Spring 2018

GOVERNMENT 101-001: DEMOCRATIC THEORY AND PRACTICE

Part I: Overview of the Course.  II: The Program

Dr. Hugh Sockett (hsockett@gmu.edu)

MONDAY and WEDNESDAY   9.00 – 10.15 a.m.

Music Theater Building 1005.

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This course will be conducted through lectures, large and small group discussions and the use of the Blackboard Learning System on which all this material is posted.

To access Blackboard, you should go to http://mymasonportal.gmu.edu where all courses you are taking will be available to you. If you have login issues call 703-993-8870 (support@gmu.edu)

You must respect the University Honor Code.

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Meetings with Dr. Sockett

Office: Robinson Hall A 217 ph. 38310

All office hours for Dr Sockett are by appointment: please email.

Group meetings will be arranged during February.

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Please read Part 1 and Part 2 document closely. You should have it constantly at hand to use as a reference point for all the requirements of the course.
Part I: Overview of the Course

Introductory Information

1. There are two main sources for your learning:

a) MAJOR TEXTS:


You should have your own copy of each of these books. They are inexpensive (around $11 each) available in the Bookstore. You are expected to have read each of these books fully by the end of the semester.

b) PAPERS AND ARTICLES ON BLACKBOARD (hereinafter BB).

In part 2 of this syllabus you will also find specified articles and papers for each session. There are also a number of other readings for your enrichment, some of which are required reading as indicated on Part II of the syllabus.

2. The Purpose of the Course:

We are undertaking this course at a time of profound turbulence across the world, including the USA. We will be referring to the national and the international context regularly. In various ways, the democratic ideal is under threat and we must determine why it is valuable and needs to be protected.

Our intellectual task is analysis. We are seeking to understand the complexity of theoretical and practical issues in democracy. Analysis implies reflection: so we will need to examine our existing views about theoretical and practical matters to see whether they are well grounded. This is to emphasize that, while we will constantly be voicing our opinions, the central thinking and writing task demands deepening the ability to provide an analysis upon which a well-judged opinion can be later developed.

As a student of democracy, you will keep abreast of current affairs, especially in the Middle East and Asia, but also at home as we struggle with domestic problems. The USA is our reference point, but democracy takes many forms other than that which we experience and, from time to time, we will need to take note of different national practices. This is not a class in either American Government or Contemporary Politics.

Your attendance is required.
3. **The Mason Core Learning Outcomes: (* indicates course specific goals)**

This course is set within the **Mason Core Social and Behavioral Science** learning outcomes, which are to:

*1.* Demonstrate understanding of key concepts, terminology, principles or theories within the field;

2. Demonstrate understanding of methodological approaches appropriate to the fields (N/A for this course);

*3.* Identify, evaluate and properly cite resources appropriate to the field;

*4.* Explain how individuals, groups of institutions are influenced by contextual factors;

*5.* Using appropriate methods, apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles or theories to major contemporary issues or everyday life.

4. **Discovery and Inquiry Goals for the Course**

The context of this class provides opportunities to learn from the teachers, members of your group and all members of the class; to strive to present one’s best work and to focus on how to improve in all aspects of the course, and to deepen your understanding and commitments to your practice as a democratic citizen. You will be discovering relevant material in which you will learn to:

1. Distinguish between assumptions, evidence and conclusions based on argument,
2. Understand the epistemological and historical perspectives of the discipline, and
3. Evaluate the credibility of public information, and be able to clarify alternatives.

You will also become an inquirer on the way to becoming a critical thinker and you will learn how to:

1. Articulate and refine questions,
2. Follow ethical principles in inquiry,
3. Gather and evaluate evidence appropriate to the question,
4. Apply appropriate scholarly conventions in reporting or performing,
5. Assess the validity of assumptions, and
6. Situate your inquiry within the broader context of the discipline and society.

5. **Trajectories, Stages and Reflections**

The course has two trajectories: a) You will deepen your understanding of the challenges facing a democratic society, and b) you will learn how to improve your written work through reflection and review, and monitor your study skills and habits in a journal.
These two trajectories link up through each **Stage of Learning**: (see Syllabus below)

**Stage 1:** WHAT IS DEMOCRACY AND WHAT ARE ITS ORIGINS?

**Stage 2:** WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPLES OF MODERN DEMOCRACY?

**Stage 3:** WHAT IS CITIZENSHIP IN A MODERN DEMOCRACY?

**Stage 4:** HOW DO DEMOCRACY, CAPITALISM and GLOBALIZATION INTERCONNECT?

**Stage 5:** THE FINAL PLAN AND ESSAY. This is a cumulative extended outcome of the course and constitutes some of your academic capital.

### 6. Individual Work and Group Work

**i. 4 Precis Assignments** at the beginning of the course are intended to help you to understand a piece of writing, digest it and then summarize it.

**ii. 8 paragraph assignments.** These prepare you for the structure of writing an essay, particularly the **Final Essay** that brings together your work in the semester.

**iii. Group discussion and notes.** Each class will have one or more group discussions. You will write about these discussions in your Weekly Journal.

**iv. The Weekly Journal.**

Your first entry will be on your Targets for Improvement (to be discussed in Session 1: January 22).

Thereafter, beginning January 29/31 week, and in each week until April 30, you must enter your full responses to two questions, one from Monday’s and one from Wednesday’s classes. This will enable you to monitor your progress as a student, to explore issues raised in class, and to reflect on your work.

*Entries for each week must be submitted by noon on Friday of the relevant week.*

**NB:** You may also use your journal to write about your learning problems or any other issues you would like to raise with me.

**Reading:** You are expected to read the books and chapters prescribed. BUT, as a serious student, you should also read all the additional material provided on BB and explore your own specific interests. Some of this will be directed to online sources, usually from journals, **but you should not substitute online material for the readings given.**

There will be close reading of some texts in class. You should bring copies (electronic or paper) of all those texts.
7. **ASSIGNMENTS: Distribution of Points**

   12 Assignments (5 points each) 60 points
   Journal (12 entries, weekly, 5 points each) 60 points
   Final Assignment Plan (Assignment 14) 20 Points
   Final Assignment Essay (Assignment 14) 20 Points

   **Total:** 160

8. **Numerical and Literal Grades**

   A+: 154-180  A: 144-153,  A-: 134-143
   B+: 124-133  B: 114-123  B-: 104-113
   C+: 94-103  C: 84-103  D: 74-83
   F: 73 and below

9. **Summary of assignments required:**

   1. Through February 7, 4 precis assignments, (due following Monday)
   2. February 14 to April 23, 8 paragraph plan assignments, (due following Monday)
   3. Weekly Journal, from January 29 through April 27: due Friday noon each week.

**NOTE:**

You must let Dr. Sockett know if you are unable to submit an assignment on time, always through an email to ensure there is a record. Unexplained late assignments automatically get a 0.

You may resubmit any assignment ONCE without special permission if completed within one week of returned work. Later resubmissions attract penalty points.

You will receive feedback on each of your assignments on BlackBoard.
8. **GRADING**

**Grading on Paragraph Plans. Discovery to Inquiry Rubric: Criteria for Points given.**

0: Not presented, grossly inadequate, failing to following the instructions, or a late submission.

1: Trivial analysis, poorly written, little clarity on main concepts, failure to follow instructions properly. No indication of appropriate reading. No attempt to distinguish assumptions, evidence or conclusions.

2: Topics tackled inadequately: inadequate discussion of main ideas, and/or mediocre quality of the form required. Little attention to the readings.

3: Satisfactory form but weak content, or, strong content but weak form. Limited evaluation of assumptions and/or limited clarification of alternatives.

4: Substantive content, good form, clear analysis. Clear articulation of questions, good evidence in support, effective writing and strong references to the readings.

5: Excellent form and content: Well-crafted key sentences, strong in substance and form. Strong evaluation of sources and supporting evidence, with assumptions clearly examined.

**Grading of the Precis:**

This will follow broadly the above categories but with particular attention to the quality of the summary provided in terms of content and presentation.

**Grading of the Journal:**

The grading of the questions answered weekly in the Journal will be based on these criteria.

9. **Class Behavior:**

You may use laptops or cellphones in class but permission to do so will be withdrawn if they are used for activities not related to the class.

You should always have appropriate materials with you for taking notes other than electronically.

You are expected to take part in class discussions.
STUDY SKILLS AND HABITS INTRODUCTORY ASSIGNMENT

Choose only 3 of these as **Tasks for Improvement** during your semester and on Blackboard enter them as your **JOURNAL ENTRY #1**
*(Go to BB: hit Journal folder and enter your name to start)*

Read these statements carefully and circle Y or N in terms of how they apply to you.

**STUDY CONTEXT**
1. Y N I usually try to study with the radio or the TV turned on.
2. Y N I can’t study for long periods without becoming tired or distracted.
3. Y N I go to class, but I usually doodle, daydream or fall asleep.
4. Y N I don’t like working in the library.

**STUDY ORGANIZATION**
5. Y N I spend too much time studying for what I am learning.
6. Y N I don’t/can’t keep up with my reading assignments,
7. Y N My class notes are sometimes difficult to understand later.
8. Y N I usually spend hours cramming the night before an exam.

**READING and WRITING**
9. Y N I often find myself getting lost in the details of reading.
10. Y N When I get to the end of a chapter, I can’t remember what I’ve read.
11. Y N I don’t know how to pick out what is important in the text.
12. Y N I wish I could read faster.
13. Y N I can’t seem to organize my thoughts into a paper that makes sense.
14. Y N I don’t plan an essay—I just write it.

**ATTITUDE**
15. Y N I am a conscientious student (attending class, getting work done on time.)
16. Y N I always submit work that is my very best effort.

**INTELLECTUAL HABITS**
18. Y N I am open-minded about political questions.
19. Y N I am always careful to consider alternatives in coming to a judgment.
20. Y N I have strong political commitments
21. Y N I rarely take an intellectual risk.
22. Y N I am always truthful with my self.
23. Y N I have come to GMU to.............fill in the blank.

**Enter this information in addition to your 3 tasks (optional)**
24. My major is ........... If undeclared, please indicate.
25. Y N I am an out-of-state student from.................
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<tr>
<th><strong>SPRING SCHEDULE</strong></th>
<th><strong>TOPICS</strong></th>
<th><strong>READINGS</strong></th>
<th><strong>ASSIGNMENTS</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>January 22 M</td>
<td>Introduction: Study Skills and Targets of Improvement.</td>
<td>Use Study Skills and Habits from class &amp; post as a journal entry.</td>
<td>Introductory Assignment &quot;My targets of improvement 2012.&quot; (graded as part of the Journal)</td>
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**STAGE I: WHAT IS DEMOCRACY AND WHAT ARE ITS ORIGINS?**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tr>
<td>February 7 W (Assignment 4 due)</td>
<td>Aristotle's place in thinking about democracy.</td>
<td>BB1:16. Aristotle's Politics (excerpts) 2) Crick, chapter 2.</td>
<td>See Powerpoint slides on Blackboard</td>
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<td>February 12 M</td>
<td>1. Review of Stage 1 2. Planning an Essay and future assignments.</td>
<td>BB1:17 Is America Exceptional?</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<td>February 21 W</td>
<td>Democracy and Civil Society</td>
<td>BB2:5. Alexis de Tocqueville. Democracy in America: (Extracts); Crick: Ch.4.</td>
<td>Assignment 6. Paragraph Plan: Why did Tocqueville regard associations as important?</td>
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<td>February 28 W</td>
<td>Church and State: The Religious Base?</td>
<td>BB2:8 (Pew). BB2:9 (Sharlett), BB2:10 (Beliah) and 10a. BB2:11 ((Wallace)</td>
<td>Assignment 8: Paragraph Plan: “Should religion be protected from the State?”</td>
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<td>March 5 M (Assignment 7 due)</td>
<td>Democracy: A Moral Platform</td>
<td>BB2:12 (Riccardi after Hart.) BB2:13 (King)</td>
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### Stage III:
**What is citizenship in a modern democracy?**

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Material</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 21 W</td>
<td>REVIEW OF STAGES I &amp; II</td>
<td>REMEMBER TO READ THE STAGE 3: READINGS AND WEBLINKS</td>
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BB3:2 (Geo. Washington.)  
BB3:3, (States and Taxation)  
BB3:4 (FT article)  
BB3:5. (Public Agenda)  
BB3:6 (The Electoral College) |
| March 28 W | The democratic citizen’s attitude: authority, legitimacy, government, state and culture. | Bellamy, Chs. 1, 2 and 4.  
BB3:7. (Scotland’s warning)  
BB2:8 (Tocqueville on Democratic Despotism.)  
BB3:9 Zinn: BB3:10 Sockett |
BB3:12. (Milwaukee & poverty)  
BB3:13 (Tocqueville: Associations)  
BB3:14 (Review of Putnam) |
| April 4 W  | Unity and Diversity: Membership and Belonging | Bellamy, Ch. 3.  
Bellamy: chapter 3  
BB3:17 Cultural Division |
| April 9 M  | Participation and democracy                   | Bellamy, Chs. 3, 4, & 5.  
BB3:17 Leach on Civility          |
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<tr>
<th><strong>Stage 4: How Do Capitalism, Democracy and Globalization Interconnect?</strong></th>
<th><strong>To be revised in February</strong></th>
<th><strong>Remember to read the Stage 4: Readings and Weblinks Folder (BB)</strong></th>
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<td><strong>April 11 W</strong></td>
<td>Planning a long essay: the final assignment</td>
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<td><strong>April 18 W</strong></td>
<td>Democracy, Capitalism and Political Organization</td>
<td>Fulcher, Chapter 4 and 5: BB4:5. *Reich, Capitalism and Democracy. (youtube)</td>
<td>Assignment 12 Paragraph Plan and full paragraph: How do types of capitalism vary in different democracies?</td>
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<td><strong>April 25 W</strong></td>
<td>Globalization and capitalism: Cosmopolitanism</td>
<td>Steger, chapters 3-8: BB4:10 (Wapshott) BB4.11: (Fukyama)</td>
<td>Assignment 13 Paragraph Plan and full paragraph: Can the democratic state survive globalization? (3 point extra credit)</td>
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<td><strong>April 30 M</strong></td>
<td>REVIEW OF THE COURSE</td>
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<td><strong>May 2 W</strong> <em>(Assignment 13 due (extra credit))</em></td>
<td>Individual meetings to discuss the final assignment</td>
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<td><strong>Stage 5: Assignment 14</strong></td>
<td><strong>Submit</strong></td>
<td><strong>The final assignment</strong></td>
<td><strong>By May 9 W. 5.00 pm</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Analyze the major challenges facing modern Western Democracy</strong></td>
<td>1. A plan for a long essay with this title, not less than 15 paragraphs <em>(including Introduction and Conclusion)</em></td>
<td>2. The essay written out in full, with references and bibliography, based on the PLAN</td>
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