When you complete this course successfully, you will:

- understand the structure of American political institutions and how national policies are made.
- recognize the benefits and disadvantages of American political institutions and the ideas and historical forces that led to them being structured as they are.
- be able to think critically about the proper role of the public, political parties, and interest groups in the American political system.

1 Course Requirements

**READING.** We will use two books in this class: 1) *Keeping the Republic: Power and Citizenship in American Politics* (Brief 5th Edition), by Barbour and Wright (referred to as B&W below) and 2) *Principles and Practice of American Politics* (5th Edition), edited by Kernell and Smith (referred to as K&S below). Both books are available for purchase at the bookstore. You can also rent either book for the semester. Most course readings will come from these two books. Readings listed as “This Week” (all from B&W) should be completed by the end of that week. All other readings should be completed before the class period for which they are assigned. Several readings are not included in the two books. These readings are listed as “(online)” and are available under the “Resources” section of the Sakai course site (http://sakai.luc.edu/).

You will also need to acquire an iClicker. These are available through the bookstore and can be rented for the semester. We will use iClickers for quizzes (see below), for in-class activities, and to stimulate class discussions. You will need to register your clicker using the link in the “i>clicker” area of the course Sakai site.

**QUICK QUIZZES.** At the beginning of most class sessions we will have brief quizzes. These quizzes will consist of one or two multiple choice questions that focus on the reading for the day (Friday class meetings may cover major themes from the Keeping the Republic chapter for that week). You will complete each quiz using your iClicker. You will automatically receive 60% for being in-class to complete the quiz. For two-item quizzes you will receive 20% for each correct response; for one-item quizzes you will receive 40% for a correct response.

These quizzes are intended to provide an incentive for you to keep up with the readings and be prepared for class meetings. The questions will only cover basic, core themes from the assigned reading for that day—you should not need to “study” for them. A few other important points regarding these quizzes:

1. they will occur at the beginning of class—you must be on time as you cannot make up these quizzes;
2. you must bring your iClicker to class to complete these quizzes;
3. I understand that occasionally “something comes up” that leads students to miss a day of class or be unable to complete the reading prior to class. I account for this when calculating your grade for this portion of the course: *I will drop your three lowest scores and average only the remaining scores.*
Exams. There will be two midterm exams and a final exam. The exam on Friday, September 26 will cover the material from the first five weeks of the class. The exam on Friday, October 24 will cover the material from weeks 6-9. The final exam will be held on Monday, Dec 8 (1:00-3:00pm) and will cover all of the material from the semester. However, the final will give much greater weight to the material that we cover after the second exam. A week or so before each exam I will post examples of the types of questions you can expect to see on the upcoming exam on Sakai.

Current Events Response Papers. You will write two papers that each discuss a current event and how it relates to material from one of the assigned readings from the Principles and Practice book. Your focus should be on demonstrating the depth of your understanding of the course material and your ability to clearly connect that material to the specific current event you are writing about. The paper should have three components: 1) a description of the argument made in the reading you are drawing on, and 2) a description of the current event you are writing about (what is at stake, who is involved, etc), and 3) a discussion of how the course reading helps you better understand the current event you are writing about.

Each paper should be 2-2 1/2 pages long, double-spaced, using 12-point Times New Roman font and 1-inch margins. At the top of your paper, on *one line* type your name, the date, and which paper it is (Paper 1 or Paper 2). There is no need for a paper title. The second line of the first page should be the beginning of the text of your paper. You do not need to do a outside research beyond reading the news. However, you should read at least two newspaper articles on your topic to ensure that you have a solid understanding of the issue/debate/process that you are writing about. Please provide a clear citation to the newspaper articles you reference at the end of the paper.

You may only do one paper within any of the three sections of the course. If you draw on material from a reading from the first section of the course you must hand the paper in by Friday, October 3; papers drawing on material from the second section of the course are due by October 31; papers from the last section of the course are due on the last day of class (December 5). Note that if you have not handed in either paper by October 31, your first paper will be treated as late. ***You need not wait until these due dates to hand papers in.*** I encourage you to keep your eye out for news events that remind you of one of the readings and write your papers while those connections are fresh in your mind!

2 Grading Policy

Grading rubric and scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components of Your Course Grade</th>
<th>Letter Grade Ranges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quick Quizzes: 15%</td>
<td>A = 93.00% or higher C+ = 77.00 - 79.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exams x 2: 20% each</td>
<td>A- = 90.00 - 92.99% C = 73.00 - 76.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Exam: 25%</td>
<td>B+ = 87.00 - 89.99% C- = 70.00 - 72.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brief Papers x 2: 10% each</td>
<td>B = 83.00 - 86.99% D+ = 67.00 - 69.99%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B- = 80.00 - 82.99% D = 60.00 - 66.99%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The scoring rubric above and the thresholds for various letter grades are non-negotiable. I will not change your numeric grade to “bump you up” to the next letter grade. For example, if your final score in the class is 86.8, your letter grade for the class will be a B, not a B+ just because you are so close.

If you have a question or concern about your grade on an assignment or exam you must contact me within 7 days of receiving the grade. For example, if an exam is returned to you at the end of a Monday class, you have until the end of the following Monday class to contact me.
Missed Classes/Late Assignments: The only excusable reasons for missing a class or exam or handing in an assignment late are serious illnesses and family emergencies. In either case you must both 1) notify me of your situation in a timely manner and 2) provide appropriate documentation. Because the nature of these situations varies, I do not have a hard and fast policy about what constitutes a “timely manner.” However, given the wide availability of internet access, in virtually all cases I expect you to contact me before the absence or missed assignment.

In all situations I require documentation of your reason for missing class or an assignment. This requirement extends to situations where there is a death in the family. If you would prefer not to discuss your situation with me directly you can provide documentation to your academic advisor and ask him or her to contact me to confirm that documentation has been provided. In fact, I strongly encourage you to discuss events like this with your academic advisor as they presumably have consequences for all of your classes—not just this one.

Papers handed in late without documentation will be penalized by 10 points (out of 100) for each day they are late. Thus, if you hand in your paper one day late, the highest grade you can receive is a 90.

Office Hours/Getting Help: My regularly scheduled office hours are Mondays and Wednesdays from 1:30pm-3:00pm. If you need to schedule another meeting time, email me.

3 Additional Policies and Notes

Technology in the classroom: I do not permit the use of laptops or other technology during class—iClickers only. If you would like to read a brief summary of research that shows that laptops interfere with in-class learning, this is a good place to start: http://web.stanford.edu/class/linguist156/laptops.pdf.

Students with disabilities: If you have a documented disability and wish to discuss academic accommodations, please contact me as soon as possible.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Incidents of plagiarism or cheating on an exam (by copying from another student, use of a “cheat sheet,” or other means) will result in a grade of F (zero) on the assignment or exam in question. The behavior will be reported to the chair of your major department and to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences. Note that records of academic misconduct may be transmitted to medical school, law schools, and other organizations who have a legitimate reason to inquire.

Disclaimer: The schedule, policies, and assignments described in this document are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances.

4 Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

The Idea of (American) Government

Week 1: August 25 - August 29: The Idea of Government
This week: B&W, Chapters 1
Monday No additional reading
Wednesday K&S, 1-2, Hardin
Friday No additional reading
Week 2: September 1 - September 5: The Founding I
This week: B&W, Chapter 2
Monday NO CLASS - Labor Day
Wednesday K&S, 2-4, Federalist 51
Friday K&S, 2-3, Federalist 10

Week 3: September 8 - September 12: The Founding II; Federalism
This week: B&W, Chapter 3
Monday K&S, 2-2, Anti-Federalist 3
Wednesday K&S, 3-3 Rauch
Friday K&S, 3-2, Kettl (p.87-97; "Political Federalism" and "Fiscal Federalism" sections)

Week 4: September 15 - September 19: Civil Liberties
This week: B&W, Chapter 4
Monday K&S, 5-1, Sunstein
Wednesday No additional reading
Friday K&S, 5-3, Roe v. Wade

Week 5: September 22 - September 26: Civil Rights
This week: B&W, Chapter 5
Monday No additional reading
Wednesday No additional reading
Friday MIDTERM EXAM 1

The Structure of American Government

Week 6: September 29 - October 3: Congress
This week: B&W, Chapter 6
Monday No additional reading
Wednesday K&S, 6-1, Smith
Friday No additional reading

Week 7: October 6 - October 10: Executive branch
This week: B&W, Chapter 7
Monday NO CLASS - Mid-Semester Break
Wednesday K&S, 7-3, Kernell
Friday No additional reading

Week 8: October 13 - October 17: Bureaucracy; Courts I
This week: B&W, Chapter 8
Monday K&S, 8-4, McCubbins, Noll, and Weingast
Wednesday Brutus’ Anti-Federalist 15 (online); K&S, 9-3, Hamilton
Friday No additional reading

Week 9: October 20 - October 24: The Courts I
This week: B&W, Chapter 9
Monday K&S, 9-1 Scalia; 9-2 Breyer
Wednesday The Polarized Court (online)
Friday MIDTERM EXAM 2
Week 10: October 27 - October 31: Public Opinion and Political Participation

This week: B&W, Chapter 10
Monday No Additional Reading
Wednesday K&S, 11-4, Schudson
Friday No Additional Reading

Week 11: November 3 - November 7: Participation and Government Responsiveness
Monday Fiorina: Extreme Voices - A Dark Side of Civic Engagement (online)
Wednesday No Additional Reading
Friday K&S, 10-2, Stimson, MacKuen, and Erikson

Week 12: November 10 - November 14: Political Parties; Interest Groups
This week: B&W, Chapter 11
Monday K&S, 12-1, Aldrich
Wednesday K&S, 12-2, Bartels
Friday No Additional Reading

Week 13: November 17 - November 21: Interest Groups; Campaigns and Elections
This week: B&W, Chapter 12
Monday K&S, 13-3, Hall and Wayman
Wednesday No Additional Reading
Friday No Additional Reading

Week 14: November 24 - November 28: Campaigns, Election, and Congress
Monday K&S, 11-2, Jacobson
Wednesday NO CLASS -
Friday Thanksgiving Break

Week 15: December 1 - December 5: Congressional Districts and Democracy
Monday No Additional Reading
Wednesday Brunell: Rethinking Redistricting (online)
Friday No Additional Reading

FINAL EXAM - Monday, Dec 8 (1:00-3:00pm)