SYLLABUS

PS 201 U.S. Government and Politics
Fall 2015

DRAFT

Professor:
Joseph Lowndes
Email: jlowndes@uoregon.edu
Office: PLC 919
Office hours: Mondays 1-4pm

Course Description: In this course we will analyze how and where political power is exercised in the United States. We will examine the fundamental institutions of U.S. government, voting, the role of the media, social movements, civil rights and civil liberties, and political parties, among others.

Course Organization: You will meet four times a week, three times in lecture and once in smaller discussion sections led by graduate teaching faculty. Your examinations will include both material covered in class and in your textbooks. In the discussion sections, you will debate political questions based on that week’s readings and lectures. Be sure to complete the appropriate readings before the discussion section and participate actively, because you write two essays drawn from those questions.

Grading and Examinations: All examinations and essays are during the regularly scheduled class time or during finals week. There will be no make-up examinations, without a note form a physician or the dean’s office. Neither can we reschedule examinations ahead of time. So, please review the schedule and plan accordingly.

1) In-class essay 25%. I will choose one question from the first two discussion questions and announce it in class at the exam. This means you must prepare for both questions. Drawing from your textbooks, lectures and class discussion, you will write a 7 to 8 page examination book essay.

2) Midterm Exam in class. 30%
Multiple choice and short definitions.

3) Final Examination 45%

4) Lecture and Section Attendance & Participation. Students are expected to attend all lectures and discussion sections and to participate actively in discussion sections. Discussion
leaders will note the quantity and quality of your participation, and we will take this into account when calculating final grades.

Class Policies

1. **CLASSROOM CONDUCT:** We are all accountable to create a climate of mutual respect in the classroom. While differences of opinion and perspective are vital and will be encouraged, common courtesy as well as University policy prohibit personal attacks and discriminatory conduct.

2. **READING:** This is a reading intensive course. Students must come to class having read all the assigned materials and prepared to engage in active discussion.

3. **RE-GRADING OF EXAM:** You may request the re-grading of materials that have been graded by the instructor or the GTF. If you wish to make such a request, you will be asked to provide a written explanation of why you wish to have the assignment re-graded.

4. **EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE:** Please identify yourself and the name of our course in all correspondence with the instructor and GTF. Do not expect an immediate response to your email—it is not appropriate to ask a question about an exam on the night before it is to be taken.

5. **ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Wireless devices including Blackberries and cell phones must be turned off prior to class. **There will be no laptops open and in use during lectures.** If you have special need of one, i.e., you are unable to take notes with pen and paper, come speak to me for permission. If you are granted permission, you will need to sit in the first row of the lecture hall.

6. **ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND PLAGIARISM:** All work submitted in this course must be your own and produced exclusively for this course. The use of sources (ideas, quotations, paraphrases) must be properly acknowledged and documented. For the consequences of academic dishonesty, refer to the Schedule of Classes published quarterly. Violations will be taken seriously and are noted on student disciplinary records. If you are in doubt regarding the requirements, please consult with the instructor before you complete any requirement of the course. Please review the University’s policies at: [http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/judicial/conduct/sai.htm](http://studentlife.uoregon.edu/judicial/conduct/sai.htm)

7. **DISABILITY SERVICES:** If you have a documented disability and anticipate needing accommodations in this course, please make arrangements to meet with me soon. Please bring a notification letter from Disability Services outlining your
approved accommodations. For information on Disability Services, go to http://ds.uoregon.edu/DS_home.html

LECTURE AND EXAM SCHEDULE WITH READING ASSIGNMENTS

American Political Culture
We the People Chapter 1

The Founding and Constitution
We the People Chapter 2
Fault Lines, Chapter 2

Federalism
We the People Chapter 3
Fault Lines, Chapter 3

Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
We the People Chapters 4 and 5
Fault Lines, Chapter 4

Public Opinion and Media
We the People Chapters 6 and 7
Fault Lines, Chapters 1 and 9

In-class essay exam Oct 27

Groups and Interests
We the People Chapter 11
Fault Lines Chapter 12

Participation and Voting
We the People Chapter 8
Fault Lines Chapter 10

In-class midterm

Social Movements
TBA

Parties and Elections
We the People Chapter 7
Fault Lines, Chapters 11

Congress
We the People Chapter 9
Fault Lines, Chapter 5

The Presidency
We the People Chapter 10
Fault Lines, Chapter 6

No Class Nov 28 – Thanksgiving Break

Foreign Policy
We the People, Chapter 14
tba