



## Introduction to United States Government and Politics

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PS 201; Sect 001; CRN 51766

Oregon State University

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UH 10:00-11:50 a.m.

KEAR 212

I hope this class will be interesting, sometimes surprising, and maybe even fun. Nearly every student has strong feelings about American politics, not just its current leaders but also the nature of US government itself. Americans often hold very negative views of the nation's leaders that coexist with very positive evaluations of the US political system. Most Americans have a sense of the main features of American politics but often find them to be confusing and possibly anger producing. And about some aspects, they might be misinformed.

It is **not** a goal of this course to change students from conservatives to liberals or vice versa but instead to stimulate **developing skills in careful and critical thinking about politics**. A core course goal is to help students recognize and think about "conventional wisdom" (CW), what "everyone 'knows' to be true" but which might not be. This course will **not** simply repeat what you might have learned in high school civics courses or from living in this country for many years.

PS 201 examines the constitutional foundations of American politics and also media, parties, elections, interest groups, and the institutions of the national government in the United States—Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, and the courts. It concludes by examining public policy, government actions that affect our lives, so are the actual "payoff" of American politics.

**Important note:** As stated, a core goal of this class is to examine elements of the so-called "conventional wisdom" (CW), that is, widely shared views that no one thinks to question because they are so "obviously true." In addition, a core goal is to expose students to a critical analysis of American politics, in this instance by someone who has been in a position to directly observe the operations of the US national government. So, I am using as a core text *The Party Is Over*, a book that is extremely critical of both Democrats and Republicans. The author, Mike Lofgren, was for nearly 30 years a high-level Republican congressional staffer, specializing in national security. Students are expected to read, understand, and critique the book's points, though probably no student will agree with all the author's points.

I was intimidated by politics until this course, like it was something that was beyond a normal mortal's ability. Not that it doesn't take some study . . . , but now I feel it's do-able.

(A former PS 201 student)

This course has three core goals:

- To help students develop a set of **frameworks** for understanding otherwise isolated facts about American politics rather than simply memorizing masses of seemingly unrelated information
- To help students recognize the effect of **ideas** and of **institutional arrangements** on leaders and the public; and
- To stimulate students to develop **skills in using media** and other information sources regarding politics and in **careful and critical thinking** about politics, including challenging elements of "**conventional wisdom**" (CW) and developing skills using political information and recognizing the centrality of political images. Partly this effort involves examining political data, but it also includes frequent examination of current news sources.

Regarding the final goal, I **strongly** encourage students to read regularly a national newspaper; student-rate subscription information will be provided in class.

After students complete the course, they should feel less intimidated by "big political numbers" and by attempts to influence views through selective information, one-sided political language, and in other ways.

I hope these efforts will help overcome the tendency of most of us to make either/or judgments about politics and to "turn off our minds" when we see big political numbers and other politically-relevant information.

**A note about introductory courses:** Many students take introductory courses "just" to satisfy University requirements and so do not expect to get more than a grade and credits. So, their attitude toward the course is passive, and possibly irritated at having to satisfy "another requirement."

I encourage a *different attitude* toward each introductory course, including this one: **Think of the course as an opportunity instead of as only a way to fulfill a requirement**. In this class, you might gain self-confidence from challenging what you think you already know and from developing the ability not to be "snowed" by huge

political numbers and you might enhance your skills using media about politics. Many students in previous quarters have found that they changed perceptions about what they thought they already “knew” about American politics, for example, characteristics of particular presidents.

This course meets the University Baccalaureate Core requirement for the Perspectives category of Social Processes and Institutions. The student learning outcomes for courses in this category are that students will:

1. Use theoretical frameworks to interpret the role of the individual within social process and institutions: This class draws on several conceptual frameworks in relation to individuals, ideas, politics, and institutions.
2. Analyze current social issues and place them in historical context(s): Although this course is not primarily a class in American history, it emphasizes the effects of historical developments on current Americans politics, institutions, and policy.
3. Critique the nature, value, and limitations of the basic methods of the social sciences: A core goal of this course is to stimulate development of critical skills in thinking about and in using sources of information to study American politics, through course reading, assignments, and class discussion.

⇒ **Course Blackboard Web Site: PS\_201\_001\_S2015: The syllabus and all course handouts will be available there.**

**Requirements and Grading:** This course encourages participation. Much class time will be devoted to discussing course material and applying them to current developments. **In lectures, I will assume that students have completed the reading assigned for that day.** Therefore, reading course materials **in advance** of class is **important**, as is using news media to follow current political developments.

**Course Requirements:** Because some students do better on objective questions and some do better on essay questions, I use both for evaluation. The course requirements are two **exams** (@ 150 points, 300 total), a number of online and in-class multiple-choice **quizzes** (200 points total), and in-class activities (100 total).

Exams and quizzes will draw **about equally** on lectures and reading, though **online** quizzes will be almost totally from the course texts.

In-class quizzes will be primarily or totally objective and will include questions since the previous quiz or exam, including **reading** assigned for **the day of the quiz**. A quiz might also include short extra-credit questions.

Exams will include both in-class objective questions and take-home essay questions. I will distribute take-home essay questions about one week before the in-class exam.

**Participation** in in-class activities is part of the course grade. **Sometimes** I will ask that students **bring to class a short media or similar example** about a topic relevant to that class or the previous class.

**Starting week 2**, in most classes I will use **in-class exercises** to gain feedback and to take **attendance**. These in total count 100 points, one-sixth of the final course grade.

I might on some quizzes and exams include one or several short-essay extra questions, based on **optional “extra credit” (EC) reading**, as announced in class. **EC reading does not guarantee an A nor is it required to receive an A.**

Generally an A requires 90% (540 of 600 possible points), a B 80-89% (480), a C 70-79% (420), and a D 60-69% (360). **Within each grade range**, the bottom three percentages are minus and the top three are plus. I will use improvement and other factors to help determine borderline grades.

**Problems or Questions:** This is a **4-credit course**, so the **workload** will be **somewhat heavier** than in 3-credit introductory courses. The time you spend on this course might not equal the general University guideline of two hours outside of class for each hour in class (for this class, that would be eight [8] hours each week). The course will, however, require more work than most high school classes.

⇒ **Valuable advice for this course: read regularly, attend class, listen actively, participate in class discussion, and feel free to ask questions to clarify any unclear or confusing points.**

⇒ **Do not be lulled into thinking this course will be easy because you have lived in this country for many years and so “already know it all.” Much of the class will be devoted to analyzing topics most people take for granted; this requires exposure to a variety of materials as well as effort on your part.**

⇒ **Important note: This is NOT a no-show drop course. So, if you stop coming to the course, YOU must drop it.**

⇒ **Feel free to contact me about questions, after class, during office hours, or by appointment. If you contact me by e-mail, please indicate PS 201 on the subject line (carefully separate PS and 201, not PS201).**

**Note about S/U Grades:** Instructors do not know who takes a course S/U (satisfactory/unsatisfactory). Instead,

we submit letter grades for all students. The Registrar's office changes grades to S or U. **Important: to receive an S requires a letter grade no lower than C-**. A grade D+ or lower becomes a U.

**Important note:** In this class, I will **not** post points on **Blackboard**, so each student should record grades using the form on **page 8 below** to enable monitoring progress during the quarter.

**I (incomplete) grades:** A grade of "I" indicates that a student has not completed all course requirements by the end of the quarter. An I grade does not affect GPA and is only temporary; it is given totally at the discretion of the instructor. Instructors who submit a grade of I indicate also an "alternate" grade, that is, what the student's grade would be based on what he or she has completed. Students have one year to complete an I grade. If a student does not do so within one year, the Registrar's Office changes an I grade to the "alternate" grade, which can, depending on what a student has completed, be as low as an F. I suggest that students request an I **ONLY** under very unusual circumstances. I encourage students who receive an I to complete the work **as soon as possible**, because a delay usually results in both more stress and a lower grade, as student memory of the course fades.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** A student who wants a grade of I for this course **MUST** submit a statement that indicates: the reason he or she requests an I; a complete listing of items completed so far, with points for each; and a clear statement of the schedule for completing the I. This is **due no later than the final exam**.

### Course Books and Other Materials

**Course Books:** The OSU Book Store ("Beaver Store") has both course books. All of each is required reading. The **primary course text** is **Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, full version**. (Oxford University Press, 2015). This is the **core text** and provides most of the detailed course content. **The edition and version available through the Bookstore contains a card that provides access to "Dashboard," which contains required online materials for the text. If you buy a used copy of the book or if you share the book** with another student, you can buy access to Dashboard using a credit card. (The price is about \$19.95, about \$15 more than if you use a Dashboard access card packaged with the text.) To buy access to Blackboard separately from the text using a credit card, go to the Oxford University Press online site (<http://global.oup.com/us/companion.websites/umbrella/dashboard/dashboard.html>) and register.

⇒ **ESSENTIAL:** Each student **must** have **separate** access to Dashboard, even if sharing a book with others.

The **secondary course text** is **Lofgren, *The Party Is Over: How Republicans Went Crazy, Democrats Became Useless, and the Middle Class Got Shafted*, PAPERBACK edition—it is ESSENTIAL to get the PAPERBACK version, which contains material not found in the original cloth version** (Penguin Books, 2013). As the sub-title suggests, this book is a very critical analysis of American politics, toward both Democrats and Republicans. **I assume few students will agree with all the author's points**, but I do expect that they will carefully read and think about them. I often will discuss this book in class, so it is important to read assigned chapters **in advance of class discussion**. In addition, a major part of the take-home final (essay) exam will ask that students critique this book. I have placed a copy of the book on **3-hour Library reserve**, but most students probably will want to buy it. Note: Although I label this as the "secondary" course text, all of **both** books are required reading.

**Optional subscription:** Students are **strongly encouraged** to subscribe to the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) at a sharply reduced student price (\$10.00 for ten weeks), using the **signup form**. Subscriptions should begin week 2. The WSJ will bill for payment. WSJ has a very conservative editorial page but its news coverage generally is quite good on many topics related to this course. Student-rate subscriptions are available to other publications as well, for example, the *New York Times* and *The Economist*, a weekly publication that is more detailed and sophisticated than *Time* or similar. If interested in any of these, ask me for details.

### Additional Information

♿ **Students with documented disabilities** who need accommodations, have emergency medical information the instructor should know, or who need special arrangements in the event of evacuation should contact the instructor. Accommodations are collaborative efforts between students, faculty and Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Students with accommodations approved through SSD are responsible for contacting the faculty member in charge of the course prior to or during the first week of the term to discuss accommodations. Students who believe they are eligible for accommodations but who have not yet obtained approval through SSD should contact SSD immediately at (541) 737-4098.

The official Oregon State University “Statement of Expectations for Student Conduct,” that is, policies about cheating and related topics, is available online at <http://oregonstate.edu/admin/stucon/index.htm>.

**Using the OSU Library and Other Libraries:** I have requested all course books for reserve at the reserve desk near circulation on the main floor of Valley Library. You might want to use a library copy of one of the course books. OSU reference librarians have prepared a guide to library research for political science; it is available online at <http://guides.library.oregonstate.edu/subject-guide/361-Political-Science>.

### General Guidelines for Written Assignments

- On any **GRADED** written assignments, do **NOT** indicate your **NAME**. Instead, in the upper right corner of page 1 indicate your **ID number (NOT name)**, **PS 201**, the **assignment name** (if any), and the **date** you submit it.
- I prefer that students type **single-spaced**, with a line between paragraphs and 1-inch margins on all sides.
- Do **not** use a **cover** (plastic or similar) on any written assignment.
- I have indicated guidelines for **paper length** for specific assignments. These are **approximate** and are **estimates** of what might be required to respond adequately to the elements of the assignment. I grade concise responses more highly than longer, verbose, less clearly written responses.
- Each paper should be carefully written and proofread. I suggest that students use a spell **and** grammar checker.
- **Citations** to **course reading** should use simply the author and page number(s), in parentheses after using that material (quotation, paraphrase, or any other use). You need **not** list these in any citations listing at the end.
- **Citations** of **non-course material** should be complete: Author, *Title*, edition if 2<sup>nd</sup> or later (City: Publisher, year) or web address and date accessed, using footnotes or—preferred—parenthetical references and citations at end.
- Many students engage in **plagiarism**—presenting points that need citation without indicating source—sometimes without realizing it; to avoid plagiarism, you **must give credit whenever you present**:
  - another person’s idea, opinion, or theory
  - any facts, statistics, graphs, drawings—any pieces of information—that are not common knowledge; if in doubt about whether something is “common knowledge,” provide a cite (that is, err on the side of caution)
  - quotations of another person’s actual spoken or written words, or
  - paraphrase of another person’s spoken or written words (that is, **re-wording** what another person has said or written does **not** eliminate plagiarism)
- **NUMBER all pages** on all assignments, for ease in my commenting and to assure pages are in the correct order.

### OSU Writing Assistance

The Oregon State University Center for Writing and Learning has very useful materials for helping the writing process, including online access. The address is <http://cwl.oregonstate.edu/twc.html>. Note especially the “Online Writing Lab,” to which you can submit a draft of your papers for feedback, the “web resources,” which has excellent links to writing resources, and “Writing Tips and Handouts,” which includes suggestions about many writing topics. You can schedule appointments for in-person consultation about your writing.

### Quizzes and Exams

So that students have frequent feedback on their understanding of course materials, I use quizzes in addition to mid-term and final exams. Quizzes will be a **combination** of online (through course text Dashboard site) and in-class. **Online quizzes** will be short (usually 10-11 questions), multiple-choice format, and focus on one (or occasionally two) chapters from the core text (Morone-Kersh), with possibly one or two questions from the other text, by Lofgren. Online quizzes will be **sharply time-limited** so students need to study text chapters **before** attempting each quiz.

Because students are to read text materials **prior to** the class for which it is assigned, **online quizzes must be completed no later than 30 minutes BEFORE the beginning of the class for which is is assigned.**

**In-class quizzes** will be somewhat longer (probably about 25 questions) than online quizzes, will be multiple-choice, and will include both new questions about recent reading and lectures as well as review questions from the online quizzes. In some instances I might include one or more short-essay extra credit questions, based on extra-credit reading announced for each quiz/exam.

**Exams** are partly objective (multiple-choice, usually 25-30 of 100 points, and short-essay, usually about 25 points) and partly take-home essay (two or more questions, usually about 1000 points total). One or more short-essay extra credit questions might be included on the in-class part of the exam.

Quiz and exam objective questions will cover reading, lectures, and handouts since the previous quiz or exam, usually with some review questions from the previous exam or quiz on questions that many students missed.

**Occasional extra credit** questions for on exams and quizzes ask that students: (1) briefly identify the core topic of the extra-credit chapter or chapters and then (2) summarize four or more core points of that extra-credit reading. On some quizzes/exams, I might include an extra credit question that does not require extra reading.

Note: I have not previously required online quizzes in this course, so the **online quiz procedure is tentative and subject to revision**.

- ⇒ **Note: In answering exam ESSAY questions, it is ESSENTIAL to reflect (and cite!) REQUIRED course materials, such as texts and notes. Use Wikipedia or similar online sources ONLY to supplement, NOT replace, these required materials. The use of these supplementary materials is not required.**

### Participation and Attendance

As noted earlier, because this course involves frequent participation, **regular attendance is important**. Attending, taking careful notes, and participating all will help students do well in the course. The required online quizzes should help stimulate regular reading and also provide feedback about understanding.

Beginning week 2, except on days when in-class quizzes or exams are scheduled, I usually will use **in-class participation exercises**. Part of some classes might involve small-group or full-class discussion or other in-class activities. These and similar exercises provide feedback about student understanding, reactions, and views and also enable taking attendance. To emphasize the importance of participation and attendance, those count as 100 points, that is, one-fifth of the course grade. I will provide details in class.

During each class, I will provide an opportunity for students to ask questions.

### Quick List of Due Dates (Subject to Minor Change)

<b>By Tuesday, April 7</b> .....	Complete and turn in the course grade form (last page of this syllabus)
<b>Thursday, April 16</b> .....	<b>In-class Quiz 1</b> (multiple-choice with some short-essay extra credit as listed in that day's reading.
<b>Tuesday, April 28</b> .....	Exam 1 take-home essay questions distributed
<b>Tuesday, May 5</b> .....	<b>In-class Exam 1</b> ; essay answers are <b>due by 5 p.m.</b> , delivered in class or to Ballard Hall 303.
<b>Tuesday, May 19</b> .....	<b>In class Quiz 2</b> (multiple-choice possibly some short-essay extra credit as announced in class.
<b>Thursday, June 4</b> .....	Exam 2 take-home essay questions distributed
<b>Wednesday, June 10</b> .....	<b>In-class objective Exam 2</b> starts at <b>2:00 p.m.</b> , in the regular classroom; essay answers due.

### Topic and Reading Schedule

Study carefully text graphs, tables, and similar. Know core points and main supporting details. You might want to outline reading and/or use the online or in-text Study Guide materials for the text. In the **Morone-Kersh text**, read especially **carefully** tables and figures, not to memorize but understand core points of each table or figure.

**Note:** I expect students to read for **understanding of concepts, not details**. So, avoid getting caught up in details except as emphasized in class. In addition, as you read, note any questions to ask in class.

- ⇒ Nearly all Blackboard items listed below are in **pdf** (portable document format) and so require Adobe Acrobat or equivalent to read (available free from [www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html](http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html)).

### Important Guidelines for This Class

- ⇒ **Important:** Class discussion will **not** simply **repeat text materials** but will provide examples, different views, possibly videos or other examples, and so on.
- ⇒ **BRING to each class:** (1) the core texts (Morone-Kersh and Lofgren) assigned for that day, and (2) any questions that have emerged from your reading of course materials or from observing political developments.
- ⇒ **Important:** I might occasionally post lecture outlines or other notes in Blackboard; these probably will not be understandable without attending lectures. So, if you must miss a lecture, **arrange to get notes** from someone. In addition, for some classes I might distribute or place in Blackboard brief additional required materials.

### Part I. Introduction to American Politics and Its Study

1. **Tuesday, March 31. Introduction to Course Concepts: Interests, Ideas, Institutions, and Images**  
**Read very carefully this syllabus.** **You** are responsible for knowing deadlines, assignments, and similar.

**Assignment:** Bring to Thursday's class a list of questions about American politics that you hope this class will address. Indicate any aspects that puzzle or anger you or that you find confusing. Do not spend much time on this, but briefly state your questions and, if not clear, explain why they are questions. Indicate your NAME, PS 201, and Thursday's date (April 2, 2015) in the **upper-right corner of the first page**. You can type or hand write (clearly) these questions. The maximum length is 2 pages (I prefer printing on both sides of pages).

- ⇒ **Please complete and turn in the grade form (final page, below) and the completed course questionnaire no later than Tuesday, April 7.**
- ⇒ **Essential: Register SOON for the Morone-Kersh online site, "Dashboard," required to take online quizzes, which will begin week 2. (The first quiz will include questions about Morone-Kersh reading for this week.)**

## 2. Thursday, April 2. Thinking about American Politics, Political Culture, and Political Power

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, "About the Authors," "Preface," and ch 1. I **strongly suggest** that after reading each chapter students review **key terms** and think about the "Study Questions," both listed at the end of each chapter. In each chapter, read carefully the "boxed features," **especially** "Info/Data," "By the Numbers," "What Do You Think?" and "Comparing Nations." Be careful to understand the main points (**not** to memorize numbers or similar **details**) of tables and figures. There is a **Glossary** of terms at the book's end.

For **chapter 1**, be sure you understand the book's "four main questions," listed on page 5 and then enlarged. For each chapter in the book be sure you understand the core emphases and also the main points. The authors include a brief "The Bottom Line" at the end of each sub-section, which states core points. In addition, the "chapter summary" at the end of each chapter will help you check your understanding, after you read it. A very helpful way to **take notes** as you read texts is to write the subheads and then briefly summarize the main points.

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, "Introduction" (pp 1-8 in the **paperback** edition) and ch 1. **Reminder:** This book is very critical of both Democrats and Republicans. The "Introduction" provides background about the author, which will provide context for understanding his qualifications and the basis upon which he judges. **Read this book actively and critically.** I suggest taking notes and writing your reactions **as you read** because we will discuss the book in class and I will ask that you critique it on one or both exams. For interested students, the author's web site is <http://www.mikelofgren.net/>.

**Reminder:** Today is the **deadline** for subscribing to the *Wall Street Journal* (WSJ) at the special 10-week rate.

**Reminder:** **Beginning next Tuesday**, I will use in-class exercises, **except** on days when in-class quizzes or exams are held. These serve to provide feedback about course materials, stimulate thinking about course topics, and "take attendance." Some classes might include brief writing exercises, individually or as small groups.

## 3. Tuesday, April 7. Ideas that Shape America

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 2

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 2 and 8

**Reminder:** Turn in the **completed course grade form** (last page below) **and questionnaire** no later than today.

## 4. Thursday, April 9. The Constitution as Effect and Cause

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 3, Appendix I, "Declaration of Independence" (pp A-1 to A-2), and Appendix II, "Constitution" (pp A-3 to A-19), both following chapter 18; I **encourage** but do **not** require students to read the two Federalist papers, in Appendix III, pages A-20 to A-28 (ch 3 discusses these)

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 3

Students who would like to **listen to** the Constitution read by former University of Chicago Law Professor David Currie can go to <http://www.law.uchicago.edu/constitution> (50:08 minutes; also can be saved as an MP3 file)

## **Part II. American Political Processes**

### 5. Tuesday, April 14. Federalism and Civil Liberties

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 4 and ch 5 (this illustrates that when two chapters are assigned for a class from the core text, it will be for a Tuesday class to provide more reading days between classes)

### 6. Thursday, April 16. Civil Rights **and** Quiz 1

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 6

**QUIZ 1**, the last part of class; it will include review questions and questions about the reading assigned for **today**. **IMPORTANT:** **Bring a number 2 pencil with eraser** to all quizzes and in-class exams. Scantron forms will be supplied.

**As stated on page 5 above, if I announce in class extra credit reading(s)** for any quiz or exam, students can read one or more of those extra credit items and then on the relevant exam or quiz, answer short-essay questions

about those items. The questions will ask that students state core points of any of extra credit materials read.

**Tuesday, April 21. Participation and Public Opinion**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 7 and ch 8  
Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 4 and review ch 8

**8. Thursday, April 23. The Extraordinary Role of the Media in American Politics**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 9  
Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 7

**Bring to this class** a newspaper, preferably NYT or WSJ but possibly another **daily** newspaper

**Optional**, for **extra credit** on **Exam 1** (all are available in **Blackboard documents**): Sahr, "Historical Overview of Changes in U.S. 'Media Regimes,' 1950s to the Present" (you need not agree with all of this, but it fits the course emphasis on the role of news media); **and/or** Baumgartner and Morris, "The Daily Show Effect: Candidate Evaluations, Efficacy, and American Youth," *American Politics Research*, May 2006; **and/or** Entman, "Media and Democracy Without Party Competition" (2005).

**9. Tuesday, April 28. Campaigns, Elections, and Political Parties**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 10 and ch 11

**Optional** reading, about proportional representation, <http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damv/prlib.htm>

Probably an **in-class video** of political advertising examples (applying a course handout on evaluating political ads), and/or use the streaming video examples available at <http://www.livingroomcandidate.org/> (this has ads for campaigns starting 1952, also arranged by category, e.g., biography, fear) to examine political ads from 1988, 2004, 2008, and at least one other election; for each election, watch both positive and negative advertisements from at least two of the campaigns (Republican and Democratic). I will distribute or place in **Blackboard** documents a guide to analyzing political advertisements.

(Students who miss this class should watch selected political ads at the Living Room candidate online site.)

**Exam 1 Take-home Questions Distributed (answers will be due no later than 5 p.m. Tuesday, May 5)**

**10. Thursday, April 30. Interest Groups**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 12  
Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, "Preface to the Paperback Edition"

**11. Tuesday, May 5. Exam I; objective exam in class, Exam 1 take-home essay answers due no later than 5 p.m., delivered either in class or to Ballard Hall 303**

If I announce in class **extra credit reading(s)** for any quiz or exam, students can read one or more extra credit items and then on the relevant exam or quiz answer short-essay questions about those items, stating core points.

**For this exam**, possible extra credit items are listed for class 8; all are available in **Blackboard documents**).

**Part III. Institutions of American National Government**

**12. Thursday, May 7. Congress "at Home"**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 13

**13. Tuesday, May 12. Congress "in DC" and begin Presidency**

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, re-read ch 1, ch 2, and "Preface to the Paperback Edition"

Ellis and Nelson, eds., *Debating Reform*, ch 12 (Senate filibusters), pp 187-203 (**Blackboard** documents)

Possibly another short item on filibusters and similar, distributed in class, placed in Blackboard, or both

**Note:** The **final essay exam** might ask that students state their views of the US Senate and possible changes.

**14. Thursday, May 14. The Presidency as Individual, Institution, and Set of Relationships**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 14

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, re-read ch 2 and "Preface to the Paperback Edition"

Presidents and media (**Blackboard** documents; about 7 pages, including Doonesbury cartoon)

Alterman, "Why a Progressive Presidency Is Not Possible, for Now" (July 2010; **Blackboard** documents)

Dickinson, "Obama," *Rolling Stone*, October 2010 (**Blackboard** documents)

Possibly one or more sets of materials about Presidents and media, available in **Blackboard** documents

**In class video** on the media strategy and coverage of President Reagan: "The Power Game" (some background material might be distributed in class), available at <http://oregonstate.edu/media/vbvzl> (about 19 minutes) for students who are unable to attend this class.

**15. Tuesday, May 19. The National Government Bureaucracy and Quiz 2**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 15

**Quiz 2, the last part of class; it will include the reading assigned for today. IMPORTANT: Bring a number 2 pencil with eraser to all quizzes and in-class exams. Scantron forms will be supplied.**

**If I announce in class extra credit reading(s) for a quiz or exam, students can read one or more items and on the relevant exam/quiz answer short-essay questions asking to state core points of any of those materials read.**

**Part IV. Public Policy (the “Payoff” of American Politics) and Political Change**

**16. Thursday, May 21. The Courts**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 16

**17. Tuesday, May 26. Political Information and Public Policy**

Sahr, “Political Information” (Blackboard documents)

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 9 and ch 10

**18. Thursday, May 28. Economic and Social Policy**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 17

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 5

**19. Tuesday, June 2. Foreign and Defense Policy**

Morone and Kersh, *By the People*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ch 18

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 6, ch 11, and re-read ch 10

**20. Thursday, June 4. Political Change, Course Conclusions, and Exam Preview**

Lofgren, *The Party Is Over*, ch 12 and re-read “Preface to the Paperback Edition.” Think carefully about his proposed changes, both about whether you agree or disagree with them and why, and about whether you think his proposed changes are adequate to the problems he describes.

“Political change” materials (Blackboard documents): Read this to understand various “scenarios” of possible US political change; think about which you believe is most likely and why, **and** which you prefer and why.

Review Sahr, “Political Information” (class 17 above)

**Reminder:** The take-home essay final exam will include a question that asks for a systematic and detailed critique of Lofgren’s *The Party Is Over*, so think carefully about your views of the book, with your reasoning carefully developed. It is, for example, inadequate to dismiss his views by writing “he is biased” or similar.

**Exam 2 Take-home Questions Distributed (answers DUE at the final exam, Wednesday, June 10, 2 p.m., or submitted in Ballard Hall 303 no later than 5 p.m. later that day)**

**Wednesday, June 10, 2 p.m. (regular classroom): Exam 2 objective exam; take-home essay answers due**

⇒ **For your records: Use this space to record grades on completed quizzes, exams, and other requirements. Reminder: Grades on specific assignments will not be posted in Blackboard.**

Quizzes: Quiz # 1 \_\_\_\_\_ plus any extra credit \_\_\_ = total quiz 1 score \_\_\_\_\_

Quiz # 2 \_\_\_\_\_ plus any extra credit \_\_\_ = total quiz 2 score \_\_\_\_\_

**In-class Quiz Total \_\_\_\_\_ (50)**

Online quiz scores will be available in **Dashboard**.

**Online Quiz Total: \_\_\_\_\_ (150)**

Exams: 1 objective \_\_\_\_\_ Essay \_\_\_\_\_ + bonus \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (150)

(2 @ 150) 2 objective \_\_\_\_\_ Essay \_\_\_\_\_ + bonus \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (150)

**Exam Total \_\_\_\_\_ (300)**

**In-class activities/attendance** (maximum 5 points each, adjusted to equal 100 maximum): class: 3\_\_\_ 4\_\_\_ 5\_\_\_ 6 none 7\_\_\_

8\_\_\_ 9\_\_\_ 10\_\_\_ 11 none 12\_\_\_ 13\_\_\_ 14\_\_\_ 15 none 16\_\_\_ 17\_\_\_ 18\_\_\_ 19\_\_\_ 20\_\_\_ Total points \_\_\_\_\_/100

Makeup work (optional): \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_ (adjustment, if any \_\_\_\_\_) = Final total points \_\_\_\_\_/600 = \_\_\_\_\_ Percent = Course Grade \_\_\_\_\_



PS 201 (Sahr)

Introduction to United States Government and Politics

Spring 2015

Name: Last \_\_\_\_\_, First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle \_\_\_\_\_

Nickname, if prefer \_\_\_\_\_

Student ID Number (clearly, with hyphens, as 930-123-456): \_\_\_\_\_

Local address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address (print clearly): \_\_\_\_\_ Local telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent address (if different): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Permanent telephone (if different): (area code \_\_\_\_\_) number \_\_\_\_\_

Year (**end winter** quarter): freshman \_\_, sophomore \_\_, junior \_\_, senior \_\_, other \_\_; **expected graduation**: month \_\_ year \_\_

Major (or likely major): \_\_\_\_\_ Minor (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

Career goals: \_\_\_\_\_

From what **high school** did you graduate? Name \_\_\_\_\_, City/state \_\_\_\_\_

Did you take a **high school civics/US government** (not just US history) course? Yes \_\_, No \_\_

Previous college-level courses in political science or similar related to this course, if any  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What other courses are you taking now (names and numbers)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you have athletics \_\_, work \_\_, or other required non-class activity \_\_ (specify: \_\_\_\_\_) in addition to classes, check the appropriate space in the previous line and indicate how many hours per week \_\_\_\_\_

If you have ever lived in another country besides the US, which, when, and for what purpose: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

If you can read or speak another language besides English, which and how fluently? \_\_\_\_\_

If you have ever worked in government, a political campaign, or similar, check here \_\_ and indicate the kind of experience and when:

Indicate the main reasons you are taking this course:

**Do NOT write anything below this line; do NOT separate the following from the rest of this page**

**In-class Quizzes:** Quiz # 1 \_\_\_\_\_ plus any extra credit \_\_ = total quiz score \_\_\_\_ / 25  
Quiz # 2 \_\_\_\_\_ plus any extra credit \_\_ = total quiz score \_\_\_\_ / 25 **In-class Quiz Total** \_\_\_\_\_ (50)

**Online quiz scores total** **Online Quiz Total:** \_\_\_\_\_ (150)

**Exams:** 1 objective \_\_\_\_\_ Essay \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) + bonus \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (150)

**(2 @ 150)** 2 objective \_\_\_\_\_ Essay \_\_\_\_\_ ( ) + bonus \_\_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_\_ (150)

**Exam Total** (300)

**In-class activities/attendance** (maximum 5 points each, adjusted to equal 100 maximum): class: 3\_\_ 4\_\_ 5\_\_ 6 none  
7\_\_ 8\_\_ 9\_\_ 10\_\_ 11 none 12\_\_ 13\_\_ 14\_\_ 15 none 16\_\_ 17\_\_ 18\_\_ 19\_\_ 20\_\_ Total points \_\_\_\_/100

**Makeup** or extra credit work (if any): \_\_\_\_\_

**Total** \_\_\_\_\_ (minus percent adjustment, if any \_\_\_\_\_) = **Final total points** \_\_\_\_/600 = \_\_\_\_\_ **Percent = Grade** \_\_\_\_\_