RPOS 101 Introduction to American Politics, Spring 2017

Teaching Assistant: Donnett Lee
Email: dalee@albany.edu or donnette.lee@gmail.com
Office Hours: Fridays 2-3pm or by appointment in Humanities Basement 16

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section number</th>
<th>Time and room</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8535</td>
<td>F 09:20 AM-10:15 AM BB002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8536</td>
<td>F 10:25 AM-11:20 AM BB125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8537</td>
<td>F 11:30 AM-12:25 PM BB007</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The purpose of the discussion section is to actively engage you in the material that is presented in the lectures. Each week we will review ideas that interest you from the lectures, raise questions and explore subjects with other students in a small group setting. One of the course requirements is a short research investigation into a topic that interests you and is related to American politics. We will work together in section to support the steps associated with the research process. Attending and participating in section will assist you in understanding key themes and concepts from the course.

This discussion section will contribute to each student’s ability to:

**Learning Objectives (Oral Discourse):**
1. Communicate ideas effectively appropriate to a specific context and according to a specific set of criteria
2. Establish and maintain an appropriate performer/audience relationship in a given oral exercise, and actively engage with listeners/audience
3. Respond to, and where appropriate, incorporate listener’s comments and questions
4. Regularly practice communication skills through questions, discussions, debates and/or presentations (informal).

**Learning Objectives (Writing):**
1. Demonstrate increasingly sophisticated writing
2. Be able to communicate clearly in writing, employing fundamental rules of usage, style, and mechanics in the context of their discipline
3. Demonstrate the ability to incorporate critical feedback on their writing, coming to understand that revision and rewriting are an integral part of the writing process.

**Components of the Grade & Assignments:**
The work we complete in discussion section will contribute to 20% of your entire course grade. Here is how that 20% is determined in section:

- Attendance: 50%
- Participation: 20%
- Paper #1: 10%
- Paper #2: 20%

**Attendance:**
Your attendance in the discussion section is mandatory. *Attendance will be taken at the start of each section.* You are allowed one absence without being penalized; if you have more than 1 absence during the semester, your grade will be negatively affected.
Discussion will be held each Friday with the exception of the following dates: 2/24, 3/10, 4/7. On those days, I will be available to students during our regularly scheduled discussion time to discuss papers or anything else related to the class.

**Participation:**
Attending section meetings regularly, participating, and turning in all assignments are great ways to boost your understanding of the course material and your grade. Some of the topics that we will discuss in this course may be controversial to some. There will be a variety of opinions and you are expected to be respectful of others and their opinions in the course.

**Papers:**
At the end of the semester, students will submit a paper on a public policy issue of their choice; **the details regarding this paper are TBA.** To help students prepare for the final paper, parts of the paper will be due throughout the semester as they relate to the lecture topics. Each section of the paper should be 2 pages, double-spaced with reasonable fonts and margins.

**Presentations:**
The topic of your policy paper as well as other policy topics will be the subject of required discussion leadership in section. Each student will need to act as a discussion leader or join a small team of leaders in engaging our class in a discussion that connects their policy issue to topics we are covering in lecture. A schedule and expectations for those presentations are TBA.

**Special Circumstances:** If you require special considerations related to a learning disability, language barriers or membership on a sports team, you must come and talk to me so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

**Academic Integrity:** The strength of the university depends on academic and personal integrity. In this course, you must be honest and truthful. Plagiarism is the use of someone else’s work, words, or ideas as if they were your own without giving the original author credit by citing him or her. If you have any questions about plagiarism, please contact Dr. Hildreth or me before submitting assignments for grading. Plagiarism violations will result in disciplinary action.

**Accessibility and Accommodations:** The University at Albany is firmly committed to making higher education accessible to students with disabilities by removing architectural barriers and providing programs and support services necessary for them to benefit from the instruction and resources of the University. Early planning is essential for many of the resources and accommodations provided. Please see: [http://www.albany.edu/disability/current.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/disability/current.shtml)