

Introduction to American Government (Fall 2015)

Political Science 2051(2)
Dr. Belinda Creel Davis
235 Stubbs Hall
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Tues, Thurs 9:00 – 10:20
East Howe Russell 130
Office Hrs: Monday 9-11
Thursday 11-12; by appointment

INTRODUCTION:

This course is designed to give you an overview of American government. We will discuss how the American system of government came to be and the forces that shaped its development. In addition, the basic structure of our governing system and the avenues for participation will be addressed. Examples of public policy are woven throughout the course.

GENERAL EDUCATION OBJECTIVES:

This course also aims to educate students about our political and social system and to instill a lifelong interest in the topic. Specifically the students will be able to demonstrate mastery of factual knowledge of the subject matter; understand the levels of association, from friends and family, to economy and polity. *LSU graduates will demonstrate an understanding of the informing factors of global interdependence, including economic forces, political dynamics, and cultural and linguistic difference.*

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

The textbook for the course is *The Basics of American Politics* by Gary Wasserman. The book is published by Pearson (2015, 15th edition). You will need three scantrons (Form No. 882-E).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Students should read the chapter under discussion **prior** to the class so that they can participate in class discussion and asked informed questions. There are three exams over the course of the semester. Each exam is worth 100 points and consists of 50 multiple choice questions. The exams are not cumulative in nature. If you miss an exam, you may take a makeup exam under certain conditions. A makeup exam requires a doctor's note, an obituary, university excuse, or proof of an actual emergency. Things like a family vacation, etc. are not emergencies. When at all possible, please notify me in advance that you will miss the exam. Unless you are unconscious, I must be emailed within 24 hours of the missed exam in order to discuss the makeup.

Class participation is worth 100 points. Participation is assessed through in class quizzes and homework assignments. Over the course of the semester, there will be 12 quiz and/or homework opportunities. Each quiz or homework is worth 10 points. Your ten highest grades will be used to calculate your participation grade. This means you have two drops. Most of these quizzes and assignments will focus on extra readings/videos that will be assigned throughout the semester.

Grading Scale

A+ 386-400	B+ 346-357	C+ 306-317	D+ 266-277	F 0-237
A 371-385	B 330-345	C 290-305	D 254-265	
A- 358-370	B- 318-329	C- 278-289	D- 238-253	

The lectures are intended to prepare you for the exam. Material will be presented in the lecture that is not in the textbook and **will be** on the exam. Class begins at 9:00am. Students should

come to class prepared and be attentive and responsive during the lecture **with cell phones off**. Students are expected to attend regularly, **punctually and for the duration of the class**.

Students are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct which can be located at [http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/\\$Content/Code+of+Conduct?OpenDocument](http://appl003.lsu.edu/slas/dos.nsf/$Content/Code+of+Conduct?OpenDocument). Violators will be referred immediately to the Dean of Students. During exams, **all** electronic devices must be turned off and put away. Failure to abide by this rule is considered cheating.

Louisiana State University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. The syllabus is available in alternate formats upon request. Students with disabilities: If you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with Disability Services (DS). DS is located in 115 Johnston Hall. Phone is 225/578-5919. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper DS forms and meet with me at the beginning of the semester.

Readings Schedule and Topic Outline

August 25	Syllabus
August 27	Chapter One/Study Abroad Presentation
September 1	Chapter One
September 3	Chapter Two
September 8	Chapter Two
September 10	Chapter Three
September 15	Chapter Three
September 17	Chapter Three
September 22	Review
September 24	Exam One
September 29	Chapter Four
October 1	Chapter Four
October 6	Chapter Four
October 8	Chapter Five
October 13	Chapter Five
October 15	Chapter Six
October 20	Chapter Six
October 22	No Class
October 27	Review
November 3	Exam Two
November 5	Chapter Seven
November 10	Chapter Seven
November 12	Chapter Seven
November 17	Chapter Eight
November 19	Chapter Eight
November 24	Chapter Eight
December 1	Chapter Nine
December 3	Chapter Nine
December 5	Exam Three (Final) 10-12