

## Political Science 1010, Section 006

Thomas F. Eamon

Spring Semester 2010

Tuesday/Thursday 12:30

Welcome! This is a fascinating subject that often brings out disagreements. But to get things done some consensus is also necessary. In theory at least Americans value freedom and quality. Question: What is the American Dream, and how close is the dream to reality. This course will present you with an understanding of American government, a field of the social science discipline of political science. You will learn about the realities, the institutions, and the processes of American government, how political scientists study American politics and the relevance of our research in American politics to general knowledge.

### Course Requirements

- 1) **Textbook**- We the People by Thomas Patterson
- 2) **Class Attendance** is expected and required. Anyone missing over three classes is ineligible for a passing grade. Please keep me informed if you become ill or encounter a special problem.
- 3) **Tests** –
  - a) **Test I – Tuesday February 2** – In-class essay. You will get the questions a week in advance and have some choice on questions to answer. I will be looking for your ideas on particular subjects.
  - b) **Test II – Tuesday March 2** – This will cover readings, court cases, lectures and class discussions covered up to this point.
  - c) **Test III – Tuesday April 20** – This will cover readings, court cases, lectures, and class projects (presentations).
  - d) **Final Examination** – This will be a take home exam. Due in our classroom between 11:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon on Thursday April 29.
- 4) **Class Project** – You have two options.
  - a) A group project to be followed by a short paper (3 pages) related to the project. This includes an oral presentation with a group and an individual paper.
  - b) A term paper (10 to 12 pages) reflecting research and serious thought. Due at time to be announced.

**All assignments must be completed for a passing grade.**

**In addition to the above there will be some homework assignments dealing with key terms and concepts.**

### Grade Scale

A – 93 – 100

B – 85 – 92

C – 70 – 84

D – 60 – 69

F – Below 60

## **Office Hours**

Tuesday: 3:15 – 4:30

Wednesday: 10:00 – 1:15

Thursday: 11:50 – 12:20

## **Office: Brewster A-130**

If I am in my office you are always welcome whether or not it is an official office hour time. You are also welcome to call me at home. I hope to get to know all of you in the near future. *cell phone – (919) 402-7810; office: (252) 328-1061; home phones: Durham (919) 682-6486; Greenville – (252)752-7543*

*Anyone needing special accommodation should contact the Office of Disability Service (737-1016).*

## **Introduction on January 12**

### **January 14**

- I. Political Socialization and American Political Culture – *Chapters 1 and 6*
- II. Debates in American Society: How should our country be judged? – *Chapters 1 and 6*

### **January 19**

- III. The formation of a nation and the federal system – *Chapters 2, 3*

### **January 21-28**

- IV. A Fight for Equality – *Chapter 5*
  - A. The road to equality
  - B. Race- related cases
  - C. Gender issues

## **Test I on February 2**

### **February 4-9**

- V. Elections and Current Public Opinion – *Chapters 6, 7, 8, 10*
  - A. Public opinion
  - B. The parties
  - C. The election process

### **February 11-16**

- VI. The Presidency and Executive Branch of government – *Chapters 12, 13, also chapter 4, p.140-144*
  - A. The office of president
  - B. What makes someone a good president?
  - C. How presidents are elected: electability and competence
  - D. Theories of presidential power

**February 18-23**

- VII. Congress – *Chapter 11*
- A. What Congress does
  - B. Leadership in Congress
  - C. The committee system

**Review on February 25 and Test II on March 2**

**March 16**

- VIII. The Courts and Legal System – *Chapter 14*
- A. Federal and state courts
  - B. How courts are set up
  - C. The special Role of the U.S. Supreme Court

**March 18-23**

- IX. Religion in America Society – *Chapter 4 – p. 106-110, 119-123*
- X. Free Expression – *Chapter 4 – p. 106-119*

**March 25-30**

- XI. Rights of the Accused and Debates over Privacy – *Chapter 4 – p. 128-140*

**April 1 to end of course**

**Class projects**

- 1) The Second Amendment, Crime and Gun Control Debate
- 2) The Delivery of Health Care
- 3) The Immigration Debate
- 4) The Successes and Failures of the Education System
- 5) The Pros and Cons of capital punishment

**Test on April 20**