

American Federal Government

Spring 2014, POS 2041

Michael D. Martinez, Department of Political Science, University of Florida

Course Description and Requirements

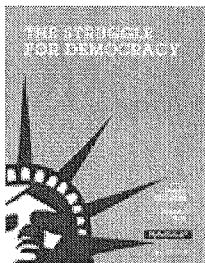
What is political power, and how concentrated is it in the United States? Where does the United States rank on the UN Human Development Index? How resistant to change is the United States Constitution, relative to other national constitutions? What influences some people to be political gladiators and others to be political spectators? Why are we still stuck with the Electoral College, which made George Bush our 43rd President, even though Al Gore got more votes from real people in the 2000 election? If more people favor gun control than oppose it, why is the NRA so powerful? How influential can Chief Justice Roberts be in shaping the Supreme Court?

We will address these and other questions through a survey the structural foundations, political linkage institutions, and governmental institutions in the United States. Our discussions will include some historical references, comparisons and contrasts to other countries' political systems, and comment on current developments. By the end of the course, students should have a basic understanding of the U.S. political system that will enable them to understand the choices that are (and are not) offered to them as citizens and to be able to critically evaluate claims about the U.S. political system using empirical evidence.

This course satisfies a Social and Behavioral Science (S) General Education requirement, and is required of all Political Science and College of Journalism majors. It is also a prerequisite to many other courses in American politics in the Department of Political Science.

Lectures will be Mondays and Wednesdays (2nd period; 8:30 am to 9:20 am) in Carleton Auditorium. The Teaching Assistants will lead discussion sections at assigned times on Thursdays and Fridays. Grades will be assigned based on three exams, MyPolisciLab assignments, participation in discussion sections, and other or in-class assignments.

Readings



Greenberg, Edward and Benjamin Page. 2014. *The Struggle for Democracy* (Eleventh Edition; Pearson, ISBN 0205950 of structural, political, and governmental effects. Greenberg and Page also suggest that American democracy is evolutionary, i

MyPolisciLab is a required companion website for this text. You will submit homework assignments from the study plan, acc *MyPolisciLab*. It provides links to websites associated with each topic, videos, student activities, and current analysis by the a *MyPolisciLab* also provides an electronic version of the text, which you can read on your computer or tablet, if that is conven

- If you purchase a new copy of the text, it should include an access code for *MyPolisciLab*.
- If you purchase a used copy of the text (or are sharing a text with someone else), you will also need to purchase a separat
- You will need to register for *MyPolisciLab* here. The course code is martinez58826 . Detailed instructions for registerir

Other readings will be accessible online through links on this webpage, on Sakai, or through links on MyPolisciLab.

Office Hours

I will not hold office hours on any day on which class is cancelled. You may also request an appointment to see me if you've already discussed your concern with your TA. My office is in 208 Anderson Hall, which is a beautifully refurbished building on University Avenue just northeast of Smathers Library and across from Chipotle.

Teaching Assistants are responsible for leading discussion sections, some grading, holding office hours to assist students outside of class time, and assigning discussion group participation grades.

	classes / sections	email	office	hours
Professor Martinez	Lectures (MW 2)	martinez@ufl.edu	208 Anderson	W 12:50 pm to 3:50 pm (except January 8 and February 26,
Charles Shields	1A91 (R 3), 1B00 (F 6)	cgshields@ufl.edu	214 Anderson	W 10:30 am - 12:30 pm
Diana Forster	1A87 (R 4), 1A97 (F 3)	adforster@ufl.edu	214 Anderson	F 10:30 am to 12:30 pm
Amy Stringer	8938 (R 5), 1A99 (R 6),	astringer@ufl.edu	214 Anderson	M 9:30 am to 11:30 am
Enrijeta Shino	1778 (F 2), 1A92 (F 4)	enrijetashino@ufl.edu	214 Anderson	F 9:30-10:30 am and 11:40-12:40 pr
Rahmi Cemen	1B02 (R 7), 1A96 (F 5)	rcemen@ufl.edu	214 Anderson	R 12 noon to 2 pm

Course Requirements and Grades

<u>First Exam</u> (Wednesday, February 5)	100
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Second Exam (Wednesday, March 19)	100
Final Exam (Wednesday, April 30; 5:30 - 7:30 pm, Carleton Auditorium)	125
MyPolisciLab Study plans, simulations, and other assignments (including lecture participation)	75
Discussion group participation and assignments	100
Total	500

	B+	425-439	C+	375-389	D+	325-339	
A	455-500	B	405-424	C	355-374	D	305-324
A-	440-454	B-	390-404	C-	340-354	D-	290-304

Exams

There will be three examinations. The first exam and the final exam will be multiple-choice machine-graded. I will offer sample examination questions as the course proceeds.

The second exam may be of the same format, or alternatively may consist of a series of true-false justify statements and a short essay to be graded by the T.A.s. The format of the second exam will be chosen by the class from these alternatives.

All exams will cover lecture, readings, completed assignments, and articles discussed in class. The second exam and the final exam will emphasize material covered in the second and third parts of the course, respectively, but will build on material previously covered.

On exam days, students will be asked to remove hats, caps, and sunglasses. Initiating or receiving outside communication using a phone or other device during an exam constitutes receipt of outside information, and will result in an immediate failure on that examination. **Please note that sending or receiving messages (including messages via electronic text or phone) during an exam is considered cheating. Do not forget to turn off your cellphone before a test. If you do forget and the cellphone rings, don't answer it. Surrender the phone to an exam proctor, and you can pick it up after the exam is over.**

It is important that you show up on exam day. Absences from exams will only be excused if the student can provide written and verifiable documentation of illness, bereavement of an immediate family member, or a conflicting University or legal obligation.

Participation and Assignments

Written assignments will generally be due on Thursdays. Assignments may be based on assigned readings, students' personal experiences, and access to the internet sites linked to this page or *MyPolisciLab*. I do assume that all students enrolled in this class have access to a computer that meets the UF minimum standards for students beginning this term, and that you can use email and access the internet. Some of these writing assignments will be turned in for a grade, some will be turned in for attendance only, and some will not be turned in but used as a basis for discussion.

Pet Peeves and other things

My first pet peeve and most important is cheating, including plagiarism. The University setting promotes the exchange of ideas, and that makes the University an exciting place to work and study. The theft of others' work violates the trust between all of us. If you cheat, abet cheating, or plagiarize in my class, I will seek the harshest academic remedies available.

My second pet peeve is rude behavior in class. Lectures and discussion sections are set aside for us to discuss, exchange, and refine ideas, and recurring side conversations, sending or receiving telephone calls or text messages, reading the newspaper, and other rude behavior indicate a lack of respect for other participants' contributions to the exchange of ideas. Please remember to turn off your cellphones and other electronic communications devices before lecture begins. Recurrent rude behavior in a grade penalty.

If you need to discuss anything about this class, you should bring the matter up with your TA first. In most cases, your TA will be able to help you with your concern. If your TA cannot provide the answers or help that you need, s/he may ask you to come talk to me.

Students requesting classroom accommodation for testing or completing assignments must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to your TA when requesting accommodation. Please do so by January 15.

Please do not phone me or your TA to discuss a grade over the phone. You are welcome to call to schedule an appointment with your TA, but please refrain from asking about your grade directly over the phone. This helps the TAs and me protect your statutory rights to privacy, as we are generally unable to verify your identity over the phone.

Calendar

The following is provided as a guideline to the course. I reserve the right to make adjustments to the calendar if needed, delay particular assignments, or to change them to optional. I will add links to short articles in the electronic media from time to time.

Our normal rhythm will be

- (1) My Polisci Lab Study plan Assignments for the chapter will be due on the night before lectures begin on that chapter. This will help ensure that students have the background to understand the major points being presented in lecture.
- (2) Lecture will be on Mondays and Wednesdays in Carleton Auditorium, and may include in-class participation assignments.
- (3) A My Polisci Lab Exercise (Explore the Data, Simulation, or In the Read World video) and quiz will usually be due on Wednesday nights, so that

they can serve as the basis for discussion in discussion sections on Thursdays and Fridays.

Dates	Readings	Other Assignments
January 6-10 Introduction to Political Power	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 1	
January 13-17 Constitution	<p>Read: <i>Struggle</i>, Chapter 2</p> <p><i>Federalist No. 51</i> (http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa51.htm)</p> <p>John P. Roche. (1961). "The Founding Fathers: A Reform Caucus in Action." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 55 (4, December): 799-816.</p> <p>Bruce G. Kauffmann (1997). "James Madison: "Godfather of the Constitution." <i>The Early America Review</i> 2 (1, Summer).</p>	Simulation: You are a I January 14, 11:59 pm
January 20 no class	<i>Martin Luther King Day Holiday</i>	
January 22-27 Federalism	<p><i>Struggle</i>, Chapter 3</p> <p><i>Federalist No. 39</i> (http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa39.htm)</p> <p><i>McCulloch v. Maryland</i> (1819) (http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/historics/USSC_CR_0017_0316_ZO.html)</p>	Simulation: You are a I January 23, 11:59 pm
January 29 - February 3 Structural Foundations	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 4	Explore the Data: Can y 29, 11:59 pm
February 5	First Exam	
February 6-7	First Exam Debrief	
February 10-14 Public Opinion and Media	<p><i>Struggle</i>, Chapter 5 and 6</p> <p>Henry Farrell. 2012. <u>Just two sentences make Americans as pro-welfare as Danes.</u></p> <p>John Sides.. 2012. <u>Most Americans live in Purple America. not Red or Blue America.</u></p>	Explore the Data: What Today? Due February
February 17-19 Interest Groups	<p><i>Struggle</i>, Chapter 7</p> <p>Robert Draper. 2013. <u>Inside the Power of the NRA</u></p>	Watch the Video: In the
February 24-28 Social Movements	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 8	Watch the Video: Socia 25, 11:59 pm

March 3 - 7 No class	<i>Give me a (spring) break!</i>	
March 10-17 Political Parties and Elections	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 9 and 10 <i>Federalist No. 10</i> (http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa10.htm)	Write a short (one to two paragraphs) paper on the political parties' positions. Which party comes closest to what you expect? Most people expect the Republican Party, but you can also write about the Libertarian Party, or an other third party. Go to http://www.federa.org for extensive links for sources. Go to each of the two parties' websites and write why one of those positions is better. Due March 12, 11:59 pm.
March 19	Second Exam	
March 20-21	Second Exam Debrief	
March 24-28 Congress	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 11 Evan Bayh. 2010. Why I'm Leaving the Senate .	Write a short essay (one to two paragraphs) on the state, who your Representative serves on those committees they serve on in your state. Does your Representative serve on fewer committees than the Republican or Democratic Representative in your question.) You may use any sources for this assignment. Due in Gainesville or another location from your country as you wish.
March 31 - April 4 Presidency	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 12 <i>Federalist 70</i> (http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa70.htm) Clinton Rossiter. 1956. The Presidency - Focus of Leadership . Richard Neustadt. Presidential Power .	Watch the Video: The Presidency. Due March 31, 11:59 pm
April 7 - 11 Bureaucracy	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 13 James Q. Wilson. 1975. The Rise of the Bureaucratic State .	Explore the Data: What is the Bureaucracy? Due April 9, 11:59 pm
April 14 - 18 Judiciary	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 14 <i>Federalist 78</i> (http://www.constitution.org/fed/federa78.htm) <i>Marbury v Madison</i> (1803) (http://www.law.cornell.edu/supremecourt/text/5/137#writing-USSC_CR_0005_0137_ZO)	Watch the Video: The Judiciary. Due April 14, 11:59 pm
April 21 - 23 Civil Liberties and Domestic Policy	<i>Struggle</i> , Chapter 15	
April 30; 5:30 - 7:30	Final Exam The date and time for the final exam were assigned to this class by the UF Registrar in order to assure that all students have time to prepare for all of their exams and avoid (most) exam conflicts. Please plan to be on campus at this time, and do not ask to take the exam early or late, unless you have an exam conflict that is recognized by the UF Registrar. If you have unavoidable plans to be out of Gainesville on April 30, you	

pm	should consider dropping the course.
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Other University of Florida Sites

- [Department of Political Science](#)
- [College of Liberal Arts and Sciences](#)
- [Honors](#)
- [Career Resource Center](#)
- [University of Florida Home Page](#)

Thanks for visiting the homepage for this class! If you are enrolled in the class, and would like to introduce yourself electronically, feel free to drop me an email (martinez@ufl.edu)

Last updated: 3 January 2014

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