without obtaining authorization from the instructors involved; purchasing term papers; or drylabbing, which includes obtaining and using experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of the course or from previous terms, or fabricating data to fit the desired or expected results” (p. 6).

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Note that submitting the same paper for more than one course *without the prior approval of both instructors* is considered to be a case of academic dishonesty. If plagiarism or any other form of academic dishonesty (including cheating on examinations) is suspected, the incident will be thoroughly investigated. If you are caught cheating in any form or plagiarizing any part of a test, paper, or other assignment, you will receive an “F” for the course and may be reported to the University administration for further possible action, including expulsion from the university.

**Late Assignment Policy**
Writing assignments are due at the beginning of class. Assignments that are turned in during or at the end of class will be treated as late. Late assignments are to be turned in to me at the next class meeting and the assignment will be deducted one full letter grade for every day it is late.

**Note on Disability Services**
Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the University Disability Services Office as early in the semester as possible. The office is located in Campus Center Room 311. The office can be contacted at 933-0816 (V), 933-3334 (TTY), or via email at shirachi@hawaii.edu.

**Note on Academic Advising**
Advising is a very important resource designed to help students complete the requirements of the University and their individual majors. Students should consult with their advisor at least once per semester in order to decide upon courses, check progress towards graduation, and discuss their career
options and other educational opportunities provided by UH Hilo. Advising is a shared responsibility, but students have the final responsibility for meeting degree requirements.

Course Outline

Week 1 (8/25-29). What is Democracy?
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 1.
♦ The Study of American Politics
♦ Governing and Campaigning
♦ What is Democracy?
♦ Formal Institutions vs. Informal Politics
♦ Democratic Idealism vs. Democratic Realism
♦ Democratic Principles and Liberties

Week 2 (9/3-5). The American Founding and the Constitution
No Class Monday, 9/1 (Labor Day)
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 2 and the Constitution in the Appendix;
♦ Declaration of Independence
♦ Articles of Confederation
♦ Republicanism
♦ Characteristics of the Constitution
♦ Three Interpretations of the Constitution
♦ Separation of Powers
♦ Checks and Balances

Week 3 (9/8-12). Federalism and the American Political Landscape
Reading: Greenberg and Page, chs. 3-4;
Kann et al., ch. 1.
♦ American Federalism
♦ Arguments For and Against Federalism
♦ Grants
♦ Political Culture
♦ Ideology
♦ The American Class Structure
♦ Diversity: An American Melting Pot or a Mosaic?

Week 4 (9/15-19). Public Opinion
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 5;
Kann et al., ch. 2.
Research Project Topics or Term Paper Topics Due Monday (does not have to be typed, one per group)
In-Class Film: “American Rock” (Schoolhouse Rock)
♦ Public Opinion
♦ Opinion Polls
♦ General vs. Specific Attitudes
♦ Demographic Differences
♦ The Public’s Influence on Governance
♦ Political Socialization
Week 5 (9/22-26). The Mass Media
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 6; Kann et al., ch. 3.
In-Class Film: “Culture Jam”
♦ Media in a Democracy vs. Media in an Authoritarian System
♦ Democratic Expectations in the Media
♦ The Media and Governance
♦ The Media, Campaigns and Elections
♦ News Bias?
♦ Objective vs. Advocacy Journalism
♦ Muckraking
♦ The Media and Public Opinion

Week 6 (9/29-10/3). Midterm Examination Monday,
Interest Groups and Corporations
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 7; Kann et al., ch. 4.
In-Class Film: “Berkeley in the 60s”
♦ Interest Groups
♦ Lobbyists
♦ National Interests and Specific Interests
♦ Corporations and Labor Unions
♦ Money and Influence in Politics
♦ Iron Triangles

Week 7 (10/6-10). Political Movements
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 8; Kann et al., ch. 5.
♦ Tactics of Movements
♦ Successes and Failures of Movements
♦ Governmental Responses to Movements
♦ Specific American Political Movements:
  ♦ Abolition and Civil Rights Movements
  ♦ The Black Panthers
  ♦ Women’s Movements
  ♦ Anti-War Movements
  ♦ Labor/Progressive Movements and Industrial Warfare
  ♦ Free Speech and Counterculture Movement
  ♦ Anti-Globalization Movement

Week 8 (10/13-17). Parties, Campaigns, and Elections
Reading: Greenberg and Page, chs. 9-10; Kann et al., ch. 6.
In-Class Film: “The Candidate”
♦ Political Parties
♦ Single-member Districting
♦ Who Runs?
♦ Candidate Recruitment
The Rules
Campaign Staff
Campaign Finance
Campaign Reform
Third Parties and Their Influence
Theories of Vote Choice

Week 9 (10/20-24). Congress
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 11;
Kann et al., ch. 7.
- Members and Structure
- Congressional Leadership
- Committees
- Duties and Responsibilities
- Styles of Representation
- How a Bill Becomes a Law
- Checks on Executive and Judicial Power
- Incumbent Reelection Advantage

Week 10 (10/27-31). The Presidency and the Executive Branch
Reading: Greenberg and Page chs. 12 and 13;
Kann et al., ch. 8.
- Job Description
- Presidential Responsibilities
- Presidential Power
- Constraints on Power
- Checks on Legislative and Judicial Power
- Presidential Personality Types
- Evaluating Presidents
- The War Powers Act
- Cabinet Appointees
- The Bureaucracy

Week 11 (11/3-7). Midterm Examination Monday, The Judiciary
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 14.
- Scope of Power
- Judicial Structure
- Judicial Selection
- The Supreme Court
- Theories of Supreme Court Decision Making

Week 12 (11/10-14). Civil Liberties
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 15.
- Freedom of Religion
- Freedom of Speech
- Freedom of Assembly
- The Right to Bear Arms
• The Right to “Privacy”
• Other Freedoms in the Bill of Rights

Week 13 (11/17-21). Civil Rights
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 16.
• Equal Rights and Equal Protection
• Rights in the original Constitution
• Rights derived from or added to the Constitution
• Rights for Racial Minorities
• Women’s Rights
• Gay Rights
• Incorporation

Week 14 (11/24-26). Domestic Policy
No Class Friday, 11/28 (Thanksgiving Holiday)
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 17.
• Active vs. Declarative Policy
• Policy Process Model
• Issue Attention Cycle
• Regulatory Policy
• Economic Policy
• Social Welfare Policy
• Education Policy
• Domestic Drug Policy

Week 15 (12/1-5). Foreign Policy
Group Project or Research Paper Due Friday
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 18.
• Unilateralism vs. Multilateralism
• Isolationism vs. Internationalism
• Defense Budget
• Foreign Policy Decision Making
• Marshall Plan
• Truman Doctrine
• The Cold War
• Realpolitik

Week 16 (12/8-10). Foreign Policy (cont’d)
No Reading
• Fiascoes and Successes
• Foreign Policy Decision Making
• The Arms Race
• Foreign Drug Policy
• Anti-Terrorism Policy
• Foreign Economic Policy
• US Hegemony

Final Examination Monday, December 15th, 9:40am–11:40am in our regular classroom.