

GO 111

Introduction to American Government and Politics

G. Calvin Mackenzie

Spring 2003: INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Office: Miller Library 256 Phone ext.: 3272 E-mail: gcmacken@colby.edu

Office hours: I am generally in my office all day on Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.

I will do my best to be there for certain on:

Monday: 10:00 — 12:30

Tuesday: 11:30 — 12:45

Wednesday: 10:00 — 12:30

If you need to communicate with me at times other than these, please call or send an e-mail.

Alternative office hours can also be arranged.

READINGS

You should purchase the following books that are available at the College Bookstore:

Kenneth Janda, Jeffrey Berry, and Jerry Goldman, The Challenge of Democracy (Houghton Mifflin, latest edition, 2002)

William Flanigan and Nancy Zingale, Political Behavior of the American Electorate (10th edition, CQ Press, 2002)

Faye J. Crosby and Cheryl Van De Veer, eds., Sex, Race, and Merit: Debating Affirmative Action in Education and Employment (University of Michigan Press, 2000)

Robert M. Baird and Stuart E. Rosenbaum, eds., The Ethics of Abortion: Pro-Life v. Pro-Choice (Prometheus Books, 1993)

New York Times. Everyone is expected to read the New York Times every day during this course. You may order a subscription from the bookstore. Some people may find it more convenient to read the on-line edition at <http://www.nytimes.com/>.

Assigned readings should be completed by the beginning of class on the day for which they are assigned.

THE ELECTRONIC CONNECTION

The **GOV 111 Web Page** is the central repository of information about this course. There you will find the syllabus, many of the course assignments, outlines of lectures, hints and guides for writing your paper and preparing for exams. There are also many hypertext links

that take you, with the click of a mouse, to a vast repository of information about American government and politics. You are strongly encouraged to take some time each week to explore the links that relate to that week's topic.

DISCUSSION SECTIONS

From time to time, as indicated in the schedule below, the class will be split into discussion sections. For each of the discussion dates, a list of propositions designed to frame the discussion will be provided. Everyone is expected to think about and be prepared to discuss these propositions during the discussions. The first 10 minutes of each discussion section will be reserved for questions about the readings or lectures. *Attendance at these discussion sections is mandatory.*

DATA ANALYSIS LAB

During the semester, everyone will participate in a short series of data analysis laboratories. These are designed to introduce you to the way political scientists collect, analyze and report data on political behavior. The lab sessions will meet on occasional Tuesday evenings for one hour and each will involve a separate assignment in which you will learn to use databases to seek answers to important questions. These sessions are mandatory for all students in the course.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT

The paper will provide an opportunity for you to analyze a complicated question about American politics and government. In carrying out this assignment, you should pay scrupulous attention to the proper use and citation of evidence. The appearance of your paper and the quality of your writing will be important factors in the evaluation of your work. A fuller discussion of the writing assignment and expectations is available on the class web page.

Paper due dates are staggered over the last half of the semester. Each class member will be assigned to a particular due date, and each of the five paper groups will have a different topic. The topic will be assigned more than one week before the paper is due.

CLASS POLICIES

1. Except in the most unusual circumstances, work submitted by students will be evaluated and returned at the following class.
2. All work in this course is due no later than noon on the date on which it is assigned. **Work received after the assigned due date will be penalized at the rate of one-half letter grade per day.** There will be no extensions of this deadline nor alterations of the penalty for late submission.
3. Everyone is expected to attend every class. Your participation in class is

valued, and the quality of your participation will be a component of your grade for the course. Any absence will lower that grade. Anyone who misses 3 class meetings risks being dropped from the course.

4. Successful completion of the course requires the submission of all written assignments and proper attention to attendance expectations.
5. Each class will begin promptly at the scheduled time. You should be in your seat and ready to begin at that time. Respect should be paid to anyone who is speaking to the class, whether student or instructor.
6. No audio, video, or photographs of the class may be recorded without the explicit consent of the instructor.
7. All telephones and pagers should be turned off during class time, and none may be brought into the room during exams.
8. All college rules regarding originality of student work and plagiarism apply in this class and will be vigorously enforced.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING WEIGHTS

1. Mid-term examination 25%
2. Participation in class discussions 10%
3. The writing assignment 25%
4. Data analysis lab 10%
5. The final examination 30%

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

Feb 5 **Introduction**

TEXT: Preface, Chapter 1

Feb 10 **Ideological and Constitutional Roots of the American Polity**

TEXT: Chapter 2, Appendices A1-A2 (Declaration of Independence)

Feb 12 **Old Ideas and New Problems**

TEXT: Chapters 3 and 4, Appendices, A2-A19 (Articles of

Confederation, Constitution, Federalist 10, 51)

Flanigan and Zingale, Political Behavior of the American Electorate, 1-30.

Feb 17 [Political Socialization](#)

TEXT: Chapter 5

Feb 19 [Political Participation](#)

TEXT: Chapter 7

Flanigan and Zingale, Political Behavior of the
American Electorate, 31-55, 117-147.

Feb 24 [Elections](#)

TEXT: Chapter 9

Flanigan and Zingale, Political Behavior of the American Electorate, 149-203.

Feb 26 [Political Parties](#)

TEXT: Chapter 8

Flanigan and Zingale, Political Behavior of the American
Electorate, 57-116.

Mar 3 **Interest Groups**

TEXT: Chapter 6

Mar 5 [Interest Groups](#)

TEXT: Chapter 10

Mar 10 **Discussion Section #1: The State of Politics in America**

Mar 12 **NO CLASS MEETING**

Mar 17 [The Presidency \(1\)](#)

TEXT: Chapter 12

Mar 19 **The Presidency (2)**

Mar 19 Evening Meeting: MID-TERM EXAM

Mar 31 [The Executive Bureaucracy \(1\)](#)

TEXT: Chapter 13

Apr 2 **The Executive Bureaucracy (2)**

Apr 7 [The Congress \(1\)](#)

TEXT: Chapter 11

Apr 9 **Discussion Section #3: Social Welfare Policy**

Paper Group 1: Papers due

TEXT: Chapter 19

Apr 14 **The Congress (2)**

Apr 16 **The Congress (3)**

Paper Group 2: Papers due

Apr 21 **Discussion Section #2: Abortion and Public Policy**

Robert M. Baird and Stuart E. Rosenbaum, eds., *The Ethics of*

Abortion: Pro-Life v. Pro-Choice

Apr 23 [The Judiciary \(1\)](#)

Paper Group 3: Papers due

TEXT: Chapters 14 and 15

Apr 28 **The Judiciary (2)**

TEXT: Chapter 16

Apr 30 **Discussion Section #4: Affirmative Action**

Paper Group 4: Papers due

Faye J. Crosby and Cheryl Van De Veer, eds., *Sex, Race, and Merit: Debating Affirmative Action in Education and Employment*

May 5 **Conclusions: The Revolution Nobody Wanted**

May 7 **Discussion Section #5: Open Agenda**

Paper Group 5: Papers due