

**POLS 100
National Politics
Spring 2007**

11:30-12:45pm
208 Seney Hall
Prerequisite: POLS 101

Instructor: Katie Vigilante
kvigila@learnlink.emory.edu
Office: Seney 307
Office Hours by appointment
404-933-0209

Course Objective

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the study of politics in the American context. As such, we will focus on the fundamental principles underlying American politics and culture. We will begin with the derivation of the term politics and the resulting power distribution of power yielded by our constitutional system. We will next turn to public opinion, political participation, and campaigns and elections as important aspects of the American system. We will spend the remainder of the course assessing political institutions and processes from a policymaking perspective with special focus on U.S. environmental policy.

Text

Wilson and Dilulio, Jr., *American Government*, 10th Edition

Grades

A student's grade is determined by his/her performance on 3 in-class NONCUMULATIVE exams. Each exam is worth 100 points. These exams are designed to assess both objective and subjective understanding of in-class lectures and reading assignments. **Students are responsible for all assigned readings whether or not those readings are covered in the lectures.** Reading assignments should be completed **before** class lectures. Changes in assigned reading will be announced by me if deviations from the course outline become necessary.

If you have questions, ask. I cannot address questions or concerns I am not aware of! I check my email several times daily. I am usually in my office on Tuesdays and Thursdays except during lectures. I will gladly schedule individual meetings with students upon request.

Course Outline

PART I: The American System

January 18

Introduction

Politics: What we mean by the term?
Why should we care?
Power, politics and legitimacy
Democracy: US Application (pp.1-12)

January 23

Democratic Theory

Defining Political Power, Distribution of Power,
and Political Change (pp. 1-16)

January 25

American Political Culture

Attitudinal Foundations of American Politics
Defining Political Culture in general and in the American
Context (pp. 75-97)

January 30

Introduction to the U.S. Constitution.

Creation, Debates, Compromises and
Intentions (pp. 16-30)

February 1

Constitutional Framework

Individual Liberty v. Democracy
Constitutional Guarantees and Equality
Constitutional Reform (pp. 30-45)

February 6

Federalism

Debate and Meaning
Nullification, Dual Federalism and
State Sovereignty
Federal-State Relations (grants in aid and national
requirements)
State rivalry (pp. 48-66)

February 8

Federalism Continued

Federal Aid = Federal Control?
Devolution: Block Grants...what is driving
devolution?
Congress and Federalism (pp. 66-75)

February 13

Exam I

PART II: Opinions, Interests and Organizations

February 15	Public Opinion Introduced Political Socialization (pp. 153- 162)
February 20	Public Opinion Continued Cleavages Political Ideology (measurement and meaning) Political Elites and Opinion Leaders (pp. 162-176)
February 22	Understanding Political Participation (pp. 177-197)
February 27	The American Party System (pp. 197- 229)
March 1	Elections and Campaigns Presidential v. Congressional Primary v. General (pp. 230-244)
March 6	Money and Elections What decides the elections and what about policy? (pp. 244-263)
March 8	Interest Groups Proliferation, Growth, Categorization Social Movements (pp. 264-276)
March 12-16	SPRING BREAK
March 20	Interest Groups Concluded (pp. 276-290)
March 22	Exam II

PART III: American Political Institutions and Public Policy

March 27	Congress Introduced Members, Constituents, Representation, Relationships and Ideology (pp. 315-341)
March 29	Congress Continued: Organization, Committees, Enacting Legislation and Gridlock Polarization and Leadership The Creation of law (pp. 341-366)
April 3	The American Presidency Evolution of the Office Electoral College (pp. 367-377)
April 5	No Class. Instructor Out
April 10	Powers of the President Cabinet and Staff Character and Persuasion and Veto Powers Transitions (pp. 379-408)
April 12	Bureaucracy Introduced Bureaucratic Growth (pp. 409- 427)
April 17	Bureaucracies Continued: Bureaucratic Procedure Agency Alliance Oversight and Reform (pp. 427-436)
April 19	Public Policymaking Process Introduced Agenda Setting and Decision-Making (pp. 468-478)
April 24	Policymaking Continued Theories of Policy Making Explored (pp. 468-490)
April 26	Environmental Policy (pp. 559-575)
May 1	Environmental Policy (pp. 559-575)
May 7	Exam III (2-5pm)

