American Politics: RPOS 101
Fall 2013 – SUNY Albany

Time: MW 5:45 PM to 7:05 PM; Location: Room SS 256
E-mail: wn8492@albany.edu Office: Humanities B16 (Pol. Sci. Contact Office)
Office Hours: Mon. 2:45 PM – 3:45 PM, Wed. 4:30 PM – 5:30 PM, and by appointment

The Project at Hand
Politics (or political power) concerns who or what determines whom gets what, when, how, and how much. In an ideal American liberal democracy, the people determine the whom, the what, the how much, all without violating individual rights. In this course we will explore who governs and for whose benefit.

Required Book

Other Reading Material
I will provide other readings through Blackboard or in class.

Course Requirements and Grade Breakdown:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Midterm</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second Midterm</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Five Quizzes – Each 5%</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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Exams and Quizzes
Make-up exams and quizzes can be taken only with a note from the dean.

Problems
Please inform me of any difficulties you might have that might impede on your performance in this course. These problems include, but are not limited to: physical disabilities, learning disabilities, medical problems, legal misfortunes, jury duty, military obligations etc.

Plagiarism
Don’t do it!!! Plagiarism means to pass off someone else’s work as your own or to pass off the work from one course for another (even if the work is your own). Any student who plagiarizes will be failed from the course and be reported to Judicial Affairs where further action may be taken.

Important Note
First, I will discuss in lecture some ideas that are not found in the text and readings; you will be responsible for these ideas. If you miss class be sure to copy notes from a classmate. Second, I will not cover in lecture all the information in the text and readings; however, you are responsible for this information and they may appear on exams and quizzes.

Now sit back and enjoy the course!
Reading Assignments and Due Dates

Note: This is subject to change.

I - Foundations

Units #1 & 2 – Introduction (August 26th – September 9th, No Class Sept 2nd & 4th):
The Democratic Debate (Miroff et al. Chp. 1)
The Revolution and the Constitution (Miroff et al. Chp. 2)
Madison - Federalist No. 10 (Miroff Appendix-12)
Madison – Federalist No. 51
Anti-Federalist Papers – Oct 18, 1787 (Miroff Appendix -16)
Charles Beard – *from* Economic Interpretation of the Constitution of the United States

II - Institutions

Unit #3 – Congress (September 11th – 16th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 11
Fenno – Homestyle
Mayhew - Congress: The Electoral Connection
Ellwood and Patashinik – In Praise of Pork

Unit #4 – President (September 18th – 23rd)
Miroff et al. Chp. 12
Cronin – The Paradox of the American President
Neustadt – Presidential Power and Modern Presidents
Kernell – Going Public

Unit #5 – Bureaucracy (September 25th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 13
Wilson – Bureaucracy

First Midterm (September 30th)

Unit #6 - Supreme Court (October 2nd)
Miroff et al. Chp. 14
Scalia – A Matter of Interpretation
Breyer - Active Liberty

Unit #7 – Federalism (October 7th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 15
Osborne – Laboratories of Democracy
Elazar – American Federalism

III - Participation

Unit #8 - The Media (October 9th & 13th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 6
Hamilton – The Market and the Media
Kurtz – Sin Cycle

Unit #9- Public Opinion (October 17th – 21st)
Miroff et al Chap. 4
Lippmann – The Phantom Public
V. O. Key – Public Opinion and American Democracy
Unit #10 – Voting (October 23rd – 28th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 5
Putnam – Turning in Tuning Out
V. O. Key The Responsible Electorate

Unit #11 – Campaigns (October 30th – Nov 4th)
Miroff et al. Chp 8
Sorauf – Inside Campaign Finance

Second Midterm (November 6th)

Unit #12 - Political Parties (November 11th & 13th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 7
Aldrich – Why Parties
Olson – The Logic of Collection Action

Unit #13 – Interest Groups (November 18th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 9
Schattschneider – The Scope and Bias of the Pressure System

Unit #14 - Mass Movements (November 20th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 10

IV - Policy

Units #15 & #16 - Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (November 25th – Dec 2nd)
Miroff et al. Chp.16
Kluger – Simple Justice
Lewis – Gideon’s Trumpet

Thanksgiving Break – November 27th – December 1st

Unit #17 – Economic Policy (December 4th)
Miroff et al. Chp. 17

Unit #17 (Continued) – Social Policy (Dec 9th)

Unit #17 (Continued) – American Political Economy (December 9th)
Miroff et al. Chp 3

Final Exam – Monday December 16th, 5:45 - 745 p.m. Room SS 256