

Political Science 111
Introduction to American Politics

Mondays and Wednesdays, 10am - 11am
Auditorium A, Angel Hall

Professor Robert Mickey
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Professor Mickey's Office Hours
Mondays, 11-12; Wednesdays, 11-12;
Thursdays, 9:30-11:30; and by appointment

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OVERVIEW

This course introduces students to the central processes and institutions of American politics, and particularly our *national* politics. It is designed to help you approach American politics with a critical eye and an analytical frame of mind. By the end of this course, you should know the basic facts about the American political system. Second, you should understand the analysis of the political system that scholars conduct, including their questions, their answers, and their methods of analysis. Third, you should be able to conduct your *own* analysis of aspects of the political system.

Such skills are important because politics plays an important role in your lives. As we gather today, the U.S. federal government is amassing trillions of dollars of debt that you will inherit, prosecuting military operations in multiple theaters, and launching a war on cyber-terrorism that may enhance your safety or diminish your liberties (or both). Closer to home, the political system is producing policies that affect how much college costs, the kinds of careers that you can pursue, and how police officers interact with you.

Politics matters to you. You can also matter to it. Citizen engagement in politics doesn't necessarily change any policies, but it does increase the chances of securing the outcomes you prefer. What citizens do and think affect the kind of politics we get. The connections are not always transparent, or as simple as news media suggest. Public opinion and political participation of the masses matter, but their impact is greatly affected by the institutions of government, including elections, the calculations of executives and legislators, political parties and interest groups, and so on. This course will help you to understand those institutions and their interactions and thereby locate yourself in American politics.

To this end, our textbook has a strong analytical bent. It does not simply describe political processes and institutions for you, but provides the conceptual tools you will need to analyze politics for yourself. Several key concepts are laid out in the first chapter. It is important that you comprehend them clearly and quickly, for they recur in subsequent chapters, lectures, and discussions in section. Do *not* assume that the book is a substitute for the lectures and sections, or vice versa. In lectures and sections we will often invoke, but not always redefine, key concepts or arguments presented in the text. Often we will use the text as the point of departure for issues or ideas not covered, or not covered well, in the text. If something is not clear during lecture, of course, we encourage you to ask questions. We will do our best to answer them during lecture, section, or in one-on-one meetings outside of class.

Your participation in discussion section is critical to the educational value of this course (as well as to your grade). Often, lectures will paint political phenomena with a broad brush or deploy abstract terms. In section, you have the opportunity to clarify what you don't understand, to make the abstract more concrete, and to engage your GSI and your classmates around key issues and ideas. Do not miss these opportunities.

GENERAL COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your course grade will be based on the following:

20%: Section Grade. This is based on attendance, participation in discussion, and performance on quizzes. *See your section syllabus for details.*

25%: In-class midterm exam ***on Wednesday, February 25.***

25%: Final exam ***from 4pm-6pm on Wednesday, April 29.***

15%: Midterm essay (1500 words) *due via Ctools and hard copy at noon on Friday, February 20.*

15%: Final essay (2000 words) *due via Ctools and hard copy at noon on Wednesday, April 22.*

Unexcused lateness on either essay results in a penalty of one-third of one letter grade per day.

Grade Grievances

If you believe that you have been unfairly graded, follow this procedure:

1. Wait 24 hours after receiving the grade before approaching Professor Mickey.
2. Provide a brief explanation in writing for why the grade you received was unfair.

Departmental grade grievance procedures are outlined at <http://polisci.lsa.umich.edu/undergrad/grievance.html>.

GENERAL POLICIES

I. Class Sessions. The class will start at *exactly* 10:10 and end at 11:00; please be on time.

II. Religious Observances and Other Scheduling Conflicts. In keeping with the University of Michigan policy of respecting students' religious commitments (http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html#conflicts), all attempts will be made to accommodate conflicts arising out of religious observances. You are responsible for reporting to the instructor your absence of class well in advance. The following are major religious and cultural holidays during the semester that conflict with our course.

Sankranti	Jan. 14
Ash Wednesday	Feb. 18
Passover	April 6, 8

This list is based on (http://www.provost.umich.edu/calendar/religious_holidays.html) and may not be complete; you are encouraged to let the professor know about other religious commitments and holidays. Furthermore, we are aware of and, in principle, sympathetic to the many other pressures students have in their lives and are willing to accommodate reasonable requests for missing class or rescheduling exams. But it is *your* responsibility to bring conflicts to the professor's attention, and to do so *in advance*.

III. Academic Integrity. Plagiarism and cheating are violations of academic integrity and thus violations of the LS&A Academic Conduct Code, and they will result automatically in a failure in the course. Furthermore, as the LS&A Academic Judiciary Manual of Procedures specifies, a student may be expelled from the university for academic misconduct. For the purposes of this class, plagiarism will be defined as *submitting a piece of work which in part or in whole is not entirely the student's own work without attributing those same portions to their correct source.* For more information, see <http://www.lib.umich.edu/academic-integrity>.

Disabled student accommodations. If you would like to request academic accommodations due to a disability, please make an appointment to see Prof. Mickey. If you haven't done so already, you are also encouraged to contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD), Rm. G-664 Haven Hall, tel. 763-3000 (Voice/TTY/TDD). More information is available at <http://www.umich.edu/~sswd/>.

IV. Honors Conversion

If you are an LSA honors student, you are eligible for an Honors Conversion for this course. It will involve a study group with Professor Mickey and some additional work. Contact Professor Mickey if you are interested. Also see <http://www.lsa.umich.edu/honors/currentstudents/academicinformation/honorsconversion>.

Note that to participate in an honors conversion, you must attend a mandatory information session and also sign/up by the add/drop deadline (Tuesday, Jan. 27).

V. Other stuff. You are strongly encouraged to attend office hours for any course-related issues. Updates of this syllabus, announcements, etc. will be available on our Coursetools website. The **regular add/drop deadline is Tuesday, Jan. 27**.

COURSE OUTLINE

Jan. 7	Course Overview
Jan. 12, 14 [*]	The Founding and the Constitution
<u>Jan. 19</u>	<u>NO CLASS—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY</u>
Jan. 21	Federalism
Jan. 26, 28	Federalism, continued; Constitutional Rights and Liberties
Feb. 2, 4	Congress
Feb. 9, 11	The Presidency
Feb. 16, 18 [†]	The Federal Bureaucracy; Federal Courts
Friday, Feb. 20	MIDTERM ESSAY DUE AT NOON
Feb. 23	Federal Courts, continued
Wed, Feb. 25	IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM
<u>March 2, 4</u>	<u>NO CLASS—WINTER BREAK</u>
Mar. 9, 11	Public Opinion
Mar. 16, 18	Elections
Mar. 23, 25	Political Parties
Mar. 30, April 1	Interest Groups and Social Movements
Apr. 6, 8 [‡]	The American Political Economy and the Distinctive U.S. Welfare State
Apr. 13, 15	Economic Inequality and Its Implications for American Democracy
Apr. 20	Some Possible Futures of American Politics
Wed., Apr. 22	FINAL ESSAY DUE AT NOON
Wed., Apr. 29	FINAL EXAM FROM 4PM TO 6PM

^{*} Sankranti.

[†] Ash Wednesday.

[‡] Passover.

TEXTBOOKS FOR PURCHASE

**Theodore Lowi, Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere, *American Government: Power and Purpose*, Full 13th Edition (2014).

**Ken Kollman, *Readings in American Politics: Analysis and Perspectives*, 3rd Edition (2014).

**Robert G. Kaiser, *Act of Congress: How America's Essential Institution Works, and How It Doesn't* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013).

*Other readings will be made available via the Ctools site.

COURSE SCHEDULE and READINGS

note: readings should be done by Monday morning of the week in which they are assigned

Jan. 7 Course Overview

*Lowi, Ginsberg, Shepsle, and Ansolabehere [hereafter **LGSA**], chapter 1 (pp. 2-31).

*Olson, *Logic of Collective Action*, in Kollman reader, pp. 6-18 [hereafter **KK**].

*Hardin, "Tragedy of the Commons," in **KK**, pp. 24-36.

Jan. 12, 14 The Founding and the Constitution

***LGSA**, chapter 2 (pp. 32-70).

*James Madison, *The Federalist*, Number 10, in **KK**, pp. 51-57.

*James Madison, *The Federalist*, Number 51, in **KK**, pp. 58-61.

*Robert Dahl, *How Democratic Is the American Constitution?*, in **KK**, pp. 71-75.

Monday, Jan. 19 *NO CLASS—MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. DAY*

Jan. 21 Federalism

***LGSA**, chapter 3 (pp. 72-102).

*Robert Mickey, *Paths Out of Dixie: The Democratization of Authoritarian Enclaves in America's Deep South, 1944-1972* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), excerpts from chapters 1 and 2 (19 pages).

*U.S. Supreme Court, *Shelby County, Alabama v. Holder* (2013), in **KK**, pp. 522-528.

Jan. 26, 28 Federalism, continued; Constitutional Rights and Liberties

*Ken Kollman, "Civil Rights and Civil Liberties," chapter 4 in Kollman, *The American Political System*, second ed. (2014), pp. 101-133.

*U. S. Supreme Court, *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), in **KK**, pp. 120-124.

*U.S. Supreme Court, *United States v. Windsor* (2013), in **KK**, pp. 145-154.

Feb. 2, 4 Congress

***LGSA**, chapter 6 (pp. 186-245).

*David Mayhew, *Congress: The Electoral Connection*, in **KK**, 155-166.

*Gary W. Cox and McCubbins, *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U. S. House of Representatives*, in **KK**, pp. 185-200.

*Robert G. Kaiser, *Act of Congress: How America's Essential Institution Works, and How It Doesn't* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013), chapter 1 (pp. 3-16) [hereafter **Kaiser**].

Feb. 9, 11 The Presidency

***LGSA**, chapter 7 (pp. 248-300).

***Kaiser**, chapters 2-3 (pp. 17-38).

Feb. 16, 18 The Federal Bureaucracy; Federal Courts

***LGSA**, chapter 8 (pp. 302-339).

*James Q. Wilson, *Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It*, in **KK**, pp. 265-277.

*Mathew D. McCubbins and Thomas Schwartz, "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Fire Alarms versus Police Patrols," in **KK**, pp. 279-290.

***Kaiser**, chapters 4-5 (pp. 39-66).

Friday, Feb. 20 **MIDTERM ESSAY DUE AT NOON**

Feb. 23 Federal Courts, continued

*Ken Kollman, "The Judiciary," chapter 8 in Kollman, *The American Political System*, second ed. (2014), pp. 263-295.

***Kaiser**, chapter 6 (pp. 66-83).

Wed., Feb. 25 **IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM**

Mar. 9, 11 Public Opinion

***LGSA**, chapter 10 (pp. 392-444).

*Donald R. Kinder and Cindy D. Kam, *Us Against Them: Ethnocentric Foundations of American Opinion*, in **KK**, pp. 391-395.

***Kaiser**, chapters 7-8 (pp. 84-107).

Mar. 16, 18 Elections

***LGSA**, chapter 11 (pp. 446-510).

*Steven J. Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, *Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America*, in **KK**, pp. 399-416.

***Kaiser**, chapters 9-10 (pp. 108-126).

Mar. 23, 25 Political Parties

***LGSA**, chapter 12 (pp. 512-557).

*John H. Aldrich, *Why Parties?*, in **KK**, pp. 453-466.

*Marty Cohen, *et al*, *The Party Decides*, in **KK**, pp. 476-485.

***Kaiser**, chapters 11-13 (pp. 127-149).

Mar. 30, April 1 Interest Groups

***LGSA**, chapter 13 (pp. 558-596).

***Kaiser**, chapters 14-15 (pp. 159-203).

Apr. 6, 8 The American Political Economy and the Distinctive U.S. Welfare State

***Kaiser**, chapters 16-20 (pp. 204-297).

Apr. 13, 15 Economic Inequality and Its Implications for American Democracy

***Kaiser**, chapters 21-24 (pp. 298-386).

Apr. 20 Some Possible Futures of American Politics

[No readings]

Wed., Apr. 22 **FINAL ESSAY DUE AT NOON**

Wed., Apr. 29 **FINAL EXAM FROM 4PM TO 6PM**