Course Objective

Through an evolutionary process, Americans developed attitudes and beliefs about politics and government with which there is a high level of agreement and attachment. You would find it to be arduous to try to persuade any American on a philosophical basis that she is not entitled to own property, that he does not have the right to vote, that she is obligated to keep her political opinions to herself, or that the government should be able to instruct him about how to worship the Supreme Being.

We will study a collection of documents and essays that have molded Americans’ political thought processes. The authors set out to influence others to think in a certain way about politics and government. We can take notice of which authors were most persuasive, and whose ideas have gone by the wayside. These influences result in Americans’ understanding of their role in the political system and determine the distribution of resources and power in our society.

Course Requirements

1. TEXTBOOKS

The required textbook, which is available at the bookstore, is:


There is an optional textbook, which is the reader that contains the unabridged versions of the essays in the required digest:

Study the assigned readings on a timely basis in accordance with the attached schedule. To "study" does not mean to scan; rather, to "study" involves careful reading and note-taking (or underlining) to facilitate retention of facts and to facilitate review for the examination.

3. EXAMINATIONS

There will be a take-home examination that will be due on Thursday, February 19. It will account for 25 percent of the course grade. There will be a final examination on Thursday, April 30. It will account for 30 percent of the course grade.

4. RESEARCH PAPER

You will write a research paper about some aspect of American politics and government that is closely related to a principle of American political thought that is significant to a sizable segment of the public.

Your paper must reference some of the readings in the textbook. It must also reference some peer-reviewed sources in political science.¹

You must use full-blown APA style on this research paper. You are advised to obtain a copy of the style manual if you don’t already own one. It is available, for example, at this Web site:

http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html

A really helpful resource is the accompanying software to the APA style manual. The software is available by direct download or by purchase of an actual CD-ROM. I strongly advise the

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¹ For advice about finding research materials, refer to the Web page at http://faculty.UNG.edu/bfriedman/bfried/PS1Aresearch/ResearchAdvice.html.
purchase of the CD-ROM rather than the direct download. The software is available, for example, at this Web site:

http://www.apastyle.org/stylehelper/

Use the modifications to APA style that appear at this Web site:

http://ung.edu/political-science-international-affairs/MPA/apa-modifications.php

The failure to use APA style properly in this paper will result in a substantial reduction in your grade on it, up to 20 percentage points.

Please take note of the following miscellaneous rules about writing that appear on the Web page at this URL address:

http://faculty.UNG.edu/bfriedman/bfried/MiscRule.html

The research paper is due on Thursday, April 16. It will account for 30 percent of your course grade. Papers that are submitted late will sustain a reduction of 2 points per calendar day.

5. PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

The integrity code of the University of North Georgia---“On my honor, I will not lie, cheat, steal, plagiarize, evade the truth, or tolerate those who do”---reflects the university’s commitment to academic integrity. The "Academic Integrity Policy" (2014-2015 Undergraduate Bulletin, at http://ung.catalog.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=397#Academic_Integrity_Policy; see also the Student Handbook) are incorporated herein by reference. Please note that in this course, as in all others at UNG, plagiarism and other forms of cheating are expressly prohibited. Any student who commits plagiarism or cheating may receive a reduced grade, which may involve a failing grade. A report of the incident will be provided to the university’s Academic Integrity Council. The council and the provost may take additional action, which may include a formal reprimand, probation, suspension, or expulsion.²

² If you would like to read a discussion of the rationale for the rules about plagiarism, you are welcome to read my essay that is accessible on the
6. ATTENDANCE

Attendance is compulsory. You are considered responsible for being attentive to lectures and class discussions, for taking notes, and for being aware of the content of all class announcements. Please take note of the university's policy about "Class Attendance" (2014-2015 Undergraduate Bulletin, at http://ung.catalog.acalog.com/content.php?catoid=17&navoid=397#Class_Attendance) which is incorporated herein by reference.

7. PARTICIPATION

Class participation and proper conduct are both expected, and will determine 15 percent of the course grade. The score for participation and conduct will involve these considerations: (1) ability to cite and interpret readings assigned for homework, (2) contribution to collective problem-solving processes, (3) demonstration of adaptability in coping with new situations, and (4) ability to support and enhance the value of the work of peers.

Do not bring to class items that will emit audible signals, such as cell phones and watches that announce the top of the hour. If you have such an item in your possession, and it emits a sound, your course grade will be reduced by 1½ to 3 percentage points (depending on volume, with the instructor’s evaluation being final) for each incident; your participation score may also be affected. During an examination, if you have such an item in your possession, and it emits a sound, you must turn in your examination immediately and leave; failure to follow this instruction will result in a score of zero and, possibly, a disciplinary complaint.

8. GRADES

Your instructor uses the conventional grading scale: 90-100%, A; 80-89%, B; 70-79%, C; 60-69%, D; below 60%, F.

9. INCORPORATION OF OTHER CONTROLLING AUTHORITY

The contents of the following are incorporated by reference:

Internet at http://faculty.UNG.edu/bfriedman/Studies/plgrm.htm.
All of the rules, regulations, and standards published in UNG’s Undergraduate Bulletin.

The supplementary information that appears on the Web page at this URL address:

http://ung.edu/academic-affairs/policies-and-guidelines/supplemental-syllabus.php

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