

UNIVERSITY OF NEVADA, LAS VEGAS
Department of Political Science
POS 101.3
Introduction to American Politics

Summer III, 2007
M-R. 7:00-9:30 p.m.
WRI C 235

Prof. Mehran Tamadonfar
Office: WRI B 212 & B 225
Office Hrs: M-R 8-10 a.m.
& by Appointment
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PURPOSE AND SCOPE:

This introductory course in American politics is designed to:

1. Introduce students to the major conceptual, methodological, and theoretical tools for the study of American politics.
2. Familiarize students with the philosophical foundations and critiques of the U.S. and Nevada politics.
3. Examine the contemporary structural and functional characteristics of the U.S. and Nevada political systems as well as their policy issues.

Daily class lectures will consist of two parts: first, examining the institutional frameworks and processes of the political system; and second, analyzing the policy issues. In order to understand these discussions, **students are required to read** their assignments **before** each class session **and** to **follow current events** in the U.S. and Nevada politics by watching news programs, reading newspapers, etc.

TEXTS:

REQUIRED:

- Benjamin Ginsberg, et. al. We The People: An Introduction to American Politics, 6th shorter ed., New York: Norton & Co.; 2007.
- Michael W. Bowers, The Sagebrush State, Nevada's History, Government & Politics. 3rd ed., Reno and Las Vegas; University of Nevada Press; 2006.

Suggested:*

1. James A. Bill and Robert Hardgrave, Jr., Comparative Politics: The Quest for Theory, United States: University Press of America; 1981.

*Available at the reserve desk of the Lied Library.

June 14

Mid-Term Examination

Part II. U.S. Government and Politics

June 18

The Constitutional Framework

- Structures
- Functions
- Contemporary Issues

Required Reading:

- Ginsberg, Chapter 2

June 19 & 20

The Congress and the Legislative Process

- Structures
- Functions
- Contemporary Issues

Required Reading:

- Ginsberg, Chapter 12

Discussion Topics: Political Corruption

June 21 & 25

The Presidency and Bureaucracy

- Structures
- Functions
- Contemporary Issues

Required Reading:

- Ginsberg, Chapters, 13 & 14

Discussion Topic: The Imperial Presidency

June 27

The Court System & Liberties

- Structures
- Functions
- Contemporary Issues

Required Readings:

- Ginsberg, Chapters, 15, 4 & 5 (in this order)

PART III. NEVADA GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

June 28

Federalism, Neo-Federalism, and State and Local Governments

Required Reading:

- Ginsberg, Chapter 3

State and Local Governments in Nevada

Required Readings:

- Bowers, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7 and 8.

Discussion Topic: Judicial Reform in Nevada

July 2

Nevada Government, Politics, and Policies

Required Reading:

- Bowers, Chapters 11 and 3.

July 3

Review

July 5

Final Examination (7:00 p.m.)

Office Hours:

Usually, I hold extended office hours. If my hours are not convenient for you, please do not hesitate to contact me at 895-5258 for an appointment. Your questions, comments, and criticisms are appreciated.

I do honor any and all university rules and regulations pertaining to academic dishonesty, disabilities, and religious observances. If you have special needs please do not hesitate to contact the Learning Enhancement Services at 895-0866.

"If you have a documented disability that may require assistance, you will need to contact the Learning Enhancement Center (LEC) for coordination of your academic accommodations. The LEC is located in the Reynolds Students Services complex in Rm 137. The phone is 895-0866 (TDD 895-0652) and [www.drcssc@cmail.nevada.edu](mailto:drcssc@cmail.nevada.edu)".