

SYLLABUS FOR

American Government

ON-LINE Section

Manchester Community College, Manchester, NH

Please KEEP, READ and REFER to this throughout the semester.

Dept. Course # POL 110 ES

Hours Per Week: as scheduled

Department: Social Science

(Meets a Social Science requirement)

Name of Instructor: Prof. Ben Hampton

Syllabus Date: 10 October 2009

Title: American Government

Credits: 3

Semester: Spring 2010

Catalog Description: A functional approach to the study of American government on the national, state and local level. The structure, functions, operations and problems of the American system will be explored in lectures, discussions, readings and papers.

Course Prerequisites: None

Required Textbooks: I am going to use the following book which can be purchased online at any used college textbook site. Thus, you will not have to go through the college bookstore to order it. The college has moved to a new book, and I feel this book is just as good, thank you, regards, Ben Hampton

Shea, Daniel M., et al; *Living Democracy Basic Edition*; Pearson Education, 2007 ISBN: 9780136132103 .

Supplemental Material: The web will provide the bulk of supplemental material.

Technical Requirements. All participating students should be sure they meet the hardware / software requirements outlined in the online education section of the college's web page <http://www.manchestercommunitycollege.edu/>

Please note that I am NOT the person to contact for *technical* difficulties. (but I MAY be able to help with general Blackboard questions after you have checked the "BB Hints" and "BB Manual" on the course site). Students should possess the following computer skills: Be able to create and save documents (in Word and / or Rich Text Format), be able to use the "insert comments" feature on Word or put footnotes / endnotes in a document, upload / download documents, view PowerPoint presentations (a reader is available on the College web site if you don't have the program), navigate the web and perform web searches, use class-wide and group discussion boards provided on the site.

Major Course Objectives: To acquaint the student with the major topics, concepts and criticisms of American government. Students will increase their ability to evaluate the policies and performance of their government. To attempt to increase student's participation in the political process. To foster critical thinking, writing and speaking skills. The student will:

1. Develop an understanding of the basic theories and structures of American government at the national, state and local levels.
2. Be able to describe and evaluate the major powers and responsibilities of the 3 branches of government.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as the bases of American government.
4. Define and evaluate the functions and problems associated with interest groups.
5. Analyze the office of the President as to power and limits as well as the formal and informal roles played by the Chief Executive
6. Discuss the budget process
7. Describe the dual court system of the US and how rights have developed
8. Be aware of the major historical themes of American foreign policy (with emphasis from the Cold War to the present)
9. Be able to decipher the meanings of typical political polls and discuss the impact of the media
10. Demonstrate critical thinking skills (in reading, writing and speaking)

Each chapter/section has specific objectives (see topic schedule)

Accommodations: Any students wishing special conditions should speak with me as soon as possible. All students should be sure to take advantage of the learning/writing center (CAPS) and tutoring.

Attendance Policy: Obviously, this is quite a different matter in an on-line course. *What I do want to draw your attention to is that assignments of all sorts have due dates. They must be met for credit to be earned.* Any discussion posted after the due date and time receives **NO CREDIT**. If an essay/assignment must be submitted to me by a certain date, **work that is late will lose a minimum of one half letter grade PER DAY** if it is accepted.

Please remember that if you choose to withdraw from the class you must do so with the registrar. Just not participating does not constitute withdrawal and the resulting F would wreck your GPA and, perhaps, any financial aid.

Method of Reaching the Instructor: I may be reached a number of ways. Please don't hesitate to contact me. If you have a general question, you might want to post it (at the discussion board). That way, all students may benefit. If it is a more personal question, simply email me or drop a line in the instructor drop box on Blackboard. You can email through Blackboard or to bhampton@ccsnh

If something is urgent--send it to my work and home.

- a. I will respond to emails within 24 hours during the week
- b. On the weekends, Friday night to Monday AM, I will respond within 48 hours
- c. Homework submissions will usually be graded and returned within 7 days of the due date of the submissions.

Methods of Testing/Evaluation: Method of Testing /Evaluation:

GRADING POLICY:

Chapter Assignments	10%
Constitution Assign.	10%
Mid Term	25%
Final	25%
Paper	30%

Policy On Make-up Work/Tests: Policy on Make-Up Work/Tests: This course is to be done on-line. Therefore, there is no make-up. Some exams will be timed but notice will be given. **Pay attention to the due dates.**

Policy on Homework/Outside Assignments. All work will, of course, be typed. However, you must proofread your work! **More than 5 errors** in a paper or assignment will result in the loss of a minimum of one half grade, 10 errors a loss of one grade etc. Correct spelling and format is important. Email and discussion list questions will NOT be graded for errors. So, relax. But still- remember that what you type reflects on you. So look it over before you hit the send or post button. Typed work should be in 10 or 12 font. no larger, no smaller. Margins should be 1 to 1 1/2 inch. Papers should be double spaced unless outline form is acceptable.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism will not be tolerated. See the College policy in the catalog. Many times it can be difficult to know what needs to be cited and what does not. It is a crime but it also is just not fair--we need to give credit where credit is due. Plagiarized work may result in a failing grade for the assignment or for the course.

Remember, just changing a word does NOT mean it is no longer plagiarism. You need to make the wording and the sentence structure your own. And, even having done that- you may certainly still need to acknowledge your source. When in doubt- use quotes or parenthetical citations.

Be especially careful when doing web assignments or take home essays. I don't want to read the book or article in your answers. (I have already done that!)

Link to any number of sites to help with citing sources.

You may want to check out this link.

<http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/pamphlets.shtml>

Course expectations (what is expected of you and expected of me):

Login to the course frequently.

Send all assignments by the digital drop box.

SAVE ALL WORK IN RICH TEXT FORMAT (.rtf) BEFORE SENDING. THIS WILL ASSURE THE MATERIAL WILL BE ABLE TO BE OPENED REGARDLESS OF THE VERSION OF WORD USED OR MS WORKS.

Chapter Assignments **MUST BE SUBMITTED AS ONE COMPLETE PACKAGE. I will accept one chapter assignment in parts with no grade penalty, it will be sent back graded with a note to submit future assignments in the form as shown below. Subsequent chapter assignments not sent in the form indicated will be returned un-graded and subject to grade reduction per the syllabus. Thus, when submitting chapter assignments please combine the various sections or parts of each chapter assignment into one submission and submit in the following format:**

EXAMPLE: Chapter 1_Complete_B Hampton

I will respond to your email within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours during the weekend as outlined above. Homework submissions will be graded and returned within 7 days of the due date of the submission.

Course Grading System:

A range= excellent work. 90 and above

B range= very good work. 80 to 89.

C range= average work 70 to 79

D range= poor work. 60 to 69

F= unsatisfactory- below 60

A's are tough to earn. On the other hand, students have to "work" at failing. If you do the work, you should be fine. Just remember the math... a few missing assignments can wreck an average. (Usually, in an online course, I do plan that a student may miss a chapter's worth of discussion and maybe an assignment or two before the grade will really tumble.)

Topics: **Research Paper.** You will be asked to do a critical research paper analyzing some aspect of the topics covered in the class. **Topic proposals are to be submitted to me by DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED via Digital Drop Box.** The paper is to be ten pages (not including title page or bibliography) and you should offer your carefully reasoned arguments in support of your thesis. You must use at least four (4) outside sources to support your arguments. Students should plan on using MLA documentation style in this paper. Start on your project early. If you wish to have feedback as the project progresses, please feel free to ask me. My feedback could very well save you a lot of anguish, and by starting early you are likely to obtain **the outside sources/material you will need to complete the project. DUE DATE MIDNIGHT DATE TO BE ANNOUNCED**

Points to Remember: *This course is worth 3 college credits. You should plan to spend an average of 8 hours a week on this material. If you are very unfamiliar with the topic-- it may be closer to 10 hours.. Be prepared to read the material more than once and to combine text and supplemental material in your answers.

*Don't get behind in the reading.

*You do need to do the assignments and do them on time. A zero can destroy an average.

*There is no such thing as a dumb question except for those that are not asked.

* Exchange phone numbers and email with the other students. You can work together. Use the features of Blackboard to chat, work on material, etc.

* Be sure to keep a copy of all your work! At least until the end of the semester and you have your grade.

*Material from the text, articles, websites, etc. is the responsibility of the student whether or not it is directly mentioned by the instructor.

* If anything in the text or in directions is unclear don't hesitate to ask!

* If you are having difficulty or not doing as well as expected---talk with me---don't wait.

* Participation is important. Be sure to put some thought and effort into the discussion threads.

* READ!! QUESTION!! THINK!!

A Hint: Now for a hint from me.. I have a basic concept that I like to stress in any course. You know that "regurgitation" of the facts is not enough for college work. You need to DO something with the information. But, you still need to know the facts. Once that is done, think of this phrase--- because you will often hear them from me.

"So what"??

Yep, that's my favorite question. Now---be careful---I don't mean it sarcastically. I really mean- so _____ happened---so what? What were the consequences? How did this affect other things at the time (Think systematically!!) What was the big deal? Why bother to put it in the books!!

Take a minute and really think--ARE you a good candidate for an online course? Many students are NOT! They would do better in a classroom. Click all around the site-- get an idea. You need to be disciplined and motivated. In general, I have found students do better in online courses in areas they are really interested in. If history is not of interest to you--that is likely to make it harder to find the time required to meet the demands of this course. Be sure to make an informed decisions!

Remember- all of the folders in the syllabus area of Blackboard are part of this syllabus-
- so check it all out.