“The three last numbers of this Paper have been dedicated to an enumeration of the dangers to which we should be exposed, in a state of disunion, from the arms and arts of foreign nations. I shall now proceed to delineate dangers of a different, and, perhaps, still more alarming kind, those which will in all probability flow from dissentions between the States themselves, and from domestic factions and convulsions. These have been already in some instances slightly anticipated, but they deserve a more particular and more full investigation” (Alexander Hamilton, Federalist No. 6).

POLITICAL SCIENCE 1320 (H)
INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Spring 2014                              Ippolito

This course examines the national government of the United States. Students in this class will be expected to master an understanding of—and be able to explain concepts and basic approaches related to—political institutions and political processes at the federal level and also of the public policies debated and decided through these institutions and processes. In addition, students will be expected to demonstrate comprehension of some basic political issues -- what democratic government is, how it operates, why it operates as it does, and what effects it has on society. These issues represent, in effect, an inquiry into how the American version of democracy has evolved. The approaches (and some materials) with which you will deal, however, can be applied to other political systems. Midterm and final examinations (with essay and objective components) and two written assignments will assess students’ comprehension of these objectives. Written assignments are expected to be carefully prepared and well-organized, presenting a reasoned, factually correct, and coherent discussion of an assigned topic. (Please see page 12 for University Curriculum student learning outcomes (SLOs).)

Required Reading
Coursepack (available at the SMU Bookstore) containing the Congressional Budget Office, CBO’s Long-Term Budget Outlook (September 2013).
Additional materials distributed in class.

Course Requirements and Attendance Policy
Scheduled class meetings are Tuesday and Thursday at 11:00 a.m. to 12:20 p.m. in Room 152 Fondren Science Building. Since lectures and discussions are integral parts of the course, attendance is required and will be monitored. More than three (3) unexcused absences will result in a five-point grade penalty. More than six (6) will result in dismissal from the course.

Grades will be based on a comprehensive evaluation that includes: (1) a written midterm examination; (2) a written final examination; (3) two essays, of five pages each; and (4) familiarity with assigned readings and participation in class discussions.
Course Outline, Reading, Requirements

[Also see Topical Outlines – pp. 5-10]

I. Introduction to Course (January 21)

II. Concepts of Democratic Government (January 23, 28, 30)

   Read: Declaration of Independence in American Government.
          Federalist Papers 10, 51.
          American Government, Chapters 1-4.

III. Political Institutions and Political Processes

   A. The Policy Process (February 4)

   B. The Congress (February 6, 11, 13)

              Federalist Papers 52, 62.

   C. The Presidency and Executive Branch (February 18, 20, 25)

       Read: United States Constitution, Article II.
              Federalist Papers 67, 68, 69.

FIRST ESSAY DUE: February 27

D. The Judiciary (February 27, March 4)

       Read: United States Constitution, Article III.
              Federalist Papers 78, 79, 80.
              American Government, Chapter 16.

MIDTERM EXAMINATION: March 6

IV. The Public and Government

   A. Public Opinion, Parties, Elections (March 18, 20, 25)

       Read: American Government, Chapters 7-10.
B. Interest Groups and Media (March 27; April 1)

Read: American Government, Chapters 11-12.

V. Public Policy

A. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (April 3, 8)

Read: American Government, Chapters 5-6.

SECOND ESSAY DUE: April 10

B. Budget Policy Overview (April 10)

Read: CBO’s Long-Term Budget Outlook, Summary and Chapter 1.

C. National Security and Foreign Policy (April 15, 17)


D. The Economy and Public Welfare (April 22, 24, 29)

CBO’s Long-Term Budget Outlook, Chapters 2-3, 5.

E. General Government (May 1)

Read: CBO’s Long-Term Budget Outlook, Chapter 4.

VI. Summary and Review (May 1)

Read: American Government, Chapter 22.

FINAL EXAMINATION: Friday, May 9, 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Important Dates:

February 27  First Essay Due
March 6     Midterm Examination
April 10    Second Essay Due
May 9      Final Examination

Instructor Information/Office Hours:

Dennis S. Ippolito
221 Collins Hall
X 83198
TTH 9:30 a.m. -- 11:00 a.m. and by appointment
ippolito@smu.edu
ESSAYS

The first essay is due on, or before, February 27. The second is due on, or before, April 10. Each essay should be carefully prepared: typed, double-spaced; five pages in length; well-organized; well-written. Each should present a reasoned, factually correct, and coherent discussion of one of the following topics. Each should draw upon reading assignments, lectures and discussions, and general information as appropriate.

Topics for Essay One:

1. What were the important structural features and organization of republican government according to Madison and why did Madison think they were necessary?

2. The power and importance of the presidency have increased a great deal over the past two centuries. What constitutional, institutional, and political factors best account for this change?

3. Explain how the party system and committee system are integrated in the House and Senate. How does this integration affect party control of each chamber?

Topics for Essay Two:

1. In Federalist 72, Hamilton discusses the need for indefinite re-eligibility of the president. How would you compare Hamilton's argument to the implicit assumptions of the XXIInd Amendment?

2. What are the important historical policy distinctions between the two major American parties? What are the important distinctions today? Which party has been better able to achieve its goals in recent years?

DETAILED OUTLINES
FOR
TOPICS
I. INTRODUCTION TO COURSE

II. CONCEPTS OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNMENT IN U.S.  
(General Ideas or Principles)

A. Background to Constitution
   1. Sequence of events
   2. Design and writing
   3. Ratification procedure
   4. Implementation

B. Federalist Defense of Constitution
   1. Specific goals
   2. Line of argument

C. Federalist 10 and 51
   1. Problems/solutions for popular government
   2. Problems/solutions for limited government

D. Basic Features of the Constitution
   1. General themes
   2. Structural principles (federalism, separation of powers, judicial review)
   3. Articles
   4. Amendments

E. Creed and Beliefs of American Politics
   1. Classical liberalism
   2. Individualism
   3. Capitalism
   4. Pluralism

F. Ideological Challenges to Democracy
   1. Economic rules
   2. Social rules
   3. Political-procedural rules
III. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL PROCESSES

A. The Policy Process

B. The Congress

1. Responsibilities and functions
   a. Lawmaking
   b. Representation

2. Powers
   a. Delegated legislative
   b. Budgetary
   c. Legislative oversight
   d. Legislative veto

3. Organization
   a. Bicameral
   b. Committees
   c. Parties
   d. Staff

4. Decision making process
   a. Legislative procedures (common)
   b. Legislative procedures (House)
   c. Legislative procedures (Senate)

5. Major issues
   a. Balance of power with executive branch
   b. Collective responsibilities versus individual interests

C. The Presidency And Executive Branch

1. Responsibilities and functions
   a. Chief of State
   b. Chief executive
   c. Commander-in-chief
   d. Leadership (policy, public, political)

2. Powers
   a. Constitutional base + precedent + circumstance
   b. Appointment power
   c. Public support
   d. Party in Congress

3. Organization
   a. Executive branch bureaucracy
   b. Executive Office of the President

4. Decision making process
   a. Constitutional or statutory requirements
   b. Staff and advisory groups
   c. Individual variations
5. Major issues
   a. Balance of power with Congress
   b. Powers and institutional resources versus responsibilities

D. The Judiciary

1. Responsibilities and functions
   a. Constitutional interpretation
   b. Statutory interpretation
2. Judicial review
   a. Constitutional questions
   b. Policy questions
   c. Impact
3. Structure of federal judiciary
   a. District Courts
   b. Courts of Appeals
   c. Supreme Court
4. Judicial selection
   a. President and Senate
   b. Criteria

IV. THE PUBLIC AND GOVERNMENT

A. Elections and Campaigns

1. Right to vote
2. Voter turnout
3. Political participation
4. President vs. Congress
5. Primaries vs. general elections
6. State and local elections
7. Campaign regulations: finance
8. Impact of elections

B. Public Opinion

1. What it is
2. Why it is important
3. Responsible vs. responsive government
4. Measurement
5. Findings (information and interest; basic beliefs; partisanship, policy preferences, and ideology)
C. Political Parties

1. Functions
2. Structure
3. Eras of party development
4. Two-party system
5. Presidential nominations

D. Interest Groups

1. Ubiquity
2. Rise of interest groups
3. Institutional v. mass membership
4. Social movements
5. Types
6. Resources
7. Tactics and strategies
8. Regulation

E. Media

1. Function
2. Evolution
3. Structure
4. Rules and regulations
5. Effects: press, media, and government

V. PUBLIC POLICY

A. Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

1. Introduction
2. Bill of Rights -- background
3. Incorporation (XIVth Amendment)
4. Expanded protections (Judicial Interpretation)
5. Current controversies (Judicial "Tests")
6. Civil rights historical eras (Race)
7. Modern civil rights initiatives
8. Non-racial civil rights issues
9. Current policy issues

B. Budget Policy Overview

1. Modern government (Definition/Costs)
2. Spending -- level and composition
3. Revenues -- level and composition
4. Deficits and budget control
C. National Security and Foreign Policy

1. Cold War and military/political responses
2. Post-Cold War defense strategy
3. Trade, aid, immigration

D. The Economy and Public Welfare

1. Fiscal policy and monetary policy
2. Regulatory policy
3. Tax policy (Evolution and Policy Issues)
4. Social welfare (Evolution and Policy Issues)
5. Social welfare policy concepts and welfare state modernization

E. General Government

1. Discretionary domestic programs
2. Traditional functions and welfare

VI. SUMMARY AND REVIEW
Disability Accommodations: Students needing academic accommodations for a disability must first contact Disability Accommodations and Success Strategies (DASS) at 214-768-1470 or www.smu.edu/alec/dass.asp to verify the disability and establish eligibility for accommodations. They should then schedule an appointment with the professor to make appropriate arrangements. (See University Policy No. 2.4.)

The Honor Code

All work undertaken and submitted in this course is governed by the University's Honor Code. The relevant section of the Code, taken from the Preamble of the Honor Council's Constitution, is as follows:

Intellectual integrity and academic honesty are fundamental to the processes of learning and of evaluating academic performance, and maintaining them is the responsibility of all members of an educational institution. The inculcation of personal standards of honesty and integrity is a goal of education in all the disciplines of the University. . . .

Students must share the responsibility for creating and maintaining an atmosphere of honesty and integrity. Students should be aware that personal experience in completing assigned work is essential to learning. Permitting others to prepare their work, using published or unpublished summaries as a substitute for studying required materials, or giving or receiving unauthorized assistance in the preparation of work to be submitted are directly contrary to the honest process of learning. Students who are aware that others in a course are cheating or otherwise acting dishonestly have the responsibility to inform the professor and/or bring an accusation to the Honor Council.

The Honor Pledge is: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this work." A signed copy of this pledge must be appended to any work tendered in this class. A violation of the Code will result in an "F" for the course, and the student will be taken before the Honor Council. If you are unclear about this policy -- either in general or in its particular application -- please see the instructor immediately.

Submitted by Professor Joseph Kobylka
Additional University Policies

Religious Observance/Excused Absences

Religious Observance: Religiously observant students wishing to be absent on holidays that require missing class should notify their professors in writing at the beginning of the semester, and should discuss with them, in advance, acceptable ways of making up any work missed because of the absence. (See University Policy No. 1.9.)

Excused Absences for University Extracurricular Activities: Students participating in an officially sanctioned, scheduled University extracurricular activity should be given the opportunity to make up class assignments or other graded assignments missed as a result of their participation. It is the responsibility of the student to make arrangements with the instructor prior to any missed scheduled examination or other missed assignment for making up the work. (University Undergraduate Catalog)

Student Learning Outcomes

University Curriculum: Individuals, Institutions, and Cultures Pillar (Level I):

1. Students will be able to identify the types of interactions and influences that arise between or among individual, social, cultural, political, or economic experiences.

2. Students will be able to summarize basic empirical phenomena in the study of individual, social, cultural, political or economic experiences.