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

Fall, 2007
Section 1, CRN# 11639
MWF 10:00-10:50 am
UCB 112

Instructor: Dr. Todd Belt
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Office: UCB 355
Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday
2:00pm – 4:30 pm,
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. In this sense, you will learn how to perform political
analysis, which is quite different than merely holding an opinion on a given issue.

These concepts studied in this course 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. The goal of this course is not only to learn how the government works, but why it works the way it does
and why it was structured the way it is. The answers may surprise you.

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 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 explain the nature of and rationale for several American domestic and foreign policies.
➢ 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. The *Struggle for Democracy* book is our primary textbook, and can be purchased at the bookstore. The *Getting Involved* book may be bundled with used copies of the *Struggle for Democracy* book, it may be purchased online, or it may be read on-line (instructions for on-line reading will be distributed in class). If you purchase your books used or elsewhere, make sure that you get both books. The *Addicted to War* book will be available for purchase directly from the instructor for $4 during the fourth week of class. I have placed all of the books on reserve in the library, so you need not purchase these books if you cannot afford them or you simply do not wish to do so. In addition, handouts may be distributed in class as required reading, and students are required to follow current political affairs in a national newspaper (*The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* are suggested and are available on-line).

Student Responsibilities
Beyond learning the course material, there are only three responsibilities that I place on all students in this course:

1. **Turn assignments in on time.** This class has deadlines that need to be met and exams that must be taken. Turn the assignments in on time. You must take the exams when they are scheduled unless you have a valid excuse (see below for the late assignment and exam scheduling policies). **Do not email assignments.**

   - “I lost my pen drive.”
   - “My computer crashed.”
   - “My nose job got infected.”
   - “I can’t get motivated to do it.”
   - “My child is sick.”
   - “I had printer problems.”
   - “But, my parents were in town.”
   - “This isn’t the only class I have, you know.”
   - “I can’t find someone to watch my kids.”
   - “I’m taking my kids snowboarding on Mauna Kea.”
   - “I have to work.”
   - “I have a doctor’s appointment.”
   - “I’m having personal problems.”
   - “I would have had to come back early from my trip to Kona.”

2. **Be courteous.** I hope and expect that we will have lively political discussions in this class. You are encouraged to disagree with other students and even the professor as long as it is done in a courteous manner. Turn off all electronic devices before class. Do not bring children or other animals to class. Do not pack up your belongings while class is still in session (see below for student conduct policy).

3. **Do not cheat.** Cheating will result in an “F” for the course, not just the assignment or exam upon which the student cheated (see below for academic integrity policy).

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Examinations</td>
<td>60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Written Assignment</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Project or Term Paper</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. **Participation:** You are not required to show up for class, but your contributions to class discussion will form part of your final grade. Participation includes the quality and frequency of individual students’ contributions to classroom discussion. I follow an “active learning” approach in my classes—simply reading the texts is not a substitute for classroom discussion and learning. In order to participate well in this class, you must complete all assigned readings for the week prior to coming to class on the first meeting of the week. Attendance will be taken for administrative purposes only and is not factored into your grade except that your ability to participate will be disadvantaged by too many missed classes. If you miss a class, it is your own responsibility to learn the material and catch up by the next class meeting. You can get missed handout from me or from the class website. Get class notes from another student if you miss a day.
2. **Examinations.** There are three examinations (two during the course term and one during finals week). The examinations are not cumulative, and they may include multiple choice, short answer, and essay questions. Exams will include material drawn from the readings as well as class lectures. 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. **Written Assignment.** We will miss our Wednesday and Friday classes of Week 2 (8/29 and 8/31). A written assignment will be distributed at the end of Week 1 in lieu of these classes. The assignment will be due on Wednesday of Week 3 (9/5). See below for late assignment policy.

4. **Group Project or Term Paper:** Students must either undertake a Group Project or 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 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 less than three or 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 participation in 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 (current) national policy issue of your choice in terms of the analytical skills learned during this course. In order to do this, you must not only explain what governmental policy is with respect to this issue, but why it is the way it is. You will not be allowed to change topics after you have decided on one, so choose carefully. You should perform your analysis (explanation, not opinion) based upon material learned in class, such as the role of Congress, the President, the courts, interest groups, public opinion, the media, etc. The paper is to be 10 pages in length and must include at least five sources. Do not be afraid of the library. You may only cite internet resources if they reflect legitimate sources of information (such as newspaper articles). If you cite Wikipedia as a source you will receive an automatic “F” on your paper. You will be required to turn in a hard (paper) copy to me as well as to submit your paper electronically to Turnitin.com. You may cite course texts, but 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. Do not email your term paper.

- 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 writing.
- 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 writing.
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 writing.

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.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Quiz Points</th>
<th>Exam Points</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>14-15</td>
<td>93-100</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>13</td>
<td>90-92</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11</td>
<td>83-86</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>73-76</td>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>7</td>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>6-4</td>
<td>60-69</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Failure</td>
<td>3 and below</td>
<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 Mary received a B for Participation, a C for her quizzes, a 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 (or Term Paper). Mary’s final grade would be calculated as follows:

Final Grade = (3.0 * .15) + (2.0 * .05) + (2.3 * .20) + (3.0 * .20) + (2.7 * .20) + (2.7 * .20)
Final Grade = .450 + .100 + .460 + .600 + .540 + .540
Final Grade = 2.690, which is closest to 2.7 grade points, which is equivalent to a B-.

Note: Failure to take an exam or to turn in an Internship Project/Term Paper will result in an F for the missed component plus a one full letter grade reduction in the student’s final course grade. Your final grade will be available on the My UH web portal after the semester. I do not email grades.

Other Course Policies and Notes

Add / Drop Policy
This class is full. 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 Friday, 8/24 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, 8/27). You must be present to add. Political Science Majors will be given priority if there are not enough spaces in the class.

Grade Options Policy
Students may take this course for Credit / No Credit, but they must exercise this option on or before Friday, 9/7. The last day to withdraw without a “W” is 9/9. Incompletes are 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 Consultation Policy (Office Hours)
Students are my highest priority. I want every student to do well. I am always happy to meet with students who need help. My office hours are listed at the top of the syllabus, and I am available for drop-in consultation at that
time. If you need to see me but can not make it during my normal office hours, please schedule an appointment with me. Sometimes my office door is left open at other times during the week, and you can drop-in to talk if it is. If my door is closed, I may or may not be available to speak with you (please knock to find out). When I am not working on course material or grading, I am often busy in my office doing research or helping to improve the university through such things as committee work. For these reasons it is best to meet with me during regular office hours or during a scheduled appointment so that we are not disturbed and I can give you my undivided attention. If you want to schedule an appointment with me, you may see me before or after class, call me or email me. When you email me, please be sure to say who you are and the class in which you are enrolled.

Student Conduct Policy
Students who engage in disruptive behavior will be asked to leave class immediately. 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 you will be asked to leave—no excuses and no exceptions. Do not pack up your belongings before class is dismissed, this is extremely disrespectful. Do not bring children or other animals to class.

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 Catalog defines academic dishonesty as:

“Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: submitting, to satisfy an academic requirement, any document that has been copied in whole or in part from another individual’s work without identifying that individual; neglecting to identify as a quotation a documented idea that has not been assimilated into the student’s language and style, or paraphrasing a passage so closely 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; or drylabbing, which includes (a) obtaining and using experimental data from other students without the express consent of the instructor, (b) utilizing experimental data and laboratory write-ups from other sections of the course or from pervious terms during which the course was conducted, and (c) fabricating data to fit the expected results” (p. 66).

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. You must use quotation marks (“these things”) if you are directly copying another author’s words. Simply citing the author is not enough unless you are paraphrasing (rewriting the idea in your own words). Copying material off of websites and pasting it in your paper is plagiarism. You are encouraged to paraphrase wherever possible, as it is preferable to using too many quotes. 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 (not just the assignment) 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 of the day assigned, and they must be turned in as a hard (paper) copy. Do not merely show up with a pen drive with your file or attempt to email your exam to me and expect this to be OK. It is not. I do not accept emailed assignments. Assignments that are turned in during or at the end of class will be treated as late. A late assignment is to be turned in directly to me at the next class meeting (do not slide it under my door or attach it to the clip outside my office door). Do not email your assignment. The assignment will be deducted one full letter grade for every class period it is late. Missing assignments or exams will result in an “F” for the assignment plus a full letter grade deduction in the student’s final grade. Thus, it is far better to turn an assignment in late than not to turn it in at all. See the course website for any missed handouts.

Note on Disability Services
I will do everything possible to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability who would like to request accommodations should contact the University Disability Services Office—Hale Kauanoe A Wing Lounge, 933-0816 (V), 933-3334 (TTY), shirachi@hawaii.edu. Please do so as early in the semester as possible.
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. You can your advisor here: http://www.uhh.hawaii.edu/studentaffairs/advising/advisors

Course Schedule:

Week 1 (8/20-24).
What is Democracy?
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 1.
- Discussion of class content and student expectations
- Governing and Campaigning
- Formal Institutions vs. Informal Politics
- Democratic Idealism vs. Democratic Realism
- Characteristics of Democracy
- Participatory and Representative Democracy
- Pros and Cons of Democracy

Week 2 (8/27).
The American Founding and the Constitution
No Class Wednesday or Friday: Do Written Assignment
Written Assignment: Compose an essay, with an Introduction, Body and Conclusion, that addresses the “Consider” questions on p. 49 of the Greenberg and Page book. Make sure you write a comprehensive essay. Do not merely write in an outline story that addresses the questions point-by-point.
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 (9/5-7).
Federalism and the American Political Landscape
No Class Monday (Labor Day)
Written Assignment Due Wednesday (see above)
Reading: Greenberg and Page, chs. 3-4; Kann et al., ch. 1.
- American Federalism
- Arguments For and Against Federalism
- Grants
- Political Culture and Ideology
- The American Class Structure
- Diversity: An American Melting Pot or a Mosaic?

Week 4 (9/10-12).
Public Opinion
Group Project Topics or Term Paper Topics Due Friday, one per group if doing group project
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 5; Kann et al., ch. 2.
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 (9/17-21).
The Mass Media
*Reading:* Greenberg and Page, ch. 6; Kann et al., ch. 3.
- Media in a Democracy vs. Media in an Authoritarian System
- Democratic Expectations in the Media
- The Media and Governance
- The Media, Campaigns and Elections
- Objective vs. Advocacy Journalism
- Muckraking
- The Media and Public Opinion
- News Bias?

Week 6 (9/24-27).
Interest Groups and Corporations
*Friday:* Exam #1, Material from Weeks 1 to 5
*Reading:* Greenberg and Page, ch. 7; Kann et al., ch. 4.
- Interest Groups
- Lobbyists and Lobbying
- Pluralism and Elitism
- Public (National) Interests and Private Interests
- Corporations and Labor Unions
- Iron Triangles
- Money and Influence in Politics

Week 7 (10/1-5).
Political Movements
*Reading:* Greenberg and Page, ch. 8; Kann et al., ch. 5.
*In-Class Film:* “Berkeley in the 60s”
- 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 (10/8-12).
Parties, Campaigns, and Elections
*Reading:* Greenberg and Page, chs. 9-10; Kann et al., ch. 6.
*In-Class Film:* “Unprecedented: The 2000 Election”
- Political Parties
- Single-member Districting
- Candidate Recruitment
Campaign Staff
Campaign Finance Reform
Third Parties and Their Influence
Theories of Vote Choice

Week 9 (10/15-19).
Congress
Reading: Greenberg and Page, ch. 11; Kann et al., ch. 7.
- Members and Structure
- Senate and House Differences
- 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 (10/22-26).
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 (10/29-11/2).
The Judiciary
Friday: Exam #2, Material from Weeks 6 to 10
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 14.
- Scope of Power
- Judicial Structure
- Judicial Selection
- The Supreme Court
- Theories of Supreme Court Decision Making

Week 12 (11/5-9).
Civil Liberties
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 15.
- Freedom of Religion
- Freedom of Speech
- The Right to Bear Arms
- The Right to “Privacy”
- Other Freedoms in the Bill of Rights
Week 13 (11/14-16).
Civil Rights
No Class Monday: Veterans’ Day
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

Week 14 (11/19-21).
Domestic Policy
No Class Friday (Thanksgiving Holiday)
Reading: Greenberg and Page ch. 17.
- Active vs. Declarative Policy
- Regulatory Policy
- Economic Policy
- Social Welfare Policy
- Education Policy
- Drug Policy

Week 15 (11/26-30).
Domestic Policy (cont’d) and Foreign Policy
Friday (11/30): Group Project Write up and Term Papers due
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 (12/3-5).
Foreign Policy (cont’d)
American Politics Quiz Show (Extra-Credit) Monday (12/3)
Last day of class on Wednesday, no class on Friday (Stop Day)
Reading: Andreas, all.
- Fiascoes and Successes
- The Arms Race
- Anti-Terrorism Policy
- Foreign Economic Policy
- US Hegemony

Final Examination Wednesday, December 12th, 9:40am–10:30am in our regular classroom.