

POLITICS IN AMERICA: LIBERTY & EQUALITY
POSC 122, WINTER 2013

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Office Hours: Mon., Wed. 1:30-3:00
by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Welcome to Political Science 122. This introductory course is intended to provide an overview of the main features of the national government and politics of the United States. The primary purpose of the course is to provide you with the knowledge and analytical skills necessary to understand and make considered judgements about political events as they unfold in the United States. The general theme of the course is an examination of the values, beliefs and concerns embedded in the political system and how they have changed since its founding. The course will be sensitive to current events and may make adaptations to address political events as they unfold.

TEXTS

- 1) *American Government: Power and Purpose*, Core 11th edition with 2010 election update, Theodore Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere
- 2) *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*, fifth edition, Ann Serow and Everett C. Ladd, editors
- 3) Selected readings posted on Moodle

CLASSROOM POLICIES

Class policies are intended to foster a safe, stimulating and fruitful intellectual community for everyone. Our time in class is valuable and the topics we address are important; therefore, I will enforce the following rules/expectations:

1. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns in the class. You can email, make an appointment, come to office hours, or talk to me before or after class. I am here to help you. If you have a problem or question in the course, the sooner you contact me, the more effectively it can be handled.
2. It is the nature of topics in politics to entail conflicting opinions. Even those who take the time to arrive at deeply thoughtful conclusions often disagree. Class discussion will encourage free expression for everyone and hold to a standard of

- respect for all class members.
3. Carleton College is committed to providing reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodations should contact the Coordinator of Disability Services, Andy Christensen, at 222-4464 or anchrist@carleton.edu, to begin the process. Carleton faculty are strongly encouraged to wait for official notification of accommodations before modifying course requirements for students. I will be happy to make appropriate arrangements as needed.
 4. In order to nurture the classroom as a learning community for everyone, side conversations, electronics and other diversions will not be tolerated. Portable electronics are a convenience, but also a tempting distraction. During class discussion and at other times I may ask that laptop screens be folded down.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1) Participation

This class will be a mix of short lectures, class discussion, and other activities. Every class period will be structured to include a significant amount of class discussion, which everyone is encouraged to participate in. The lectures will primarily include material that is not in the readings, although it may elaborate upon the readings. If you miss class it is your responsibility to find out what you missed so you can return to class prepared.

2) Current Events

We will discuss current events as they relate to the topics we are studying. Therefore, you will be expected to read a major newspaper on a regular basis and to be familiar with the prominent political stories that involve the United States. Watching television news, Comedy Central, reading a blog or listening to the radio is not adequate. As you likely know, you can read many newspapers for free online.

3) Reading

Your reading assignments are due on the date they are listed on the course schedule. I expect excellent comprehension, retention and reflection to be evident in course discussions, questions raised, and in your workbook writing.

4) Assignments

Your grade will be based on take-home quizzes, workbook writing, short papers and a take home final exam.

There will be three different kinds of writing assignments to facilitate your thinking about

politics. These include:

- 1) workbook assignments (handed in the end of weeks 3, 6, 9)
- 2) 2 short papers
- 3) one final take home exam (8-10 pages)

The workbook is a stand alone notebook that you should bring to class every day. There will be in-class writing almost every day in class. The purpose of this writing is to foster class discussion, develop your views on the course materials, and facilitate group discussions. Workbook writing cannot be made up unless you notify me in advance that you will be missing class due to illness, College-approved activity, or personal emergency. There may occasionally be workbook writing outside of class.

None of the writing assignments involve research.

Papers are due in class on the date specified. Late papers will be graded down two points for each day they are late. I do not accept computer problems as a valid excuse for a late paper, so you should not wait until the last minute to print your paper. Saving your work in a timely manner and making back up copies is your responsibility.

GRADES

4 take home quizzes	20 points each	80 points
workbook (turn in 3 times)	40 points each	120 points
2 short papers	60 points each	120 points
Take home exam		80 points
	Total	400 points

The grading standards as follows:

- A Achievement outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
- B Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements in every respect.
- C Achievement meeting the basic course requirements in every respect.
- D Achievement worthy of credit even though it does not fully meet the basic course requirements in every respect.

Please feel free to talk with me about your assignments. I am happy to answer any questions you

have about either the course materials or your progress in the course.

GUIDELINES FOR PAPERS

You can get help with your writing assignments at The Writing Center. It is located on the 2nd floor of Scoville and in the Libe (room 329), and has peer writing consultants who can work with you during any stage of the writing process (brainstorming to final proofreading). Hours are listed here: <https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/asc/writingcenter/>. You can reserve specific times for conferences in Scoville by using their online appointment system: <https://writingcenter.carleton.edu/>. Walk-ins are welcome at Scoville, though writers with appointments have priority. The Libe location requires no appointments.

Short Papers

The purpose of the short papers is to provide a venue for more extended thought about the course materials than provided by the quizzes or workbook, but still provide some leeway for exploration. In answer to specific questions you will be expected to analyze, synthesize, draw connections, question, and make judgements about the course materials. I will be looking to see how you are making meaning out of your interaction with the readings. These papers are meant to be public. As such, your work will be read by classmates and may be read aloud in class.

These papers are not extremely formal assignments, but they are expected to have clear organization in order to reflect organized thinking. In addition, you must use citations on all your references to the readings, including passages which are paraphrased. If you don't it will be more difficult for me to follow your argument or understand your point, and you may be committing plagiarism. Use the Chicago Manual of Style citation system.

Final Exam (Formal Paper Format)

Formal papers are an opportunity for you to present your ideas in a polished, well-organized format. By the time you finish this exam your thoughts on the issues should be thoroughly examined and sorted out in a logical manner. You will be expected to make a commitment to a point, and form an argument for your position, using evidence to support your points. Ideally, when you turn in your exam you will have done work that you feel proud of because it displays your best analytical skills and a depth of understanding.

Please follow the guidelines below when writing the final version of your exam.

1. Use page numbers. The first page of your paper, not including the title page, should be page one. Handwritten page numbers are fine.

2. Use direct quotes sparingly. If you have more than one sentence of direct quotations per page, you should cut back. Since I am familiar with the readings, I do not need to have the author's views repeated. Reference to the pages under discussion is sufficient.
3. You do not need to put a bibliography on your exam since all the sources for your paper will be from the syllabus.
4. You must use citations on all your references to the readings, including passages which are paraphrased. If you don't it will be more difficult for me to follow your argument or understand your point, and you may be committing plagiarism. Use the Chicago Manual of Style citation system.

Academic Integrity

It is assumed that a student is the author of all course work (quizzes, tests, papers, lab work, etc.) that he/she submits, whether for a grade or not, and that the work has not been submitted for credit in another class without the instructor's permission. Images, ideas, data, audio clips, or phrases borrowed from others should be fully identified by standard procedures for making such acknowledgment.

An act of academic dishonesty is a serious offense in a college community. By seeking credit for work that is not his or her own, a student takes unfair advantage of fellow students—who accept their limitations—and of their teachers—who trust their work. Dishonesty in academic work, particularly in the form of plagiarism or cheating, also defeats the process of self-discovery that is the heart of a liberal education. People establish their integrity and personality as they learn to distinguish what is significantly their own from what belongs to others, and as they learn to value their own work, including its limitations, in relation to the work of others. As a scholar, finally, one should be generous and welcoming in acknowledging the work of other scholars, for their work makes possible one's own.

At Carleton College, an act of academic dishonesty is therefore regarded as conflicting with the work and purpose of the entire College and not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor; all cases involving questions of academic integrity are referred for appropriate action to the Academic Standing Committee (ASC) via the Associate Dean of Students or the Associate Dean of the College. This also protects students, who cannot be “graded down” on a suspicion of academic dishonesty that has not been vetted by the larger community.