Course Description
This course serves as an advanced examination of American government and politics. Obviously it is impossible to cover the entire field in a single semester, so we have to make some choices. We will cover the major topics in American government/politics with an effort to provide an array of research approaches and significant themes.

This class will be run as a reading seminar. The reading load is moderately heavy, and you are expected to do the weekly readings. Indeed you must do the assigned readings before class each week. You should be able to discuss and analyze the literature.

Course Requirements:

- You will be responsible for three short papers. The papers should be a critical review of one of the assigned readings in each of three topics on the syllabus.
- There will be a final exam (take-home) for this course.
- Each student will also prepare an end of term paper, that clearly states a research question to be answered, accompanied by a literature review that supports the importance of the question. Finally, the paper must contain a description of the process and methods that are appropriate to answering the question.
- Finally, because this is a reading seminar, you will be graded on your participation in class discussion. Emphasis will be placed on the quality of this participation and the extent to which participation demonstrates a command of the literature.

Grades
Participation 15%
Short topic papers 15%
Paper 40
Final Exam 30%
Academic Integrity

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

Disability Accommodations

If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; http://ods.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and 2) talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

Required Texts

Aldrich, John H. Why Parties? The Origins and Transformation of Party Politics in America

Robert Dahl, Who Governs

David Howell, Power Without Persuasion

David Mayhew, Congress, The Electoral Connection

E.E. Schattschneider The Semi-Sovereign People


Angus Campbell, The American Voter Wiley & Sons

James Wilson, Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do, Basic Books
Frances Lee, Beyond Ideology

**Topics:** You will notice that the topics to be discussed are numbered rather than assigned by week into the term. Most, and maybe all, of the numbered topics will be completed in a week. It is possible, however, that due to heightened interest as measured by class discussion, we may carry over a topic into the next week. So we will make appropriate adjustments.

This syllabus is subject to minor changes as the class goes along. If, for instance, I run across a new, to me, piece of research that I think important enough I will make a change in the syllabus. You will be given ample time to adjust to the change.

1. **Foundational Beliefs**

Readings:

U.S. Constitution and Declaration of Independence

Federalist Papers, #’s 10, 11 and 51 (Can be found on the Library of Congress website.)


**Marbury v. Madison.** (edited version will be handed out)

**McCulloch v. Maryland.** (edited version will be provided.)


**Further Readings**

Buchanan, James, and Gordon Tullock. **The Calculus of Consent.**

Burns, James MacGregor. **The Vineyard of Liberty.**

Countryman, Edward. **The American Revolution.**

Dahl, Robert A. **How Democratic Is the American Constitution?**

Dahl, Robert A. **A Preface to Democratic Theory**
Dinan, John J. The American State Constitutional Tradition.


Farber, Daniel. Lincoln’s Constitution.

Farrand, Max. The Framing of the Constitution of the United States.

Gutmann Amy and Dennis Thompson. Democracy and Disagreement: Why Moral Conflict Cannot be Avoided in Politics, and What Should be Done About It.

Lane, Robert E. The Loss of Happiness in Market Democracies.

Levison, Sanford. Constitutional Faith.


Skocpol, Theda. Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life.

Smith, Rogers. Civic Ideals: Conflicting Visions of Citizenship in the U.S.

Sunstein, Cass R. The Partial Constitution.

Sunstein, Cass R. Legal Reasoning and Political Conflict.


Whittington, Keith E. Constitutional Construction: Divided Powers and Constitutional Meaning. See Also Constitutional Interpretation: Textual Meaning, Original Intent, and Judicial Review.

2. **Power and the Meaning of Power in American Politics**

Readings:

Dahl, Robert A. *Who Governs?*


**Further Reading**


Dahl, Robert A. *Who Governs?*

Dahl, Robert A. *Modern Political Analysis*


Easton, David. *Varieties of Political Theory.*

Freud, Sigmund. *Civilization and Its Discontent.*

Hunter, F. *Community Power Structure.*
Key, V.O. Public Opinion and American Democracy.

Lane, Robert E. Political Life: Why and How People Get Involved in Politics.

Lipset, Seymour Martin. Political Man.

Lowi, Theodore J. The End of Liberalism.

Lowi, Theodore J. Arenas of Power.

Michels, Robert. Political Parties.

Mills, C. Wright. The Power Elite.

Mosca, Gaetano. The Ruling Class.

Pareto, Vilfredo. The Mind and Society.

Pareto, Vilfredo. Community Power and Democratic Theory: The Logic of Political Analysis.

Pareto, Vilfredo. The Rise and Fall of Elites: An Application of Theoretical Sociology.

Parry, Geraint. Political Elites.


Schumpeter, Joseph. Capitalism, Socialism and Democracy.


Truman, David. The Governmental Process.


3. Congress as a Representative Institution

Readings:
Mayhew, David. **Congress: The Electoral Connection**


**Further Readings:**

Arnold, R. Douglas. **The Logic of Congressional Action.**

Butler, David and Bruce Cain. **Congressional Redistricting: Comparative and Theoretical Perspectives.**

Brady, David W., John F. Cogan, and Morris P Fiorina. **Continuity and Change in House Elections.**

Cain, Bruce, John Ferejohn, and Morris Fiorina. **The Personal Vote: Constituency Service and Electoral Independence.**

Carmines, Edward B. and James A. Stimson. **Issue Evolution: Race and the Transformation of American Politics.**

Dodd, Lawrence c. and Bruce I. Oppenheimer, eds. **Congress Reconsidered.** Various editions.

Fenno, Richard. **Home Style: House Members in their Districts.**

Fiorinia, Morris. **Congress: Keystone of the Washington Establishment.**
Jacobson, Gary. **The Politics of Congressional Elections.**

Jacobson, Gary and Samuel Kernell. **Strategy and Choice in Congressional Elections.**

Mann, Thomas and Norman Ornstein. **The Broken Branch: How Congress is Failing American and How to Get it Back on Track.**

______________________________  **It’s Worse that You Think.**


Pitkin, Hanna. **The Concept of Representation.**

4. Congress as a Policymaker

**Readings:**

Cox, Gary W. and Mathew D. McCubbins. 2005 **Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives.**


**Further Readings:**

Clausen, Aage. **How Congressmen Decide: A Policy Focus.**

Cox, Gary W. and Matthew D. McCubbins. **Legislative Leviathan: Party Government in the House.**

Fenno, Richard. **Congressmen in Committees.**


Galloway, George B. **History of the House of Representatives.**

Kingdon, John W. **Congressmen’s Voting Decisions.**

Krehbiel, Keith. **Information and Legislative Organization.**
MacRae, Duncan. **Issues and Parties in Legislative Voting.**

Matthews, Donald R. and James A. Stimson. **Yea and nays: Normal Decision Making in the U.S. House of Representatives.**

Polsby, Nelson ed. **Congressional Behavior.**

Polsby, Nelson. **How Congress Evolves: Social Bases of Institutional Change.**

Rhode, David. **Parties and Leaders in the Post-Reform House.**

Schickler, Eric. **Disjointed Pluralism: Institutional Innovation and the Development of the U.S. Congress.**

Wilson, Woodrow. **Congressional Government: A Study in American Politics.**

5. The Presidency

Readings:


Further Readings:

Brace, Paul and Barbara Hinckley. **Follow the Leader: Opinion Polls and the Modern Presidency.**

Cooper, Phillip J. **By Order of the President: The Use and Abuse of Executive Direct Action.**
Corwin, Edward S.  *The President, Office and Powers, 1787-1948: History and Analysis of Practice and Opinion.*

Edwards, George.  *The Strategic President.*


Greenstein, Fred I.  *The Hidden Hand Presidency: Eisenhower as Leader.*

Hess, Stephen.  *Organizing the Presidency.*


Light, Paul C.  *The President’s Agenda.*


Mueller John E.  *War, Presidents and Public Opinion.*

Nathan, Richard P.  *The Administrative Presidency.*

Nelson, Michael. ed.  *The Presidency and the Political System.* (There are various editions of this work.)

Neustadt, Richard.  *Presidential Power.* (The classic which everyone responds to.)

Pfiffner, James P.  *The Strategic Presidency: Hitting the Ground Running.*

Pfiffner, James P. and Roger H. Davidson. eds.  *Understanding the Presidency.* (Again there are various editions.)


Rose, Richard.  *The Postmodern President.*


Rudalevige, Andrew.  *Managing the President’s Program: Presidential Leadership and Legislative Policy Formation.*

Wildavsky, Aaron.  The Presidency.


6. Courts

Readings:

Baum, Lawrence.  Judges and Their Audiences.  (You may purchase the book, although it is not in the bookstore. Alternatively you can download and print the chapters from JSTOR.)


Further Readings:

Davis, Richard.  Decisions and Images: The Supreme Court and the Press.


Epstein, Lee and Jack Knight.  The Choices Justices Make.


Hirschl, Ran. **Towards Juristocracy: The Origins and Consequences of the New Constitutionalism.**

Kramer, Larry D. **The People Themselves: Popular Constitutionalism and Judicial Review.**


Murphy, Walter F. and C. Herman Pritchett. **Courts, Judges and Politics.**

Peretti, Terri Jennings. **In Defense of A Political Court.**

Posner, Richard A. **How Judges Think.**

Rohde, David W. and Charles S. Bullock. **Law and Social Change: Civil Rights Laws and their Consequences.**

Rosenberg, Gerald N. **The Hollow Hope: Can Courts bring About Social Change?**

Schubert, Glendon. **The Judicial Mind.**

Schubert, Glendon. **The Judicial Mind Revisited.**

Schubert, Glendon. **Human Jurisprudence.**

Segal, Jeffrey A. and Harold J. Spaeth. **The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model.** And the same authors with **The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited.**

Segal, Jeffrey A and Harold J. Spaeth. **Majority Rule and Minority Will: Adherence to Precedent on the U.S. Supreme Court.**

Shklar, Judith N. **Legalism: An Essay on Law, Morals and Politics.**

Sunstein, Cass R. **Are Judges Political?**

7. **Bureaucracy**

Wilson, James Q. **Bureaucracy: What Government Agencies Do and Why They Do It**


8. Organized Interests in American Politics

Readings:


Schattschneider, E. E. The Semisovereign People Chapters 1-4.

Further Readings:


Baumgartner, Frank, and Beth Leech. Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and Political Science.

Berry, Jeffrey. Lobbying for the People: The Political Behavior of Public Interest Groups.

Browner, William P. Private Interests, Public Policy, and American Agriculture.


Gais, Thomas. Improper Influence.


Lowi, Theodore J.  *The End of Liberalism.*

Moe, Terry.  *The Organization of Interests.*

Olson, Mancur.  *The Logic of Collective Action.*

Olson Mancur.  *The Rise and Decline of Nations.*

Schattschneider, E. E.  *The Semisovereign People.*


Walker, Jack L.  *Mobilizing Interest Groups in America: Patrons, Professionals, and Social Movements.*

9. Political Parties

Readings:

Aldrich, John.  *Why Parties?*


**Further Readings:**


Broder, David S. *The Party’s Over: The Failure of Politics in America.*


Crotty, William. *American Political Parties in Decline.*


Eldersveld, Samuel J. *Political Parties: A Behavioral Analysis.*

Epstein, Leon D. *Political Parties in the American Mold.*


Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist, and Eric Schickler, *Partisan Hearts and Minds.*


Key, V. O. *Southern Politics.*

Key, V. O. *Politics, Parties, and Pressure Groups.*


Mayhew, David R. *Electoral Realignments: A Critque of an American Genre.*

Milkis, Sidney M. *Political Parties and Constitutional Government: Remaking American Democracy.*

Pomper, Gerald M. *Party Renewal in America: Theory and Practice.*

Schattschneider, E. E. *Party Government.*

Sundquist, James L. *Dynamics of the Party System.*

Wattenberg, Martin P. *The Decline of American Politics.*

10. Public Opinion, Knowledge and Preferences: An Ideological Nation?

**Readings:**

Campbell, Angus, Philip E, Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, *The American Voter,* Chapter 2.

Barber, Michael and Nolan McCarty. 2016 “Causes and Consequences of Polarization.” In *Political Negotiation.* Eds.. Jane Mansbridge and Cathie Jo Martin, (JSTOR)

Lapinski, John S. 2013 *The Substance of Representation: Congress, American Political Development, and Lawmaking.* Chapter 3.(JSTOR)


11. Are We Really Polarized? Or Measuring Polarization: A Debate


Further Readings:

Abramason, Paul, John Aldrich, and David Rhode. Change and Continuity in the 1992 Election. This is where the series starts; it goes on with a volume for each election since.


Almond, Gabriel a., and Sidney Verba. The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations. (Dated, but a highly influential classic.)

Apter, David. Ideology and Discontent.


Campbell, Angus, Phillip Converse, Warren Miller, and Donald Stokes. The American Voter.

Delli Carpini, Michael X. and Scott Keeter. What Americans Know About Politics and Why It Matters.


Fiorinia, Morris P. Culture War” The Myth of a Polarized America.


Robinson, Paul John.  **Measure of Political Attitudes.**

Shenkman, Rick.  **Just How Stupid Are We? Facing the Truth About the American Voter.**


**Stimson, James A. Public Opinion in America: Moods, Cycles, and Swings.**

Zaller, John  **The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion.**

12. Public Opinion, Elections and Electoral Behavior

**Readings:**

. Campbell, Angus, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes.  *The American Voter.*  Chapters 2, 5,10, 11,19 and 20

Sinclair, Betsy.  **The Social Citizen: Peer Networks and Political Behavior.**


Schattschneider, E. E.  **The Semisovereign People.**  Chapter 6.

**Further Readings:**


Chute, Marchette.  **The First Liberty: A History of the Right to Vote in America, 1619-1850.**


Hill, Steven. *Fixing Elections: The Failure of Americas’ Winner Take All Politics.*


McDonald, Michael P. and John Samples. eds. *Electoral Competition and American Politics.*

Mayhew, David R. *Electoral Realignments: A Critique of an American Genre.*


Powell, Bingham G. *Elections as Instruments of Democracy.*
Rubin, Aviel D. *Brave New Ballot: The Battle to Safeguard Democracy in the Age of Electronic Voting.*

Teixera, Ruy A. *The Disappearing American Voter.*

Thompson, Dennis. *Just Elections: Creating a Fair Electoral Process in the United States.*


Verba, Siney and Norman Nie. *Participation in America: Political Democracy and Social Equality.*

Wolfinger, Raymond E. and Steven J. Rosenstone. *Who Votes?*

### 13. Media

**Readings:**


Iyengar, Shanto, Mark Peters, and Donald R. Kinder, “Experimental Demonstrations of the Not-so-Minimal Consequences of Television News Programs,” *American Political Science Review,* 76: 848-858. (JSTOR)


**Further Readings:**

Allen, Craig M. 2001. *News is People, The Rise of Local TV News and the Fall*


Arnold, R. Douglas. *Congress, the Press and Political Accountability.*


Baum, Matthew A. *Soft News Goes to War.*


Iyengar, Shanto and Donald Kinder. *News that Matters.*


Paletz, David L. *The Media in American Politics.*

Patterson, Thomas E. *Mass Media Election: How Americans Choose Their President.*

Ranney, Austin. *Channels of Power.*


West, Darrell M. *Air Wars: Television Advertising in Election Campaigns.*