

**EASTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

American Government

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PLSC 112

Office Hours: M and W 8-9am, 11am-Noon
Wednesday, 5 – 6pm
Class: M-W 9:30-10:45am or 12:30-1:45pm

Fall 2013

Teaching Assistant, Joseph Klepack, jklepac1@emich.edu

Course Objectives:

The objectives of the course are to familiarize students with the structure and operation of the American system of government and enable students to function as knowledgeable "citizens" in a democratic society. Particular emphasis this term will be put on the constitutional concepts and principles underlying the US political system, and a comparison of our system with other major political systems throughout the world as well as our own state and local political systems.

This course satisfies Area IV of EMU's General Education requirements (Knowledge of the Disciplines: Social Science). Students are expected to accomplish the following in these classes:

- Acquire an understanding of social science methods and how they are used to engage in the systematic study of society and culture.
- Understand and compare formal and informal social and political structures, organizations, and institutions.
- Explore and understand power relationships and the impact of social change on different groups and on society in general.
- Develop an appreciation of different interpretations of contemporary issues, institutions, or structures.
- Use social science methods and content to interpret and analyze data and reports in the media and to make informed decisions regarding local, national, and international issues.
- Use basic social scientific research techniques to examine and present information in a clear and concise manner.
- Understand the relation between qualitative and quantitative research.

Course Materials:

I have ordered copies of **GOVT 5**, the most recent edition of the Brief Edition of the acclaimed American Government textbook by my colleagues Edward Sidlow and Beth Henschen (Wadsworth, 2014), through local bookstores, and as will be apparent I have used that text to structure the outline for the course (readings noted in the outline as Chapter numbers).

I will also periodically post additional articles on the class website and other materials for class (study guides, powerpoint slides, etc.) as appropriate. Since discussions of governments are in the news every day, I would encourage you to read a daily or weekly newspaper and share any interesting issues or insights with the class (these too are fair game on exams). Don't be afraid to ask questions or seek clarification on anything that is read or discussed in class. Class attendance is expected and participation is encouraged; indeed, past experience suggests a direct correlation between class attendance and grades.

Class Expectations and Grading:

Grading will be based on three non-cumulative exams during the term; exams are a mix of multiple choice and short answer/essay in nature and cover readings as well as classroom discussion (Exam 1 = 30% and Exam 2 and 3 = 35% each). Reading assignments should be completed in advance of class. I will also provide a Study Guide for each exam to highlight specific terms, concepts and questions as a means for improving your understanding of the material and to assist you in preparing for tests. Exam dates noted on the outline are approximate; students are responsible for completing exams when given. Make-up exams will be given only under exceptional circumstances, and must be approved in advance.

EMU Writing Support:

The University Writing Center (115 Halle Library; 487-0694) offers one-to-one writing consulting for both undergraduate and graduate students. Students can make appointments or drop in between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Mondays through Thursdays and from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Fridays. Students should bring a draft of what they're working on and their assignment sheet. The UWC opens for the Fall 2013 semester on Monday, September 9 and will close on Thursday, December 12.

The UWC also offers small group workshops on various topics related to writing (e.g., Organizing Your Writing; Incorporating Evidence; Revising Your Writing; Conquering Commas; Using APA or MLA). Workshops are offered at different times in the UWC. Visit the UWC page (<http://www.emich.edu/uwc>) to see our workshop calendar. To register for a workshop, click the link from the UWC page for the type of workshop you wish to attend.

The UWC also has several satellite sites across campus. These satellites provide writing support to students within the various colleges. For more information about our satellite locations and hours, visit the UWC web site: <http://www.emich.edu/uwc>.

The Academic Projects Center (116 Halle Library) also offers one-to-one writing consulting for students, in addition to consulting on research and technology-related issues. The APC is open 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Mondays through Thursdays for drop-in consultations**. Additional information about the APC can be found at <http://www.emich.edu/apc>. Students visiting the Academic Projects Center or any of the satellites of the University Writing Center should also bring with them a draft of what they're working on and their assignment sheet.

Academic Integrity:

Academic dishonesty, including all forms of cheating and/or plagiarism, will not be tolerated in this class. Penalties for an act of academic dishonesty may range from receiving a failing grade for a particular assignment to receiving a failing grade for the entire course. In addition, you may be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Services for discipline that can result in either a suspension or permanent dismissal. The *Student Conduct Code* contains detailed definitions of what constitutes academic dishonesty, and it can be accessed online at www.emich.edu/sjs

Classroom Management Issues:

Students are expected to abide by the *Student Conduct Code* and assist in creating an environment that is conducive to learning and protects the rights of all members of the University community. Incivility and disruptive behavior will not be tolerated and may result in a request to leave class and referral to the *Office of Student Services (SJS)* for discipline. Examples of inappropriate classroom conduct include repeatedly arriving late to class, using a cellular phone, or talking while others are speaking.

Students with Disabilities:

If you wish to be accommodated for your disability EMU Board of Regents policy #8.3 requires that you first register with the Access Services Office (ASO) in room 203 King Hall. You may contact ASO by telephone at (734) 487-2470. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with ASO promptly as you will only be accommodated from the date you register with them forward. No retroactive accommodations are possible.

Course Outline: Dates and Topics are subject to change as we proceed through the term

<u>Dates</u>	<u>Topic and Assignment</u>
9/4	Review of course syllabus, expectations; The Shepherd's Story— why we need government.
9/9-18	The nature of governing and government; politics, public policy, political systems. The Constitution and the Declaration of Independence; Chapter 1-2; Appendix, Federalist Papers
9/23-25	Federalism and intergovernmental relations; The assignment of governmental authority. Chapter 3
9/30/10-7	Civil Liberties/Rights. Chapter 4-5
10/9	EXAM 1
10/14-29	Political parties and interest groups. Chapter 6-7
<i>10/23</i>	<i>Guest speaker</i>
10-29-11/6	Campaigns, elections and political participation. Chapter 8-9
11/11	EXAM 2
11/13-20	The Congress. Chapter 11
11-25-12/4	The Presidency and the bureaucracy. Chapter 12-13
<i>No class on 11/23</i>	<i>Eve of Thanksgiving, Thanksgiving Day, 11/24/13</i>
12/9-11	The Judiciary. Chapter 14
12/16	FINAL EXAM for 12:30pm class – 11:30am - 1:00 p.m.
12/18	FINAL EXAM for 9:30am class – 9:00 - 10:30 a.m.