

American National Government
Rutgers University - Newark
Spring 2018
Tuesday & Thursday, 11:30 a.m.- 12:50 p.m.
Hill Hall 105

Professor: Domingo Morel, PhD
Office: Hill Hall 727
Office Hours: By Appointment
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Course Description

This course is designed to be an introduction to the study of American politics. We will cover topics including but not limited to: Constitution, Federalism, Civil Rights, Civil Liberties, Public Opinion, Media, Interest Groups, Political Parties, Campaigns and Elections, Voting, Congress, Presidency, Bureaucracy, and the Judiciary. The main objective of the course is to provide students with a framework to think critically about the institutions, ideas, and issues in American politics.

Course Format and Requirements

This course will meet twice a week. Attendance and active participation are important aspects of your class experience and evaluation. The course meetings will consist of a combination of lectures, discussions, and group work. In addition to reading the assigned materials, students must come prepared to discuss current events as well. Each class will begin with a discussion of current events in American politics.

Course Assessment

- **Two Quizzes (10%)**
 - **Quiz #1 February 8 (5%)**
 - **Quiz #2 March 29 (5%)**
- **Two Exams (55%)**
 - **Exam #1 Thursday, March 8 (25%)** – Will cover material from January 16 – March 6
 - **Exam #2 Final Exam Date (May 8) (30%)** – Will cover material from March 20 – April 26
- **1 Paper Due on April 12 (20%)**
 - Paper topic, guidelines, and submission instructions will be posted on course website and discussed in class.
- **Participation (15%)**

Our class will benefit greatly from active participation from all class members. The unique analysis and personal experiences that each of you contributes to the discussions will help educate the rest of us. Class participation consists of the following components: (1) attending class; (2) Be prepared by doing the required readings; (3) engaging regularly in class discussions

THERE ARE NO MAKEUP EXAMS

COURSE POLICIES

Communications Inside and Outside of Class: Each student is responsible for all communications made during our class meetings as well as via e-mail. Periodically, the instructor will find it necessary to convey information to the class outside of our in-class sessions. In general, I will post any class announcements via e-mail to your Rutgers e-mail address.

Disability Accommodations: Students with disabilities who need disability-related accommodations should work with the Office of Disability Services to arrange these accommodations as soon as possible.

Code of Conduct and Academic Integrity: Students are expected to adhere to the Rutgers Honor Code.

Religious Observance: Any student who is unable, because of his or her religious beliefs, to participate in any course requirement on a particular day will be provided with an opportunity to make up the requirement without penalty. If religious observance will prevent meeting a course requirement on a particular day, please meet with me as soon as possible to identify reasonable alternative arrangements.

Electronic Devices

Unless otherwise instructed, students may not use laptops or other electronic devices (e.g., tablets) in class. Cell phones should be off while students are in class.

Contacting the Professor

Students are encouraged to attend office hours to discuss course material, assignments and other academic concerns. Students who cannot attend office hours may email me to schedule an appointment.

COURSE MATERIALS

There is 1 required book for this course. The book is available for purchase at the Bookstore:

John G. Geer, Wendy J. Schiller, Richard Herrera, and Jeffrey A. Segal. 2015. *Gateways to Democracy: An Introduction to American Government*, 3rd Edition Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

CLASS SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS

The class readings may change slightly as salient policy issues may evolve over the course of our class. I will let you know about changes to the syllabus at least a week in advance.

Week - Readings	Date	Topic
Week 1		Introduction
Gateways Chapter 1	Tuesday, January 16	Overview of syllabus and course requirements
	Thursday, January 18	American Political Culture
Week 2		
Gateways Chapter 2	Tuesday, January 23	Foundations of American Government
	Thursday, January 25	No Class – Professor at Conference

Week 3		
Gateways Chapter 4	Tuesday, January 30	Civil Liberties
Gateways Chapter 3	Thursday, February 1	Federalism
Week 4		
Gateways Chapter 12	Tuesday, February 6	Congress
	Thursday, February 8	Quiz #1 – February 8
Week 5		
Gateways Chapter 13	Tuesday, February 13	Presidency
	Thursday, February 15	
Week 6		
Gateways Chapter 15 (pp 499-519)	Tuesday, February 20	Judiciary
Gateways Chapter 14	Thursday, February 22	Bureaucracy
Week 7		
Gateways Chapter 9	Tuesday, February 27	Political Parties
	Thursday, March 1	
Week 8		
Gateways Chapter 8 (pp. 245-265)	Tuesday, March 6	Interest Groups
	Thursday, March 8	**Exam #1**
Week 9		
	Tuesday, March 13	Spring Break
	Thursday, March 15	
Week 10		
Gateways Chapter 10	Tuesday, March 20	Campaigns and Elections
	Thursday, March 22	
Week 11		
Gateways Chapter 11	Tuesday, March 27	Voting and Participation
	Thursday, March 29	Quiz #2 – March 29
Week 12		
Gateways Chapter 6	Tuesday, April 3	Public Opinion
	Thursday, April 5	No Class – Professor at Conference

Week 13	Tuesday, April 10	News and Social Media
Gateways Chapter 7 (pp.211-225)	Thursday, April 12	***Paper Due***
Week 14	Tuesday, April 17	News and Social Media
Gateways Chapter 7 (pp.211-225)	Thursday, April 19	Civil Rights
Gateways Chapter 5		
Week 15	Tuesday, April 24	Inequality
	Thursday, April 26	Conclusion