Teacher: Robert L. Deitz, rdeitz@gmu.edu (phone: (703) 993-3480).
I am in my office (Rm 674 in Founders Hall, Arlington) most week days;
I can meet with students before or after class. Office drop ins are always welcome. To schedule an appointment, please phone or email.

**Required text:**


**Required readings:**

On the Web:

The Articles of Confederation (accessed at http://www.usconstitution.net/articles.html)


**Course Description**

The structure and organization of the U.S. government are set forth in the United States Constitution. All authority of the federal government ultimately flows from its text. The Constitution addresses two very different structural issues: the relationship among the three branches of government; and the relationship between the federal government and the states. The course will examine how the Constitution is organized, the powers that it confers upon the three branches and the powers that it reserves to the states. This course will be challenging, because while a text will be used, it will incorporate primary documents: the text of the Constitution itself, of course; the predecessor Articles of Confederation; and case law. In this respect, the course will mimic aspects of a law school class in constitutional law.

**Learning outcomes**
An understanding of the U.S. Constitution, its structure, and how it allocates powers among the three branches and between the federal and state governments.

**Evaluation**

Student evaluations will be comprised of the following: Week Five quiz: 10%; Week Eight mid-term: 35%; Final Exam: 45%; class participation: 10%. The quiz will be short answer. The mid-term and final exams will be in-class, essay-style tests; students will be able to choose the questions they wish to answer from an extensive menu.

**Advice**

It is crucial that students keep up with readings. The numbers of pages I have assigned are reasonable in length, but are dense. Knowledge of the readings will be crucial for understanding the course and for participating in class discussions.

**Schedule**

Week One (both sessions): Introduction. What this course is about. What does each of the three branches of government do? Discussion of the Articles of Confederation. Assignment: The Articles of Confederation.

Week Two (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 1 (Introduction to American Constitutionalism).


Week Four (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 3 (The Founding Era).

Week Five (first session): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 4 (The Early National Era); (second session): Quiz.

Week Six (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 4 continued.

Week Seven (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 5 (The Jacksonian Era).

Week Eight (first session): Mid-term exam. (second session): Text, *supra*, Chapter 6 (Secession, Civil War, and Reconstruction).


Week Ten (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 7 continued.
Week Eleven (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 8 (The New Deal and Great Society Era).

Week Twelve (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 9 (Liberalism Divided).

Week Thirteen (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 10 (The Reagan Era).

Week Fourteen (both sessions): Assignment: Text, *supra*, Chapter 11 (The Contemporary Era).

**Final Exam.**

**Academic Accommodation for a Disability**

If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the DRC.