

COURSE: POL211 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT & POLITICS
SEMESTER: FALL 2014
TIME: MWF 1:30-2:20 PM
LOCATION: HENRY 207
INSTRUCTOR: MICHAEL E. WEAVER
CONTACT INFO: michael.weaver@chaminade.edu
(808) 542-2084
NOTE: All email communication must be conveyed by means of your Chaminade email address. I will not respond to emails sent to me from other email addresses.

REQUIRED TEXT: David B. Magleby and Paul C. Light. *Government by the People, Brief Edition* (New York: Pearson Longman).

eCOLLEGE:

This course is listed on eCollege. All written assignments are to be submitted to the eCollege site ONLY according to published deadlines on the site and also announced in class. Copies of all handouts, readings, etc. will also be available on the course website.

Scope of Course

The goal of this course is to familiarize students with the structures, functions, and processes of American government. We begin with the premise that, in an increasingly cynical world, politics matters. Emphasizing the accomplishments of a government *of the people, by the people, and for the people*, we encourage students to become effective and informed citizens. In order to do so, we will explore the philosophical and historical roots of American politics, the three branches of government, and various political institutions like the media and political parties. We will also consider the role and function of state and local governments in the American political system. By the end of the course, students should have the skills, knowledge, and motivation necessary to be engaged citizens in the American polity.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Explain how government and politics impacts your daily life;
- Recognize and evaluate the basic debates and issues in American government and American political history;
- Explain and critically assess the formal and informal political institutions, and their respective roles, in American politics;
- Identify and describe the key functions of the three branches of government;
- Assess the causes and consequences of different forms of political participation, and outline the ways in which individuals and groups can affect political outcomes in the United States; and
- Identify and explain the ways in which citizens can affect political processes in the United States.

Course Requirements

- Regularly attend and actively participate in class meetings.
- Satisfactory completion of all assignments as given throughout the course, including readings from text and other handouts.
- Satisfactory completion of all exams

Grading

The final grade for this course will be determined as follows:

- A
 - 90% or higher average on mid-term and final exams
 - Satisfactory and timely completion of all written assignments
 - Satisfactory attendance
 - Satisfactory class participation
- B
 - 80% or higher average on mid-term and final exams
 - Satisfactory and timely completion of all written assignments
 - Satisfactory attendance
 - Satisfactory class participation
- C
 - 70% or higher average on mid-term and final exams
 - Satisfactory and timely completion of all written assignments
 - Satisfactory attendance
 - Satisfactory class participation
- D
 - 60% or higher average on mid-term and final exams
 - Non-compliance with written assignment guidelines
 - Satisfactory attendance
 - Satisfactory class participation
- F
 - Less than 60% or higher average on mid-term and final exams
 - Non-compliance with written essay assignment guidelines
 - Unsatisfactory attendance
 - Unsatisfactory class participation