Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce students to the principals, institutions and processes of American politics. This course is designed to provide a foundation that should enable students to understand and critically evaluate the American political system and its form of government. POLI 2051 classes are designed to address the following General Education outcomes:

- A familiarity with the nature and function of the social sciences
- An appreciation of the methods of critical inquiry

The course is divided into three sections. The first section introduces students to the fundamental of policymaking, explores the constitutional context of politics, and examines political participation. The second section of the course explores components of the political system (elections, interest groups) and institutions of government (executive, legislative, and judicial branches) that create and implement public policies. The third part of the course examines the policymaking process in the specific areas such as the economy, social welfare, civil liberties and national security. The preponderance of our time will be spent on national-level politics, but aspects of state and local governments will be incorporated throughout the semester.

Required Texts:

Two texts are required for this course:


Student Evaluation and Policies:

Grades for the course are based on a student’s performance on two in-term exams and a final exam, and one (1) small group presentation and written summary. Letter grades are determined on the following scale:

- A: 90% - 100% (400 to 360 points)
- B: 80% - 89% (359 to 320 points)
- C: 70% - 79% (319 to 280 points)
- D: 60% - 69% (279 to 240 points)
- F: 0 - 59% (Below 239 points)

Small Group Presentation and written summary:
Each student will be responsible for selecting chapter required readings from *The Enduring Debate* text and presenting the information as a group along with submitting a written summary of the entire required chapter readings. The small group presentation and written summary will total 100 points. **You must notify the instructor of your selected readings by January 30th, 2014 via email.**

Exams:
Two exams and one final consisting of 100 points each will be given. The final exam will focus on the last section of material covered; however, material covered earlier in the semester may be drawn upon as well. Please note that any reading not covered in class will still be on the exams. It is the student’s responsibility to complete all reading and be prepared to answer any questions about them on the exam.

Makeup exams are only provided for students who can produce a valid excuse (serious illness, family crisis, etc). For problems that can be anticipated, students must let me know in advance of the problem. For problems that crop up at the last minute, students should contact me as soon as it is reasonably possible. **Students who do not meet these conditions will earn a 0 on the exam.** Note that it is the student’s responsibility to make arrangements with me about makeup exams. Makeup are generally scheduled for the Friday following the date of the missed exam and are written essay tests.

For students who have special needs or who require accommodations through Disability Services, please advise me of your situation. For accommodations involving the exams, please contact me about the necessary arrangements well in advance of the testing date.
Assignment Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Date</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>March 13th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>April 10th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>May 8th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enduring Debate Presentation &amp; written summary</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
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</tbody>
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Classroom Policy:
Please be considerate of those around you who are trying to listen and take notes. Keep in mind that class will begin promptly at 6:00. Please be on time and seated prior to the beginning of class each day and leave early only for emergencies. Most importantly, do not talk during class. Use of a cell phone or blackberry device including texting is prohibited during class- turn off all cell phones and blackberry devices prior to the beginning of class. Disruptive students will be asked to leave immediately.
## Course Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 16&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to Course</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>January 23&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>American Government: Roots, Context, and Culture</strong></td>
<td><em>American Government: Roots and Reform</em>, Chapter 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Debating the Issue: “What Does it mean to Be an American?”</td>
<td><em>The Enduring Debate</em>: pp. 27-52</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 30&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>The Constitution</strong></td>
<td><em>American Government: Roots and Reform</em>, Chapter 2</td>
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<td>February 6&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>The Federal System</strong></td>
<td><em>American Government: Roots and Reform</em>, Chapter 3</td>
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<td></td>
<td><em>The Price of Federalism</em> pp. 103-111 &amp; “Jumping Frogs, Endangered Toads, and California’s Medical- Marijuana Law” pp. 112-121</td>
<td><em>The Enduring Debate</em>: pp. 103-111 &amp; 112-121</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February 13&lt;sup&gt;th&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td><strong>Congress</strong></td>
<td><em>American Government: Roots and Reform</em>, Chapter 6</td>
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</table>
February 20th
No class meeting

February 27th
The Presidency
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 7

“The Power to Persuade” pp. 212-221 & “Perspectives on the Presidency” pp. 222-228
*The Enduring Debate:* pp. 212-228

The Executive Branch & The Federal Bureaucracy
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 8

*The Enduring Debate:* pp. 239-256

March 6th
The Judiciary
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 9

*The Enduring Debate:* pp. 280-292

March 13th
EXAM 1

March 20th
Public Opinion & Political Socialization
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 10

“Polling the Public” pp. 317-324 & “Choice Words: If I Can’t Understand Our Poll Questions, Then How Can We Understand Your Answers?” pp. 325-329
*The Enduring Debate:* pp. 317-329

Political Parties
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 11

*The Enduring Debate:* pp. 393-414
March 27th

**Elections and Voting**  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 12

The Enduring Debate: pp. 358-376

**The Campaign Process**  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 13

April 3rd

**The News Media**  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 14

The Enduring Debate: pp. 330-357

**Interest Groups**  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 15

The Enduring Debate: pp. 444-461

April 10th

**EXAM 2**

April 17th

No class meeting (Spring Break)

April 24th

**Domestic Policymaking**  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 16

**Economic Policymaking**  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 17

**Foreign and Defense Policymaking**  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 18
May 1st  
Civil Liberties  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 4

Civil Rights  
*American Government: Roots and Reform*, Chapter 5

May 8th  
FINAL EXAM  
8:00pm –10:00pm