Course Objectives:

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the study of American national government. We will investigate the Constitution and American federalism; the major branches of government; civil liberties and civil rights; political parties and elections; differing theories on how America is ruled and by whom; the mass media; bureaucracies; the economic system; and America's role in a global community. It is hoped that the course will stimulate the student to think critically about American politics and his/her place in the political environment.

Course Requirements:

The class will be conducted in both a lecture and discussion format. Students will be expected to participate fully in class discussions. Throughout the course students are required to attend each class and to keep abreast of their reading assignments. During the course of the term three exams and four quizzes will be given. These exams and quizzes will cover material from the assigned readings as well as from class lectures.

Texts:


Grading:

3 Exams at 100 points each..........300
4 Quizzes at 20 points each..........80
Attendance/Participation.............20
TOTAL POINTS..............................400
Letter Grades will be based on this scale:

93%-100%... A
90-92%....... A-
87-89%....... B+
83-86%....... B
80-82%....... B-
77-79%....... C+
73-76%....... C
70-72%....... C-
67-69%....... D+
63-66%....... D
60-62%....... D-
0-59%......... F

Student Learning Objectives:
By the end of the term, students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of:
1. The foundations and origins of the American system of government
2. The importance of civil liberties and rights
3. The origins of and significance of political ideologies in America
4. The role of public opinion in our democracy
5. The role of the media in our democracy
6. The role of interest groups and political parties in our democracy
7. The nature and significance of the electoral process in our democracy
8. The structure and functions of Congress, the Presidency and the Judiciary
9. The importance of Economic and Domestic Policy in our democracy

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:
"Central to the purpose and pursuit of any academic community is academic integrity. All members of the Westminster community are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity, in keeping with the philosophy and purposes of the College.
Academic dishonesty is a profound violation of this expected code of behavior." (2018-2019, Westminster College Undergraduate Catalog, p. 60.)
The college has adopted a comprehensive policy on academic integrity. You should read this policy in its entirety. You will find it printed in the College Catalog, in the Student Handbook, and on-line. These policies will be enforced in this class. In addition, the college has now adopted Turnitin.com as an electronic way to assess the originality of student writing. This website may be used in the class for one or more of your writing assignments.
Make-up Policy:

"Absence from an announced examination results in a failing grade for the examination, unless suitable arrangements are made for a special examination. A student who seeks such a privilege should petition the instructor in writing PRIOR to the scheduled examination date. If the instructor considers that the petition should be granted, then a note to the effect is added and the petition is presented to the Dean of the College. The examination may be given only if the Dean also approves the petition. (Westminster College Undergraduate Catalog, 2018-19, p.55)

DISABILITY POLICY

Students who desire some form of accommodation for a diagnosed learning disability or physical problem must inform their instructors at the beginning of each semester (within two weeks) as to the nature of the disability and type of accommodation requested. If the disability or physical problem is diagnosed during the semester, students should inform their instructors immediately of the problem and accommodations needed. Students with disabilities should also inform the Disabilities Coordinator in the Office of Student Affairs, who is available to assist in evaluating the disability and to facilitate communication between the College and the student in considering special accommodations. The type of accommodation provided will depend on the needs of the student, the circumstances of the student’s classes, and the resources of the College. Because of limited resources, final determination of whether an accommodation can be provided will be at the discretion of the College.

Tentative Schedule of Classes:

January 14: Introduction
January 16: US Constitution
January 18: Founding Fathers: You Say You Want a Revolution? Chapter 1

January 23: Founding Fathers: A Healthy Constitution Chapter 2
January 25: US Constitution Chapter 2

January 28: Federalism Chapter 3
January 30: Federalism Chapter 3
February 1: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights Chapter 4

February 4: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights Chapter 4
February 6: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights Chapter 4
February 8: Civil Liberties & Civil Rights Chapter 4

February 11: Exam Review
February 13: FIRST EXAM
February 15: Public Opinion Chapter 5
February 18: Public Opinion Chapter 5
February 20: Truth Chapter 6
February 22: Truth Chapter 6

February 25: The Media Chapter 6
February 27: The Media Chapter 6
March 1: Parties, Elections & Participation Chapter 7

March 4: Parties, Elections & Participation Chapter 7
March 6: Parties, Elections & Participation Chapter 7
March 8: Parties, Elections & Participation Chapter 7

March 18: Interest Groups Chapter 8
March 20: Exam Review
March 22: SECOND EXAM

March 25: The Congress Chapter 9
March 27: The Congress Chapter 9
March 29: The Congress Chapter 9

April 1: The Presidency Chapter 10
April 3: The Presidency Chapter 10
April 5: The Presidency Chapter 10

April 8: The Presidency Chapter 10
April 10: The Bureaucracies Chapter 11
April 12: The Judiciary Chapter 12

April 15: The Judiciary Chapter 12
April 17: The Judiciary Chapter 12

April 23: Policy Chapter 13
April 26: Policy Chapter 13

April 30: Roger & Me Chapter 13
May 1: Roger & Me Chapter 13
May 3: Exam Review

Wednesday, May 8 FINAL PERIOD 11:30am