



## AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT POS 2041, Fall 2006

### **Dr. Judithanne Scourfield McLauchlan**

Department of Government and International Affairs

University of South Florida St. Petersburg

Davis 116

Office Hours: Mondays, 4:00 PM to 5:00 PM, Thursdays 11:30 AM to 1:30 PM  
and by arrangement

Office Phone: 727/USF-4956; College of Arts & Sciences Fax: 727/873-4526

E-mail: jsm2@stpt.usf.edu

### **Course Objectives:**

No one course can teach all that is worth knowing about the institutions and processes of American constitutional democracy. Indeed, the Department of Government and International Affairs at USFSP offers one or more courses devoted to each of the weekly topics that are outlined below. However, students will acquire a better understanding and knowledge of American government, institutions, and politics by taking this course.

This is an exciting semester to study American government and politics. There is an open seat for Governor with competitive Democratic and Republican primaries, a high profile U.S. Senate race, and competitive state and federal legislative primaries in Tampa Bay. We will take full advantage of this election season. This course will include an experiential learning component that will enhance students' understanding of American politics in a way not possible through lectures and reading assignments alone.

### **Required Texts:**

Stephenson Jr., Bresler, Friedrich, Karlesky, Turner, and Scourfield McLauchlan. *Understanding American Government*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Redding, CA: Horizon Textbook Publishing, 2006.

Stephenson Jr., Bresler, Friedrich, Karlesky, Turner, and Scourfield McLauchlan. *Study Guide to Accompany Understanding American Government*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Redding, CA: Horizon Textbook Publishing, 2006.

*During the course of the semester, additional readings may be placed on reserve at the library and/or distributed in class.*

### **Suggested Reading/Viewing to Stay Abreast of National News and Current Events:**

**Daily:** Read a daily newspaper, such as the *St. Petersburg Times*, *Tampa Tribune*, *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, and/or the *Wall Street Journal*. (Available at Poynter Library and online.) Watch a network evening news program (NBC, CBS, ABC), CNN's "Inside Politics," and/or "The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer" on PBS. Listen to a radio news program, such as "Morning Edition" (5 to 9 AM) or "All things Considered" (4 to 6 PM) on WUSF 89.7 (National Public Radio). (You can also listen online at <http://publicbroadcast.net/wusf/ppr/index.shtml>) Students are also encouraged to check websites devoted to American politics, such as [www.politicalwire.com](http://www.politicalwire.com) and [www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/](http://www.cnn.com/ALLPOLITICS/).

**Weekly:** Read one or more of the following: *Newsweek*, *Time*, *U.S. News & World Report*. (Available at Poynter Library and online.) Watch one or more of the Sunday morning talk shows: "Meet the Press" (NBC), "Face the Nation" (CBS), "This Week" (ABC), "Fox News Sunday" (Fox), and "Late Edition" (CNN). There is also a new television talk show devoted to Bay area political news, "Political Connections," a joint venture between Bay News 9 and the *St. Petersburg Times* that airs Sunday mornings at 11 AM on Bay News 9.

Students should look for illustrations of the concepts discussed in the week's assigned readings and bring examples/clips to class for discussion and analysis.

### **Grading Policy:**

- 30% Mid-Term
- 35% Final Exam
- 25% Field Work [or research paper]
- 10% Attendance and Informed and active participation in class discussion and simulations

Each of the above is worth points corresponding to the percentage of the final grade that exam represents (e.g., the Mid-Term is worth 30 points). Only the numerical grade of each assignment counts toward the course's grade. The letter grade given to any single test/assignment only indicates where a student places for a particular test in relation to classmates.

A plus and minus system will be used in determining the final course grade.

### **EXAMS (65%):**

Exams will include multiple-choice, short answer, and essay questions. Lecture outlines, key terms, and questions for discussion will be distributed in every class; these weekly handouts will assist you in preparing for exams. In addition, you will find the Chapter Review Outlines and Summary and the Testing Your Understanding sections for each chapter in the companion *Study Guide to Accompany American Government* to be most helpful in exam preparation. There is no substitute for completing all assigned readings when due and actively participating in class discussions.

The **Mid-Term** (worth 30% of your final grade) will be administered on Thursday, October 12

The **Final Exam** (worth 35% of your final grade) will be administered on Thursday, December 14

Attendance at examinations is mandatory. Make-up exams will NOT be administered except in the most extreme (and documented) circumstances (e.g., the student is in the hospital or an immediate family member dies). Any student who fails to notify the professor of his or her absence from an exam within 24 hours of the scheduled exam absolutely forfeits all opportunity to take a make-up exam.

The University's Academic Dishonesty Policy will be strictly enforced. See the University's *Academic Dishonesty policy in your Undergraduate Catalogue*. You can view a copy online at [www.sa.usf.edu/handbook/02/academics/ImportantAcademicPolicies.htm](http://www.sa.usf.edu/handbook/02/academics/ImportantAcademicPolicies.htm).

### **Field Work (25%):**

We are fortunate to be studying *American National Government* during a competitive election cycle. Students will have the opportunity to learn more about American government, politics, campaigns, and elections by working on a federal or state campaign.

### **Your grade for the Field Work component will be based on the following:**

- ✓ Work 25 hours on a campaign (an average of 3 hours a week on a gubernatorial, U.S. Senate, U.S. House, or state legislative campaign during 8 weeks of the semester; there will be no class on Nov. 2 to give students the opportunity to work those 3 hours on the campaign trail during the final days leading up to the election). The instructor will assist students in securing internship placements.
- ✓ Internship must be approved by the Instructor; An Internship Application Form will be distributed in class; the Form must be returned to the Instructor no later than September 14
- ✓ Evaluation by internship supervisor (due November 9). (Forms will be distributed in class for you to ask your supervisor to fill out. The instructor will follow up on the written evaluation by placing a call to your supervisor.)
- ✓ Log of internship hours (due November 9) You will keep track of the dates and times that you work at your internship placement. A form will be provided in the Field Work Packet of materials distributed in class on September 7. Have your supervisor sign off on your hours at the end of each shift.
- ✓ Journal of Internship experiences (due November 16) In a separate notebook, record your internship experiences – describe the projects you work on, the campaign meetings and events you attend, and what you are learning about campaigns and elections as a result of your internship experience.

- ✓ Internship Paper (5 pages) (due November 16) (Discuss what you have learned about campaigns and elections through your participation in the internship.)

### Alternative to the Internship Placement/Field Work Assignment: 13-15 pp. Research Paper

In the event that family or work responsibilities make it absolutely impossible for students to take advantage of this election cycle and to participate in the internship experience, students will be permitted to substitute a research paper for the Field Work component of the final grade (25%).

A research paper proposal (1-2 pp.), accompanied by a preliminary bibliography, is due September 14. Upon approval by the instructor, the student will conduct research about an aspect of gubernatorial campaigns and draft a research paper of 13-15 pp. in length, which is due November 9

Students who opt to complete the traditional research paper are expected to attend a bibliographic instruction session at the Poynter Library. The instructor will assist the student in arranging this session with a reference librarian.

### **Class Attendance and Participation (10%):**

Active and informed participation in class discussions and simulations will count towards your final course grade (10%). The professor will take attendance when class begins at 2:00 PM. To “attend” class is to arrive when class starts and stay until class is finished. Students who anticipate the necessity of being absent from class due to the observance of a major religious holiday must provide advance notice of the date(s) to the professor in writing during the first week of class.

We will have vibrant class discussions, engage in vigorous debate, participate in simulations, and hear from notable guest speakers. In order for you to benefit and learn from these activities, you must come to class prepared. (5 points for attendance)

Students will participate in two simulations this session: on September 21 “Freedom for the Thought We Hate” (in conjunction with the lecture on “Civil Liberties”) and on November 30 “Typitown Planning Department Role Play” (in conjunction with the lecture on “Bureaucracies”). (5 points for participation in the simulations and class discussions)

### **Support Services:**

Students with documented learning and/or physical disabilities in need of accommodation are encouraged to work with the **Office of Student Disability Services** and should meet with the instructor to inform her about any special requirements they may have during the first week of classes (and to present her with the confidential letter from the Office of Student Disability Services). The Office of Student Disability Services is located in Terrace 200. USF(873)-4837 or USF(873)-4990. (As the Office of Student Disability Services brochure explains, “accommodations are designed to compensate for your specific disability. Accommodations vary from student to student and class to class, but they include services of note-takers, use of computers for exams, and the services of writing assistants or readers for exams.”)

The **Academic Success Center** provides academic counseling, tutoring and instruction (including writing), and conducts workshops and seminars (topics include time management and test preparation). The Academic Success Center is located in Terrace 301. USF(873)-4632.

The **Counseling and Career Center** is available for students who want to talk to someone about issues they are experiencing, such as adjusting to college life, stress, dating and sexuality, family problems, academic performance, alcohol and other drug use, and depression. All services are free and confidential. Counseling and Career Services are located in Bayboro 119. USF (873)-4422 and USF (873)-4129.

**Misc.:**

\*Cell phones and pagers should be turned off during class.

\**Taping or taking notes for the purpose of sale is strictly prohibited.* Students must obtain permission from the instructor prior to taping the class for personal use.

---

## COURSE OUTLINE AND ASSIGNMENTS

**Week 1: Introduction to American National Government (August 31)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Introduction (pp. 1-9) and Appendix (*The Declaration of Independence* and *The Constitution* (pp. 387-405)

*In Class:* Pre-Test Field Work/Civic Engagement Survey administered



**Primary Election: Tuesday, September 5, 2006**

**Week 2: The Constitution of the United States (September 7)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 1 (pp. 11-40)

*In Class:* Field Work Assignment packets distributed

**Week 3:**      **Federalism: States in the Union (September 14)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 2 (pp. 41-69)

*In Class:*      **Campaign Internship Job Fair**

Simulation assignment, "Freedom for the Thought We Hate," distributed and roles assigned

**DUE:** Internship Application Form *or*  
Research Paper Proposal and Preliminary Bibliography



**Sunday, September 17, 2006: CONSTITUTION DAY**

(Details regarding participation in USFSP Constitution Day event for extra credit will be discussed in class.)

**Week 4:**      **Civil Liberties (September 21)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 3, part 1 (pp. 71-89)

*In Class:*      *Simulation:* "Freedom for the Thought We Hate"

**Week 5:**      **Civil Rights (September 28)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 3, part 2 (pp. 89-105)

*In Class:*      Video: "Simple Justice"

**Week 6:**      **Interest Groups (October 5)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 7, part 1 (pp.195-211)

*In class:*      Mid-Term Review Handout

**OCTOBER 10<sup>th</sup>:**

**DEADLINE TO REGISTER TO VOTE FOR FALL 2006 GENERAL ELECTION**

See [www.votepinellas.com](http://www.votepinellas.com) for more information.

**Week 7:**      **MID-TERM EXAM (October 12)**

**Week 8:      Political Parties (October 19)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 7, part 2 (pp.211-226)
- Read the national Democratic and Republican party platforms (available online at [www.democrats.org/about/platform.htm/](http://www.democrats.org/about/platform.htm/) and [www.rnc.org/gopinfor/platform](http://www.rnc.org/gopinfor/platform))

**Week 9:      Campaigns & Elections (October 26)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 8 (pp. 231-263)

*In Class:*      Roundtable Discussion: Field Work Internships

**Week 10:      NO LECTURE, WORK AT INTERNSHIP PLACEMENTS (November 2)**



**General Election:      7 November 2006**

**Week 11:      Congress (November 9)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 9 (pp. 265-292)

**DUE: Field Work Requirements (Part 1):** Log of Hours and Supervisor Evaluation  
OR  
**Research Paper (13-15 pp.)**

**Week 12:      The Presidency (November 16)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 10 (pp. 293-326)

*In class:*      Distribute Typitown Planning Department Role Play Assignment

**DUE: Field Work Requirements (part 2):** Journal and Paper (5 pp.)



**November 23<sup>rd</sup> – THANKSGIVING – No Lecture**

**Week 13: Bureaucracies (November 30)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 11 (pp. 327-357)

*In Class:*      *Simulation: The Typitown Planning Department Role Play*

**Week 14: The Supreme Court and the American Judiciary (December 7)**

- *Understanding American Government*, Chapter 12 (pp. 359-386)

*In Class:*      *Slide Show: Tour of the Supreme Court of the United States and Accompanying Courtroom Lecture about the History of the Court*

**FINAL EXAM, Thursday, December 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00 PM**