

**POL 203Y1Y**

**U.S. Government and Politics**

**2015**

**Professor Ryan Hurl**

**Meeting Code: L5101**

**Lecture Times: Tuesday and Thursday, 4-6pm**

**Location: MacLennan Physical Laboratories, 255 Huron Street, Room 157**

**Professor: Ryan Hurl**

**Office:** 3049 Sidney Smith **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 process of law-making. The goal of the course is to give you the ability to understand how American political institutions operate, how those institutions have changed over time, and the political forces that shape American political life.**

**Teaching Assistants: Matthew Lesch and Zain Asaf**

Tutorial Times and Locations: TBA

You can enroll yourself in a tutorial through BLACKBOARD on Friday, May 15th at 1pm.

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

**Course Requirements**

**Mid-Term Exam** 20% *will take place during the exam period in June*

**Final Exam**: 30% *This exam will take place during the exam period in August*

*The end of term exam and the final exam will be based upon short answer and essay questions.*

**Research Paper Outline and Annotated Bibliography: 5% DUE JUNE 18<sup>th</sup>**

**Rough Draft of Research Paper: 10% DUE JULY 9<sup>th</sup>**

**Research Paper: 25% DUE AUGUST 4<sup>th</sup>**

*The details regarding the research paper will be provided on Blackboard and discussed in class 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. Your participation will also be graded based upon your questions about and comments on "Understanding America."*

*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](mailto:ability@utsc.utoronto.ca).

### **Texts**

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

[http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com\\_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=788&chapter=108558&layout=html&Itemid=27](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. .

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

## **Lectures and Readings**

### **Week One, May 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> Introduction: Political Science and American Government and Politics**

*Federalist Papers*, 1 and 2 (1787)

*Understanding America*, Chapter One

*Act of Congress*, Chapter One

### **Week Two, May 19<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> From the Revolution to the Constitution**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 2

*Act of Congress*, Chapters 2-4

*Federalist Papers* #3-10

### **Week Three, May 26<sup>th</sup> and May 28<sup>th</sup> Critical Junctures and Federalism in American Political Development: From Reconstruction to the New Deal**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 3

*Act of Congress*, Chapters 5-7

*Federalist Papers* #11-16

### **Week 4 June 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Critical Junctures in American Federalism: From the Great Society to the Polarized Society**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 3

*Act of Congress*, Chapters 8-9

*Federalist Papers* #17-28

**Weeks 5 June 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> Parties, Elections and the Electoral System: The Origin of the American Party System and the New Deal Alignment**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 4

*Act of Congress*, Chapters 10-11

*Federalist Papers*, #29-40

**Weeks 6 (June 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup>) 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 12-13

*Federalist Papers*, #41-51

**(EXAM PERIOD: No classes during the week of June 23<sup>rd</sup>)**

**Week 7. (June 30<sup>th</sup> and July 2<sup>nd</sup>) The Development of Congress**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 5

*Act of Congress*, Chapters 14-15

*Federalist Papers*, #52-61

**Week 8. (July 7<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>) The Presidency**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 6

*Act of Congress*, 16-17

*Federalist Papers*, #62-77

**Week 9. (July 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup>) Courts, Civil Rights, and Civil Liberties**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 7

*Act of Congress*, Chapters 18-19

*Federalist Papers*, #78-83

**Week 10. (July 21<sup>st</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup>) Bureaucracy**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 8

*Act of Congress*, 20-21

**Week 11 (July 28<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup>) Who Rules? Interest Groups, Public and Elite Opinion, Mass Media**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 9

*Act of Congress*, 22-23

**Week 12. August 4<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> American Public Policy and The Question of American Exceptionalism**

*Understanding America*, Chapter 10

*Act of Congress*, Chapter 24

*Federalist Papers*, #84-85