

POL 203Y1Y

U.S. Government and Politics

2015-2016

Professor Ryan Hurl

Meeting Code: LEC 5101

Lecture Times: Wednesday, 6-8pm

Location: MP 203 (McLennan Physical Laboratories)

Office: Sidney Smith 3108 E-mail: rhurl@utsc.utoronto.ca

Office Hours: Wednesday, 9-11am or by appointment

Course Description

This course is an introduction to American government and politics which will emphasize the historical development of the American political system and the legislative process. The goal of the course is to give you the ability to understand the how American political institutions operate, how those institutions have changed over time, and the political forces that shape American political life.

Teaching Assistants:

Zain Asaf zain.asaf@mail.utoronto.ca

Lincoln Rathnam lincoln.rathnam@utoronto.ca

Erica Petkov erica.rosenfield@alumni.utoronto.ca

Tutorial Times and Locations: TBA

You can enroll yourself in a tutorial through BLACKBOARD on Friday, September 18th, at 12 noon

To enroll in a group, go to the POL 203 Blackboard page-- Select "Tools" under Course Menu-- select the UT Group Self Sign Up -- Enroll in a tutorial

Course Requirements

Mid-Term Exam 25% *This exam will take place during the exam period in December*

Final Exam: 30% *This exam will take place during the exam period in April/May*
The end of term exam and the final exam will be based upon short answer and essay questions.

Rough Draft of Research Paper: 5% February `12th

Research Paper: 30% DUE MARCH 30th

The research paper must be 10-12 pages in length (Times New Roman, 12 point font, double spaced.) Additional details regarding the research paper will be provided on Blackboard and discussed in lecture and tutorial..

ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO TURNITIN.

Late Penalties: All assignments will be penalized one-third of a letter grade for every day they are late, up to two full letter grades.

Class Participation: 10%

Students are expected to attend lectures and tutorial sections, complete all readings and assignments, and discuss the material covered by the class in an intelligent and respectful manner.

In addition, students should stay informed of current affairs in American politics-- the following website is a good one to follow: <http://www.realclearpolitics.com/>

TURNITIN!

I am required by the university to include the following statement regarding turnitin.com:

“Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.”

You have the right to choose NOT to allow your paper to be submitted to turnitin.com. If you choose to exercise this right, you **must** provide an annotated bibliography, and you may be required to undergo an oral examination based upon your paper. Should you elect not to send your paper to turnitin.com, please inform your teaching assistant during the first tutorial.

If you are caught plagiarizing, you will receive an "F" for the paper, an "F" for the course, and numerous other punishments too hideous to recount. **You are responsible for making sure you understand what constitutes plagiarism.** In particular, this means that you must properly

footnote your sources, in addition to avoiding the more obvious types of plagiarism. If you have any doubts about whether something constitutes plagiarism, don't do it. Your teaching assistants and I can answer your questions regarding proper footnoting/citation practices. Please consult us if you have any concerns.

For further information on plagiarism, please see <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep/html>.

Accessibility

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or the AccessAbility Services Office as soon as possible. I will work with you and AccessAbility Services to ensure you can achieve your learning goals in this course. Enquiries are confidential. The UTSC AccessAbility Services staff (located in S302) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations (416) 287-7560 or ability@utsc.utoronto.ca.

Texts

Alexander Hamilton, John Jay, and James Madison (Publius.) *The Federalist Papers*. (can be accessed on-line at...

http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=788&chapter=108558&layout=html&Itemid=27

Ryan Hurl *Understanding America*. Open-access textbook, "beta-version" NOT FOR CITATION IN THE REAL WORLD (yet)

Robert Kaiser, *Act of Congress: How America's Essential Institution Works, and How it Doesn't*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2013. *Kindle Edition* .

Other readings will be available on Blackboard in pdf form (under Course Materials.)

Lectures and Readings

Week One 9.16 Introduction: Political Science and American Government and Politics

Understanding America, Chapter One

Act of Congress, Chapter One

Week Two 9.23 From the Revolution to the Constitution

Understanding America, Chapter 2

Act of Congress, Chapters 2-4

Week Three 9.30 The Constitution and the Problem of Faction

Federalist Papers #10, #47, #51

Week 4 10.7 Critical Junctures, Federalism and American Political Development: From Reconstruction to the New Deal

Understanding America, Chapter 3

Week 5 10.14 American Federalism and Political Development: From the Great Society to the Polarized Society

Understanding America, Chapter 3

National Federation of Independent Businesses v. Sebelius 567 U.S. ____ (2012), 132 S.Ct 2566
(edited version available under course materials)

Weeks 6 10.21 Parties, Elections and the Electoral System: The Origin of the American Party System and the New Deal Alignment

Understanding America, Chapter 4, Part One

Act of Congress, Chapters 1 and 2

Weeks 7 10.28 Parties, Elections and the Electoral System: The End of the New Deal Alignment and the Rise of the Contemporary Party System

Understanding America, Chapter 4, Part Two

Act of Congress, Chapters 3-4

Week 8 11.4 Voting Rights, Campaign Finance, and American Elections

Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission 558 U.S. 310 (2010) (edited version available under course materials)

Act of Congress, Chapters 5-6

Week 9. 11.11 The Development of Congress in the 20th century

Understanding America, Chapter 5

Act of Congress, Chapters 7-8

Week 10 11.18 Congress in the Era of Polarization

Act of Congress, Chapters 9-10

Week 11 11.25 The Presidency and the Constitutional Order

Understanding America, Chapter 6, part one

Federalist Papers, #62-77

Week 12 12.2 Imperial Presidencies: George W. Bush and Barack Obama

Understanding America, Chapter 6, part two

Act of Congress, Chapters 11-12

WINTER TERM READINGS TBA