

POLS 225.01 (3)
National Government
Spring 2011
MWF 8-8:50A
AD 219

NAME
O: AD 220, 674-2917; H: 676-1726
EMAIL
Hours: TR 8-11A; T 1-2P; or appointment
Abilene Christian University

Mission

The mission of Abilene Christian University is to educate its students for Christian service and leadership throughout the world. The mission of the Department of Political Science is to provide a program of study that will help students understand domestic and international politics and to prepare them for informed and active participation in the political arena and public service. This course aims to fulfill this mission by teaching the theory and process of United States government and empowering students to be active in such for God's glory.

Course Description

National Government is an exploration of America's government and politics. Questions recur throughout the course about how power and privilege are distributed in America, what is the nature of democratic citizenship in the United States, and how Christian faith relates to public policy issues. The course seeks to equip students to be find answers to important questions of national politics, be better informed, and become active citizens and more thoughtful of policy.

Required Text and Readings

Thomas Patterson, We the People (2011, Ninth Edition).

Other readings may be assigned and placed on reserve during the semester, handed out in class, or emailed to students.

Recommended Reading (List is not exhaustive)

New York Times
Washington Post
Fox News
CNN
Real Clear Politics
"Morning in America"

www.nytimes.com
www.washingtonpost.com
www.foxnews.com
www.cnn.com
www.realclearpolitics.com
1470AM (7-8A M-F)

Class Procedure

Lecture/Discussion. Lectures are designed as a springboard for discussion and interaction among class members. Students are encouraged to prepare and participate fully in class discussions. Adequate preparation means that each student diligently keeps pace with all reading assignments.

Faithful class attendance is expected, and irregular attendance can result in a lower grade or being dropped from the course. Attendance will be checked every class meeting. Students who miss more than nine class meetings, regardless of cause, will be dropped from the course with a grade of "F." Student papers and tests remaining in the professor's possession one month after the last day of the semester will be discarded.

It is also expected that all students will adhere to the University's honor and dress codes. Violations of academic integrity and other forms of cheating, as defined in ACU's Academic Integrity Policy, involve the intention to deceive or mislead or misrepresent, and therefore are a form of lying and represent actions contrary to the behavioral norms that flow from the nature of God. Violations are addressed as described in the Policy. While the University enforces the Policy, the most powerful motive for integrity and truthfulness comes from one's desire to imitate God's nature in their life. Every member of the faculty, staff, and student body is responsible for protecting the integrity of learning, scholarship, and research. The full policy is available for review at the Provost's office web site (www.acu.edu/campusoffices/provost) and the following offices: Provost, college deans, dean of campus life, director of student judicial affairs, director of residential life, and academic departments.

Under no circumstances can class sessions be audio or video recorded in any manner without the express written consent of the instructor. Any violation of this policy may result in the student being dropped from the course with a grade of "F".

There will be three tests. The privilege of making-up tests will be reserved for persons encountering such problems as illness, participation in official university activities, or death or serious illness in the family. As soon as you aware that you must miss a test, contact the instructor.

Short Research Paper

The research project for the course involves a short paper on a subject of your choice about American national government. Topics must be approved by the instructor by the date indicated on the syllabus. There are many possibilities for topics and several ideas are suggested below. Papers should be 5-7 pages of text, double-spaced, size 12 font, and have a cover page and bibliography. Use at least two published and three internet sources.

Service Learning Project

All students must perform at least five hours of "service learning" associated with the class at the Lawn Atlas Missile Base. Students will work at the LAMB for five hours on a Saturday afternoon during the semester. Student teams (see the instructor to sign up for a team) should leave Abilene no later than 12:15P to assure arrival at the Base by 1P. Work times are 1-4P. This Cold War-era base was one of 72 in the U.S. that housed the first intercontinental nuclear weapons. Dates available will be announced in class. Wear work clothes; a map to the base is attached to the syllabus.

Extra Credit

Select one of these extra credit opportunities. Submit a one-page paper regarding the activity by the date indicated on syllabus, and earn up to 10 points on the Final Exam.

Perform two hours of service helping load a container of humanitarian goods for the Zambia Medical Mission and the Namwianga Mission Hospital. It will be announced when this opportunity is available.

Tour the 12th Armored Division Museum at 289 North Second (cost is \$3, hours Tues. to Sat. 10-5PM).

Perform four hours of "service learning" at the Lawn Atlas Missile Base during one of the two Saturdays during our short semester, from 1-4P that day. Write a one-page summary of your service learning and include in your paper your duties/job and what you learned that supplements information studied in this course. Wear work clothes and bring work gloves if you have them. Our host is Larry Sanders (see Dr. Coates for a map and to sign up for the Saturday you want to work).

Tour the 12th Armored Division Museum at 289 North Second (cost is \$3, hours are Tues. to Sat. 10-5PM) and submit a two-page paper regarding what you learned at the museum and the role the U.S. played in winning World War II in the European Theater.

Grades

Grades are based on the following:

Exams 60%
Short Research Paper 20%
Service Learning Project 10%
Class participation and attendance 10%

A book award is given at the end of the semester to the student with the highest average. Grading guidelines:

A 90-100 (Excellent)
B 80-89 (Good)
C 70-79 (Average)
D 60-69 (Inferior but passing)
F 59 and below (Failing)

Course Outline

<u>Schedule</u>	<u>Topic and Reading Assignment</u>
Jan. 19W	Introduction
Jan. 21F	I. Political Thinking and American Political Culture Reading: Patterson, Ch. 1
Jan. 24M	- continued -
Jan. 26W	II. Constitutional Democracy Patterson, Ch. 2 Mayflower Compact, Declaration of Independence, U.S. Constitution
Jan. 27R	3P, Chris Kyker, Silver-Haired Legislature, Campus Center Living Room
Jan. 28F	- continued -
Jan. 31M	III. Federalism Patterson, Ch. 3 <u>Background:</u>

“The Powers of Government”
www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-QJiwcKTC&feature=related

Feb. 2W IV. Civil Liberties
Patterson, Ch. 4

Feb. 4F - continued -

Feb. 7M V. Equal Rights
Patterson, Ch. 5

Short Research Paper topic due

Feb. 9W - continued -

Feb. 11F “Eyes on the Prize”

Feb. 14M **First Exam**

Feb. 16W VI. Public Opinion and Political Socialization
Patterson, Ch. 6

Feb. 18F - continued -

Feb. 21M VII. Political Participation and Voting
Patterson, Ch. 7

President’s Day

Feb. 23W - continued -

Feb. 25F VIII. Political Parties, Candidates, and Campaigns
Patterson, Ch. 8

Feb. 28M - continued -

Mar. 2W IX. Interest Groups

		Patterson, Ch. 9
Mar. 4F		- continued -
Mar. 7M	X.	News Media Patterson, Ch. 10
Mar. 9W		- continued -
Mar. 11F	XI.	Congress Patterson, Ch. 11 “Years of Wrangling Lie Ahead for Health Care Law,” <u>NYT</u> , 12-13-10, www.nytimes.com/2010/12/14/health/policy/14legal.html?emc=eta1
Mar. 14M-18F	Spring Break (<i>No Class</i>)	
Mar. 21M		- continued -
Mar. 23W		“Congress”
Mar. 25F	Second Exam	
Mar. 28M	Undergraduate Research Festival—Meeting Place TBA	
Mar. 30W	XII.	Presidency Patterson, Ch. 12 www.270towin.com
Apr. 1F		- continued -
Apr. 4M		- continued -
Apr. 6W	XIII.	Federal Bureaucracy, and E-Government Patterson, Ch. 13
Apr. 8F		- continued -

Apr. 11M	XIV.	Judiciary Patterson, Ch. 14
Apr. 13W	XV.	Economic and Environmental Policy, and Climate Change Patterson, Ch. 15 “Chart: Nearly Half of All Americans Don’t Pay Income Taxes,” Heritage Foundation http://blog.heritage.org/2012/02/19/chart-of-the-week-nearly-half-of-all-americans-dont-pay-income-taxes
Apr. 15F		- continued - Income Tax Day, Tea Party Rally Day
Apr. 18M		“An Inconvenient Truth”
Apr. 20W		- continued -
Apr. 22F		Easter Holiday (<i>No Class</i>)
Apr. 25M	XVI.	Welfare and Education Policy Patterson, Ch. 16
Apr. 27W		- continued -
Apr. 29F		- continued -
May 2M	XVII.	Foreign and Defense Policy Patterson, Ch. 17 “The American 21st Century,” Victor Davis Hanson, Real Clear Politics, 12-30-10, www.realclearpolitics.com/articles/2010/12/30/the_american_21st_century_108384.html “Freedom in decline worldwide: US report”, AFP, 1-13-11, www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5h7KOPsLus7HbUJhw9oR2VcTcuyig?docId=CNG.b7ab9f89dccc945f6545ca445a6fac5a.4a1
May 4W		- continued -

May 6F

- continued -

5P Short Research Paper due, Service Learning Project due, Extra Credit due

May 13F

8-10A Final Exam

*All dates, including test dates, are tentative and subject to change at the instructor's discretion (except the Final Exam). Any test date changes will be announced at least one week in advance.

Some Research Questions for Consideration

Should the U.S. move away from an oil-based economy? What is the future of offshore drilling? Why are the oil companies there in the first place?

Should the United States have troops in Afghanistan?

Is there a native movement in Puerto Rico for statehood? Are the Democrats advocating statehood?

Who will be the next person confirmed to the Supreme Court? Does this matter? Will this affect the make-up of the Court and its rulings?

Is man-made global warming real? Is it a threat?

Where do Americans get their news? One source? Only sources they agree with? Is the media biased?

What are the ideological underpinnings of American government, and how do they play out at present?

Should marriage be the subject of a constitutional amendment?

Should a balanced budget be the subject of a constitutional amendment?

What is the Tea Party movement? Will it affect U.S. politics short-term or long?

How does the U.S. select a president? Should this be changed?

What will be the significance, if any, on the 2012 presidential election of the recent census and resulting redistricting?

How much debt should the United States have in its annual budget? Is the debt growing? What will the percentage of debt be when you (students) are 30 years old, and what will this mean economically for the nation and the world?

Is the Arizona illegal immigrant law a good idea?

Do citizens trust U.S. leaders? Why or why not? What are the implications?

Is Iran working to develop a nuclear bomb? What should the United States, if anything, do about it?

Why is the U.S. the most influential and powerful country today? Should it remain so? How? What would the Founding Fathers say?

What does the shooting on 1-8-11 mean for America, if anything?