Harold Lasswell once wrote a book called: Politics: Who Gets What, When, and How. That book title is a good definition for politics, the process in which decisions are made allocating things we value. This course is about politics in America -- the manner in which our political system decides "who gets what, when, and how."

A number of actors and institutions are central to American politics, and they will be considered during this course. Some are well recognized and formally defined in the United States Constitution: the Presidency, the Congress, courts, and elections. Others, such as bureaucracies and political parties, have evolved over time. They are not mentioned in the Constitution, and many of the founding fathers would be dismayed at the roles they now occupy. Still others, most notably pressure groups, are viewed unfavorably by many contemporary commentators, even though the first article in original Bill of Rights articulates their right "peaceably to assemble and, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances."

While this course is about the institutions and actors that play a part in the American political process, it is not simply a course about the formal institutions and officeholders. We will examine the role of citizens in American democracy and the role of the news media within the political process. Special attention will focus upon the consequences of the political process for the formulation and execution of public policies, and the impact of these policies upon things we value -- freedom, equality, justice, and material rewards. Not only does American politics produce winners and losers, it also addresses a wide range of public issues that are crucial to all.

**IMPORTANT DATES**

The following dates are not negotiable. If students are unable to accommodate their schedules within the constraints of the course calendar, they should consider enrolling in different courses.

First Exam: April 20      First essay due: April 13
Second Exam: May 18      Second essay due: May 11
Final Exam: Wednesday, June 9, 1-3 PM

**REQUIRED BOOKS AND THE NEW YORK TIMES**


Each student should have access to the online version of the daily New York Times (www.nytimes.com).
**REQUIREMENTS**

Students must: (1) attend lectures and discussion sections, (2) complete the reading assignments prior to class meetings, (3) take three exams, (4) write two essays (no more than three pages each) based on assigned readings in the Kernell and Smith reader, (5) complete a series of in-class conference activities, (6) participate in a political science research exercise.

**THE ESSAYS**

Students must write two essays based on reading assignments taken from Kernell and Smith, *Principles and Practice of American Politics*. Both essays will be discussed during both lectures and discussion sections. The first essay will be addressed as part of the discussion section during the week of April 5. The second essay will be addressed as part of the discussion section during the week of April 26. The first essay is due in class on April 13, and the second is due in class on May 11. Each of the essays will require that the student adopt and defend a thesis statement in response to the readings. The first essay will be concerned with the Federalist 10 and majority factions, and the second will address the 14th Amendment and federalism. These essays must be typed and double spaced, and the text of each paper cannot exceed three pages in length.

**IN-CLASS CONFERENCE ACTIVITIES AND RESEARCH ACTIVITY**

The in-class conference activities are a series of structured small group exercises that will occur during both lectures and discussion sections. Student participation in individual activities will be graded on a pass/fail basis. We will have at least 8 of these activities during the course of the semester, and the activities will not be announced ahead of time.

In addition, students will have the opportunity to participate in a political science research activity that occurs outside of the regularly scheduled class times. Students will sign up for a time to participate in this activity that meets their schedule, and the activity will take no longer than 20 minutes. Participation in the activity constitutes a passing grade.

A summary grade will be constructed for the in-class conference activities and for the research activity. The grade will be based on the percentage of passing grades on individual activities. Each in-class conference activity is worth one point, and the research activity is worth two points.

**THE WEB**

The Kernell and Jacobson web site can be accessed directly at: http://logic.cqpress.com. This website includes study guides, quizzes, and other aides to learning.

**DISCUSSION SECTIONS**

New material will be covered during discussion sections, and thus students who do not attend will place themselves at a severe disadvantage.
The days, times, and locations of the discussion sections are as follows:

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**GRADES**

Course grades will be calculated on the following basis: 25 percent on the first exam, 25 percent on the second exam, 25 percent on the third (final) exam, 15 percent on the essays, and 10 percent on the in-class conference and research activities.

**RULES**

1. Incompletes are only given in truly extraordinary cases, and the burden of justifying an incomplete rests with the student.

2. Exams may only be missed in exceptional cases, and an excuse should be provided prior to the exam. One, and only one, makeup exam will be scheduled after each exam. The format for a makeup exam is four essay questions.

3. Essays are due during the assigned class period. Late essays will be accepted for one week after the due date, but the grade will be lowered 15 points for any late paper, and the essay must be personally turned in to the student's teaching assistant.

4. An exam that is not taken, or a paper that is not turned in, or an activity that is not completed, receives a grade of "0".

5. Any student who cheats or plagiarizes will receive a grade of "0", as well as being subject to university disciplinary procedures.

**COURSE AND READING OUTLINE**

In addition to the readings listed below, students will be regularly asked to read articles from the *New York Times*. 
WEEK 1

1. Politics, Conflict, and Social Order (March 30)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 1; Olson; Hardin in Kernell and Smith.

2. Democracy in America: Institutional Roots and Revision (April 1)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 2.

Discussion Group (week of March 29): Federalist 10.

WEEK 2

3. Federalism and Intergovernmental Relations (April 6)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 3; 14th Amendment to the Constitution;
   Brown v. Board of Education
   (http://www.nationalcenter.org/brown.html)

4. Models of Federalism (April 8)
   read: Buchanan; Kettl in Kernell and Smith.

Discussion Group (week of April 5): Discuss first essay: “Does the Federalist 10 overestimate
   the dangers of majority factions?” reread: Olson; Buchanan in Kernell and Smith.

   NOTE: First essay due in lecture on April 13.

WEEK 3

5. Congress (April 13)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 6; Federalist 51 in Kernell.

6. Members of Congress (April 15)
   read: Pearson and Schickler in Kernell.

Discussion Group (week of April 12): Review Session for first exam.

WEEK 4

7. FIRST EXAM (April 20)

8. The President (April 21)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 7; Kernell; Liza in Kernell and Smith.

Discussion Group (week of April 19): Road to the Supreme Court
WEEK 5

9. The Courts and Judicial Interpretation (April 27)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 9; Binder and Maltzman in Kernell and Smith; Marbury v.
   Madison on the web:
   (http://www.law.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/conlaw/marbury.HTML)

10. Civil Liberties, Civil Rights, and the 14th Amendment (April 29)
    read: Kernell and Jacobson 4-5; Gideon v. Wainwright on the web:
    (http://usinfo.state.gov/infousa/government/overview/67.html)

Discussion Group (week of April 26): Discuss second essay: “Does the 14th Amendment to the
Constitution violate the rights of states, thereby undermining federalism?”: reread: the
14th Amendment; the 10th Amendment; Gideon v. Wainright; Brown v. Board of
Education.

NOTE: Second essay due in lecture on May 11.

WEEK 6

11. Political Parties (May 4)
    read: Kernell and Jacobson 12; Aldrich in Kernell and Smith.

12. Public Opinion (May 6)
    read: Kernell and Jacobson 10; Bartels in Kernell and Smith.

Discussion Group (week of May 3): American politics and new media.
    Read: Baum and Kernell in Kernell and Smith.

WEEK 7

13. Information and Communication (May 11)
    read: Schudson; Popkin in Kernell and Smith.

14. Elections (May 13)
    read: Kernell and Jacobson 11

Discussion Group (week of May 10): review for second exam.

WEEK 8

15. SECOND EXAM (May 18)

    read: Fiorina; Jacobson in Kernell and Smith.
Discussion Group (week of May 17): Making the Clean Air Act Work

WEEK 9

17. Interest Groups, Politics, and Policy (May 25)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 13.

18. What is Public Policy? (May 27)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson 8.

Discussion Group (week of May 24): read: Schattschneider, Wright in Kernell and Smith;
   reread Federalist 10

WEEK 10

19. Bureaucratic Politics (June 1)
   read: Kernell and Smith: Lewis in Kernell and Smith.

20. Making Politics Work (June 3)
   read: Kernell and Jacobson: 15; Moe in Kernell and Smith.

Discussion Group (week of May 31): review for final exam

FINAL EXAM: Wednesday, June 9, 1-3 PM