

# American Democracy in a Changing World

Spring 2002

Political Science 1001, section 001  
MWF 11:15am-12:05pm  
Willey Hall 125  
Course code: 50763

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Course web page:

<http://www.polisci.umn.edu/courses/spring2002/1001/001/>

## Teaching Assistants:

Jon Peterson  
Monday 12:05-1:05  
(meet in class)  
[peterson@polisci.umn.edu](mailto:peterson@polisci.umn.edu)

Jeff Hubbard  
Wednesday 3:30-4:30  
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Wednesday 12:05-1:30  
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## I. Introduction

This course is intended to introduce students to the expressed hopes of the American people for their government and to the institutions and processes that have been created and recreated to achieve these hopes. What do we mean by good government? Have we achieved it? How do we build it?

By the end of the semester students should have a basic understanding of the structure and function of American government as well as an increased ability to critically reflect on the degree to which our institutions, processes, and citizens live up to the expectations placed on them.

## II. Required Texts

The following texts are required and have been ordered at the West Bank Bookstore:

- Serow, Ann G. and Everett C. Ladd, Ed. 2000. *The Lanahan Readings in the American Polity*. Baltimore, MD: Lanahan Publishers, Inc.
- Wilson, James Q. and John J. DiIulio, Jr. 2001. *American Government: The Essentials 8<sup>th</sup> Ed.* New York: Houghton Mifflin Company.

Occasional handouts may also be distributed over the course of the semester.

### III. Course structure and requirements

**Format.** The class is designed as a large lecture. I will, however, try to encourage as much participation and discussion as possible, and it is my hope that students will contribute with their own thoughts on the material or by connecting the material to their own experiences.

**Grades.** Your final course grade will be based on two in-class midterm examinations, one final examination, and completion of three written assignments. The final exam will not be cumulative and will cover roughly the same amount of material as each of the midterms. Each of these components will weigh equally in the final grade as follows:

First midterm examination	25%
Second midterm exam	25%
Final exam	25%
Written assignments	25%

The grading scale is as follows:

A: Achievement outstanding relative to the basic course requirements

A 93% or higher

A- 90-92.9%

B: Achievement significantly above the basic course requirements

B+ 86.5-89.9%

B 83.6-86.4%

B- 80-83.5%

C: Achievement meeting the basic course requirements

C+ 76.5-79.9%

C 73.6-76.4%

C- 70-73.5%

D: Achievement worthy of credit but below the basic course requirements

D+ 66.5-69.9%

D- 60-66.5%

F Below 60%

**Class participation.** Please come to class prepared to discuss the assigned readings. Regular class attendance is expected, as it will contribute to our discussions and investigations over the course of the semester. Although attendance will not count directly towards your grade, lecture and class discussion material will be on the exams.

**Assigned readings.** Because our class activities depend on the readings, please come to class having read them. All of the readings in the syllabus are required. Lectures and readings will not always overlap, and material from the assigned readings may be included in the exams, whether or not I have discussed it in class.

**Examinations.** Each of the two midterm exams and the final will cover roughly 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the course material. Each exam will consist of multiple-choice and short answer questions. The exams will test your comprehension of the material covered in the readings and lectures as well as understanding of the underlying concepts.

**Written assignments.** Each student will be expected to write *three 1-2 page single-spaced papers* over the course of the semester involving a critical reflection of material covered in class and lecture. I will provide guidelines for producing well-written papers with the assignments.

#### IV. Course Policies

**Academic Freedom and Responsibility.** All of the work presented in this course is expected to be your own. I will follow the University's policies and procedures for academic integrity. Using information from a book, article, web page, another person, etc. without crediting the author is plagiarism. Quotations, paraphrased information, and use of others' ideas should be properly cited in your written assignments. If you have questions about citation, please contact the Professor or one of the TA's. More information is available at:  
<http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/StudentConduct.html>

**Students with Disabilities.** I will make every effort to accommodate the needs of students with disabilities. Please contact Disability Services (180 McNamara Alumni Center: 612-626-1333) to discuss your individual needs as early as possible in the semester. More information on disability services is available at <http://disserv3.stu.umn.edu>

**Late work and missed exams.** Make-up exams are possible only in the case of emergencies or for University-approved functions. In both cases students will need to provide me with documentation (either a note from a physician or from your coach or faculty sponsor). If you must miss an exam for an approved function, you must contact me before the scheduled test time. The make-up exam questions may be different from the regular exam, though the format will be the same. Students will be penalized one grade per day for late papers (i.e. the best possible grade for a paper one-day late is a B).

**Classroom atmosphere.** "Student conduct at the University is governed by the Student Conduct Code, which prohibits disruptive conduct. All students at the University have the right to a calm, productive, and stimulating learning environment. In turn, instructors have a responsibility to nurture and maintain and such an environment" (CLA grading and examination procedures). Please turn off pagers and cell-phones in class and wait until the end of class to zip-up backpacks and organize your papers. I will try to ensure that class never goes over the allotted time and give students adequate time to organize materials. Please do not read the newspaper or have conversations with classmates during class.

Disruptive conduct *does not* include thinking and speaking critically about the issues we are discussing, respectfully and impersonally disagreeing with the opinions of fellow students, voicing one's own opinions, or questioning, even challenging, the things that I tell you in class. It will be a far less interesting semester if students accept what I say uncritically, and I hope that will not happen.

Please do not come to class after the scheduled start time. We have very little time for each class session, and streams of latecomers are disruptive to the rest of the students in the class. I reserve the right to institute procedures (i.e. closing the doors) if late arrivals become disruptive to our class, though I would rather not do this.

I will also respect and follow University policies regarding sexual harassment, and I expect all students in the course to do the same. The Regents' policy on sexual harassment can be found on the web at (<http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.html>).

**Contacting me.** Please contact me at [abernath@polisci.umn.edu](mailto:abernath@polisci.umn.edu) or one of the TA's if you have any questions, problems, or concerns and please do so as early in the semester as possible. No difficulty is insurmountable, provided we have time to work it out. It is nice to hear from students who just want to chat about the course as well, though this does not happen as much as we faculty would like.

**University resources.** This class will use multiple choice and short answer exams. Students who feel they might benefit from test-taking services should contact the University Learning and Academic Skills Center at 109 Eddy Hall, East Bank (612-624-3323) or on the web at (<http://www.ucs.umn.edu/lasc/>).

This class will also use writing assignments. The Student Writing Center has TA's and ESL specialists to help with your writing skills. The Writing Center is at 306 B Lind Hall, East Bank (612-625-1893) or on the web at (<http://swc.umn.edu.html>).

## **V. Weekly Schedule and Assigned Readings**

### **Week 1: Bad Government**

(1/23, 1/25)

*The Declaration of Independence* (Wilson and DiIulio, appendix)

### **Week 2: Political Power and American Democracy**

(1/28, 1/30, 2/1)

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 1

Serow and Ladd, Number 6: Cornel West (pp.35-43)

Serow and Ladd, Number 70: Jesse Ventura (pp.473-479)

Serow and Ladd, Number 12: C. Wright Mills (pp.75-82)

### **Week 3: Federalism and the Constitution (1)**

(2/4, 2/6, 2/8)

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 2

*The Federalist*, Number 10 (Wilson and DiIulio, appendix)

*The Federalist*, Number 51 (Wilson and DiIulio, appendix)

*The Constitution of the United States* (Wilson and DiIulio, appendix)

### **Week 4: Federalism and the Constitution (2)**

(2/11, 2/13, 2/15)

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 3

Serow and Ladd, Number 9: Richard Hofstadter (pp.55-60)

Serow and Ladd, Number 20: James Madison (pp.131-135)

Serow and Ladd, Number 24: Tommy Thompson (pp.153-160)

*1<sup>st</sup> paper due at the beginning of class Friday, February 15*

### **Week 5: Democratic Ideals and American Political Culture**

(2/18, 2/20, 2/22)

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 4

Serow and Ladd, Number 1: Alexis de Tocqueville (pp.3-6)

Serow and Ladd, Number 3: Louis Hartz (pp.11-16)

***Midterm exam #1 in class Friday, February 22***

**Week 6: Congress**

(2/25, 2/27, 3/1)

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 11

Serow and Ladd, Number 25: David Mayhew (pp.163-166)

Serow and Ladd, Number 29: Paul Starobin (pp.185-188)

Serow and Ladd, Number 31: David Price (pp.193-200)

**Week 7: The Courts**

(3/4, 3/6, 3/8)

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 14

Serow and Ladd, Number 42: Alexander Hamilton (pp.293-297)

Serow and Ladd, Number 44: David O'Brien (pp.301-306)

**Week 8: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights**

(3/11, 3/13, 3/15)

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 15 *and* Chapter 16

Serow and Ladd, Number 82: Edward de Grazia (pp.580-585)

Serow and Ladd, Number 88: Thomas Sowell (pp.617-621)

***2<sup>nd</sup> paper due at the beginning of class Friday, March 15***

***Spring Break: March 18-22 – No class***

***Revised Readings and Lectures – 2<sup>nd</sup> Half of the Course***

**March 25: Civil Liberties – Religion and the Schools**

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 15, pages 448-458 only.

**March 27 and March 29: Civil Rights**

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 16, pages 461-477 only.

**April 1 and April 3: The President and the Bureaucracy**

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 12.

Serow and Ladd, Number 40: James Q. Wilson (pp.275-281)

Serow and Ladd, Number 41: David Osborne and Ted Gaebler (pp.282-289)

***Midterm exam #2, in class Friday, April 5***

**April 8 and April 12: Interest Groups**

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 9, pages 217-230 only.

Serow and Ladd, Number 52: Alexis de Tocqueville (pp.353-355)

Serow and Ladd, Number 55: Jeffrey Birnbaum (pp.366-374)

*Paper topic #3 handed out in class on Monday, April 8*

*No class on Wednesday, April 10*

**April 15 and April 17: The Media**

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 10.

**April 19, April 22, and April 24: Public Opinion and Political Participation**

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 6

Serow and Ladd, Number 48: Walter Lippmann (pp.326-330)

Serow and Ladd, Number 51: Thomas Cronin (pp.342-350)

*3<sup>rd</sup> paper due at the beginning of class Wednesday, April 24*

*No class Friday, April 26 and Monday, April 29*

*Midwest Political Science Association Annual Meeting*

**May 1 and May 3: Political Parties, Campaigns, and Elections**

Wilson and DiIulio, Chapter 8

Serow and Ladd, Number 61: Kathleen Hall Jamieson (pp.410-417)

Serow and Ladd, Number 62: Larry Sabato and Glenn Simpson (pp.417-426)

**May 6 and May 8: Public Welfare and Public Policy**

Serow and Ladd, Number 87: Michael Harrington (pp.613-617)

Serow and Ladd, Number 85: Milton Friedman (pp.596-601)

*Noncumulative final exam in class Friday, May 10*

*Make-up time: Saturday, May 18 - 8:00am-9:00am*