Introduction to American Government

PS 201- Internet
Website: http://hcl.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/ps201/
Instructor: David Garson E-Mail: David_Garson@ncsu.edu
Telephone: 919-515-3067 (office)
Telephone if needed during exams: 919-616-2273
Fax: 919-515-7333
Office: 022 Winston
Office hours: By appointment; feel free to e-mail or phone

All exams are by e-mail:

Summer Session 1, 2009
PS 201 Section 601 (Internet)
Commentary 1 due: May 29
Commentary 2 due: June 5
Paper 1 due (unless doing longer Paper 2): June 5
Midterm: 5:30 - 8:30 pm, Monday, June 8
Commentary 3 due: June 15
Paper 2 due: June 15
Final exam: 5:30 - 8:30 pm, Monday, June 22

Summer Session 2, 2009
Section 601 (Internet)
Commentary 1 due: July 10
Commentary 2 due: July 13
Paper 1 due (unless doing longer Paper 2): July 13
Midterm: 5:30 - 8:30 pm, Wednesday, July 15
Commentary 3 due: July 27
Paper 2 due: July 27
Final exam: 5:30 - 8:30 pm, Monday, August 3

Warning

This syllabus is available online at http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/ps201/201syl.htm. If you have received a printed copy from another source, you must go to this url on or after the first day of class to print out a current version of the syllabus as details, including exam dates, may
change. Also be sure to read carefully the separate "Basic Instructions" document at
http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/ps201/basic.txt.

What?

For Internet students, any term: When the course is taken as a distance education course through
the McKimmon Center, there are no live sessions. Substitute exploratory activities on the web
should be undertaken instead. These activities are found in the "Politics in Action" and other
sections of the class website.

For Summer School regular sessions: This section is a lab course, which means that much of
what you do will be in the Social Science Computing Lab, 118 Winston (call 515-3791 for
times), or on the web from your home, dorm, or office. This course is taught in first summer
sessions as a partly-on-the-web course which, contrary to what it may say in the Summer School
catalog, will not meet on a daily lecture format, as do other sections. Concurrently, usually it is
also taught as an Internet-only course each semester. Internet-only students will not be expected
to attend the scheduled Tuesday and Thursday sessions.

Note: For all students, regardless of term or Internet status, the weekly reading, homework, and
test assignments are found by clicking on "Weekly Assignments" at the class website at
http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/ps201/. Click here for an example of exam format, with
answers. Warning! You will still be responsible on exams for the weekly readings even if the
website is not operating on the day of the exams, so keep up with the readings and take notes.

Textbook The course textbook is Government by the People, Brief Edition, 8/e, by Magleby &

Schedule

The fall and spring semesters are fifteen weeks long, and since there are 15 chapters in the
textbook, you need to be covering about one chapter a week, correlated with the 15 "Weekly
Assignments" on the course web page main menu. Summer terms, however, need to cover
approximately 2.5 "weeks" of work per actual week. The main thing is to have covered "weekly
topics" 1 - 7 by midterm, corresponding to textbook chapters 1 - 5, and 12 - 13.

The midterm and final dates are at the top of this syllabus. The midterm is entirely by e-mail.
Unless otherwise instructed, the midterm covers through "Weekly Topic 7" (this is not the same
as Chapter 7, but refers to assignments on the class web page). You must be at your computer for
these exams. If you do not receive the exam by email within five minutes of the appointed hour,
call the instructor immediately at the special exam-only number 1-336-521-4093. Warning: You
will receive a failing grade on the exam if you mail it back to the class listserv instead of to the
instructor. Exams must be mailed directly to david_garson@ncsu.edu. Save a backup copy on
your computer also!

Although the review questions are online, the textbook itself should be purchased as usual
through the campus bookstore. Note the midterm and final are not limited to the review
questions, but also may cover the readings, discussions, lectures, and other information encountered in the course.

Where?

Commentaries, tests, and all important course information will be distributed through the class list! The instructor will enter into the listserv all registered addresses up to one or two days before class begins, but if you are a latecomer, you will need to follow the directions to add yourself (email the instructor if you have problems; go to http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PS201/listserv.htm and http://www.ncsu.edu/it/pub/lists/subscribe.html). While the instructor will enter most students automatically, it is your ultimate responsibility to make sure you have joined the class online discussion list. Click here for more information. All students are responsible for unsubscribing themselves if they drop the course or at the end of the semester. Warning: The class listserv may not be used to share/exchange sets of answers to the review questions (there will be a grade penalty if you do) as the point of review is to learn by looking answers up yourself.

During regular terms, there are no physical meetings. However, you are welcome to also visit and use Winston 133, the lab room available for our use, or you may use Winston 133 or the Social Science Lab (Third Floor Winston) or at any computer in the world if linked to the the web. The instructor will be available by email or telephone to help with lab work questions.

How?

You will complete this course by accomplishing the following objectives:

1. Successfully passing the midterm and final. Preparation for these examinations is best accomplished by completing the review questions found linked from the "weekly assignment" pages of the class website, and by doing one reading per chapter (summarize the main points and be able to relate it to the chapter). You must do the main listed reading unless unavailable due to the changing nature of the web, in which case you may do one of the alternate readings listed.

2. Completing and handing in electronic copy (a file attachment in Word .doc or generic .rtf format) of two writing assignments on a topic to be selected by you but related to one of the chapters in the textbook. For additional ideas, note the writing assignments in the Internet Research component of the online textbook and the writing assignments in the Review, Essay, section of the online textbook.

Paper due dates: Papers are required of all students. You may choose between two short (8 pp.) papers or one long (16 pp.) paper. Due dates are listed at the top of the syllabus. Submissions will not be accepted after these due dates. Submissions in the last 7 days of
Keep in mind the following paper criteria, which also apply to news commentaries, although commentaries are much briefer and can accomplish less.

- Please indicate your topic clearly. The paper should have a clear question introduced in the first paragraph. It should be a question about which intelligent people might disagree.

- Then, of course, you should organize your paper around this question, which should raise an issue in political science (not journalism, history, psychology, etc.). Do not, for instance, simply have a topic that you talk "around" without a clear focus. Rambling is one of the most common problems in student papers. Avoid the "look at this, look at that" or long-list-of-quotes approaches but instead be telling a "story" in a logical order. A description of Congress or some other political institution is not an analysis.

- The introduction should provide the "roadmap" for the paper; there should be internal headings to guide the reader along, with transitional paragraphs linking sections; and the ending should summarize the argument and conclusions.

- Discuss both sides of an issue, even though you may be favoring one side. Discuss both pros and cons for your issue. Give quite a bit of attention to presenting arguments which run counter to your opinions. Avoid creating oversimplified "straw men" to attack but instead be fair about opposing viewpoints. It's good to have a point of view, but it is more effective if you anticipate and rebut the other side. Failing to do this is also one of the most common mistakes of beginning political science writers.

- Include facts, analysis, and your opinion -- not just descriptive facts and your opinion. An analysis weighs evidence on both sides of an issue, so you must seek to have empirical evidence, not just opinions and ideological arguments.

- Relate the paper to themes of the textbook and course. This is a political science course, not one in history, journalism, or creative writing. Do not let the bulk of the paper be an historical narrative or case account, but instead try to analyze a political issue or question.

- If you have a quote, you should have a cited reference in the back. This should be a complete, formal citation.

- Some research is expected, say half a dozen sources/citations. If you have direct quotes or tables, you must cite. Please also cite your sources for any assertions of fact which are in dispute between the pro and con sides of the issue.

- This is a political science course; use political science literature in your citations for at least some of your citations.

- Even though these are short papers (about 8 pp.), use of headings and subheadings for your points is a good idea.

- Be careful: use a spell-checker and proofread too.
Internet students should email the instructor if feedback is wanted about grading or their papers as Internet-submitted files are not returned to students with markup. Note: Save copies of all your work in case there are problems with e-mail!!!

3. Participating in the discussion sessions.

*Internet distance education section students:* You must comment to the class listserv on a current newspaper or Internet news source topic, doing so at least three times during the semester. Please number your commentaries 1 through 3. In addition to your grade on the commentaries, you are encouraged to use the class list to comment on the commentaries of others. Substantive comments of this type will yield bonus points, raising your own commentary grades.

**Commentary due dates:** Commentary due dates are listed at the top of the syllabus. Submissions will not be accepted after these due dates. Submissions in the final two days before due in summer sessions will be graded but will receive grade only, not comments, unless specifically requested. Likewise, submissions in the seven days before due or in the last two weeks of regular terms or last week of summer terms will be graded but will receive grade only, not comments, unless specifically requested.

Note: With regard to news commentaries, you may find it helpful to look at real news commentaries by columnists. Any news topic is okay. A website linking to real columnists is [http://www.blueagle.com/](http://www.blueagle.com/) (Blue Eagle). Your commentary should be about the same length as a newspaper columnist's commentary. However, unlike a news columnist, you should seek to relate the specific news story to a general theme in a chapter in our class textbook (ex., relating California's electric energy crisis to the general issue of deregulation) and also cite your sources. Thus, take a current event and relate it to a general theme in the textbook. I am looking for making this specific-to-general connection, for presenting both sides fairly, for insightful analysis, and general professional tone. Grading criteria to keep in mind: interesting topic, presenting both sides, having extended analysis, not just description or opinion weighing empirical evidence, relating to broad themes in the textbook, grammar, spelling; needs to be analytical (analytic means your topic has an issue about which people can disagree, you present both sides fairly, you get evidence on both sides -- not just opinion, you evaluate, you come to a conclusion); have full citation of source; extra research avoid factual errors.

Note: Save copies of all your work in case there are problems with e-mail!!! The newsbreak commentaries are to promote discussion: this cannot be done if they are turned in at the very end of the course, hence these timed deadlines! Some bonus points will be given for commenting on the commentaries of others.

**Grading**

Grade components: Midterm 25%, Final 35%, Papers 10% for first, 15% for second, Discussion 15%. Discussion includes commentaries for Internet students and class presentations for regular
students. Incompletes are not accepted except for written, verifiable medical reasons. Attendance is not graded. Makeup work, if any, must be arranged within two weeks of due date at the option of the instructor, prior to two weeks before the end of classes. Please note: Grade only, without markup, is assigned for papers and commentaries turned in at the last minute (that is, during midterm week or during the last week of class).

**Privacy**

Midterm and final grades are posted on MyPack Portal, with its built-in system for privacy and security. Commentary grades and midterm paper grades are mailed directly to you on an individual basis. Instructor comments on selected commentaries are posted to the class list: this helps class members understand better what makes for a good commentary, but if you wish such instructor comments to be kept private in your particular case, notify the instructor in writing prior to submitting any commentaries.

**Course Evaluations** Course evaluations are now done online at [http://classeval.ncsu.edu/](http://classeval.ncsu.edu/). Help on course evaluations is by email at classeval@ncsu.edu.

**Academic Integrity Statement**

Please note the existence of the University policy on academic integrity found in the Code of Student Conduct (found in Appendix L of the Handbook for Advising and Teaching). Academic misconduct will not be tolerated in this class. Academic misconduct may be defined as "any activity which tends to compromise the academic integrity of the institution, or subvert the educational process". I expect complete honesty in the completion of tests and assignments. It is my understanding that the student's signature on any test or assignment means that the student neither gave nor received unauthorized aid. Beyond cheating on quizzes or exams, academic misconduct also includes the submission of plagiarized work for an academic requirement. Plagiarism is "the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use and/or paraphrasing of another person's work, and/or the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas". Thus each argument made in the research papers which is not completely the student's own, must be footnoted or otherwise referenced to indicate its source.

"Plagiarism, or presenting another's works or ideas as one's own, is a form of stealing. The instructor reserves the right to examine any source used by the student before giving a grade on a paper, and to give and "incomplete" in the course if necessary, to allow time to obtain sources. Students should be prepared to show source material to the instructor for the purpose of verifying information. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.

Academic dishonesty includes the following offenses:

1. Claiming as your own work a paper written by another student.
2. Turning in a paper that contains paraphrases of someone else's ideas but does not give proper credit to that person for those ideas.
3. Turning in a paper that is largely a restatement in your own words of a paper written by someone else, even if you give credit to that person for those ideas. The thesis and organizing principles of a paper must be your own.
4. Turning in a paper that uses the exact words of another author without using quotation marks, even if proper credit is given in a citation, or that changes the words only slightly and claims them to be paraphrases.
5. Turning in the same paper, even in a different version, for two different courses without the permission of both professors involved.
6. Using any external source (notes, books, other students, etc.) for assistance during an in-class exam, unless given permission to do so by the professor." ---- Source: Kendra Stewart et al., Columbia College

Further details on academic integrity are in NC State University's Code of Student Conduct (http://www.ncsu.edu/student_conduct).

The faculty has agreed that violations of academic integrity must have consequences. Consequently, students who cheat (behaviors cited in point 1 and 6 or similar behavior) may receive at least an F in the course; other forms of dishonesty, similar to those covered in points 2 through 5 may result in at least a 0 for the assignment.

**Statement Regarding Students with Disabilities**

Every attempt is made in this course to conform to university policy on disabilities, as described at http://www2.ncsu.edu/ncsu/provost/info/hat/current/appendix/appen_k.html. If you have disability-related needs, please inform the instructor of them immediately.

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**Who?**

Prof. G. David Garson  
Winston 022  
NCSU Box 8102  
Raleigh, NC 27695  
Tel. 919-515-3067  
Fax 919-515-7333  
Email David_Garson@ncsu.edu