

Political Science – 1100

American Government

M-W-F: 11a – 11:50a
Agriculture Building 2-10

Zack Bowersox
Professional Building 307
Email: zhbt33@mail.missouri.edu
(573) 882 - 0126
Office Hours: T-R, 9a – 12p

Course Description

As the title suggests, this course is your classic overview of the American government. While much of this might seem familiar from your junior or high school civic courses, much of the content (particularly the literature) should be new to you. We will examine the U.S. government, its formation, and its activity, in three parts. First, we will take on the grand theories and ideas that shaped the institutions (like the presidency, Congress, bureaucracy, etc.) and rights. Second, we will take a politics-free look at these institutions, and especially the bureaucracy, to see just how banal governance really is. Finally, in the third and last section, we will discuss political behavior and policy making; are politics good for policy? Is political gridlock the wave of the future?

While this class is of the “lecture” variety I welcome your input, insight, and opinions. Students should feel free to ask questions and make statements.

Grading

There will be three tests and one Missouri constitution assignment comprising the greater bulk of your grade. Quizzes will be administered (in the classic “pop” fashion), but their impact on one’s overall grade will be minimal.

- Missouri Constitution Assignment = 22.5%
- Section 1 Test = 22.5%
- Section 2 Test = 22.5%
- Section 3 Test (Final) = 22.5%
- Quizzes = 10%

Each test will be 50 questions, multiple choice. They will be administered on the assigned dates (per the syllabus description) and students will have the entirety of the class period to complete them. This does not include the final which will occur at an assigned date and time during finals week.

The *Missouri Constitution Assignment Instructions* can be found on Blackboard under Course Content. It consists of 25 questions from the Missouri constitution and may be answered directly from the Missouri constitution. It should be emailed, to me, by 11:59pm Friday, February 20th.

Your final, letter grade for the class will be calculated by the following scale:

97 to 100 - A+

94 to 97 - A

90 to 93 - A-

87 to 89 - B+

84 to 87 - B

80 to 83 - B-

77 to 79 - C+

74 to 77 - C

70 to 73 - C-

67 to 69 - D+

64 to 67 - D

60 to 63 - D-

59 and below - F

University Policies

Attendance is mandatory, as in, you must come to class. While I do not count attendance in the final grade, it will be incumbent on you to collect any missed lecture notes. Tests and quizzes are *only* administered in class on the date assigned. Make-up tests and quizzes will only be allowed in the event of a *documented* medical or family emergency, or university sanctioned event. In the case of the latter, student athletes, members of Marching Mizzou, or any other University organization, it is in your and my best interest that I be informed of any of these events as soon as possible so that we may schedule a make-up.

Academic honesty... don't cheat. Per the University's policy “[a]ny effort to gain an advantage not given to all students is dishonest whether or not the effort is successful. The academic community regards breaches of the academic integrity rules as extremely serious matters. Sanctions for such a breach may include academic sanctions from the instructor, including failing the course for any violation, to disciplinary sanctions ranging from probation to expulsion. When in doubt about plagiarism, paraphrasing, quoting, collaboration, or any other form of cheating, consult the course instructor.” (See: <http://provost.missouri.edu/faculty/syllabus-information.php>)

Classroom conduct: This class, and its students will be respectful of others. I welcome diverse opinions and invite you all to do the same. If for any reason you have questions or concerns regarding “the atmosphere in this class (including respect for diverse opinions) may contact the departmental chair or divisional director; the director of the Office of Students Rights and Responsibilities; the MU Equity Office, or equity@missouri.edu.

“University of Missouri System Executive Order No. 38 lays out principles regarding the sanctity of classroom discussions at the university. The policy is described fully in Section 200.015 of the Collected Rules and Regulations. In this class, students may make audio or video recordings of course activity unless specifically prohibited by the faculty member. However, the redistribution of audio or video recordings of statements or comments from the course to individuals who are not students in the course is prohibited without the express permission of the faculty member and of any students who are recorded. Students found to have violated this policy are subject to discipline in accordance with provisions of section 200.020 of the Collected Rules and Regulations of the University of Missouri pertaining to student conduct matters.” (See: <http://provost.missouri.edu/faculty/syllabus-information.php>)

Disability services: “If you anticipate barriers related to the format or requirements of this course, if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need to make arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please let me know as soon as possible.

“If disability related accommodations are necessary (for example, a note taker, extended time on exams, captioning), please register with the Disability Center (<http://disabilitycenter.missouri.edu>), S5 Memorial Union, 573- 882-4696, and then notify me of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For other MU resources for persons with disabilities, click on ‘Disability Resources’ on the MU homepage.”

Course Textbook

There is one required textbook for this course and a required companion “e-reader”.

- Morone, J.A. & Kersh, Rogan. (2016). *By the People, Brief* 2nd Ed. Oxford University Press.
- University of Missouri E-reader.

Assigned readings should be completed before class.

Class Outline

Week 1: January 19 – January 23, Bienvenidos!; Begin Section 1.

Monday – **NO CLASS** Wednesday – Introduction Friday – M&K, Chapt. 1

E-Reader – Chapt. 1: Chapter II of the State of Nature.

Summary: Syllabus review and a broad introduction to the grand ideas that we will be revisiting throughout the semester.

Week 2: January 26 – January 30, The founding and foundational thoughts.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 2 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 2/3 Friday – M&K Chapt. 2/3

E-Reader – Chapt. 1: Alexis de Tocqueville’s “Introduction to Democracy in America”
Chapt. 3: McCulloch v. Maryland; Barron v. Mayor, *et al.*

Summary: This week is devoted to the political thoughts and foundational theories that were prevalent at the nation’s founding, and their place in contemporary American political thought. Also, an overview of the federalist system.

Week 3: February 2 – February 6, Civil Liberties and the Struggle for Civil Rights

Monday – M&K Chapt. 4 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 4 Friday – M&K Chapt. 4

Summary: In depth overview of civil liberties; defining and recognizing these rights, their origin, and their status today.

Week 4: February 9 – February 13, Civil Liberties and the Struggle for Civil Rights, Cont’d.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 5 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 5 Friday – M&K Chapt. 5

E-Reader – Chapt. 7: Mo. Ex. Rel. v. Canada; Brown v. Board of Education (I and II)

Summary: Continuation of Week 3’s discussion, this time focusing on the legal, social, and political battles that have attended the advancement of civil rights.

Week 5: February 16 – February 20, NO CLASS, ISA New Orleans.

Monday – NO CLASS Wednesday – NO CLASS Friday – NO CLASS

Summary: **NO CLASS** (International Studies Association annual conference). Study break for **Test 1** on February, 27th.

Mo. Constitution Assignment: **DUE 02/20/15, 11:59PM** to Blackboard.

Week 6: February 23 – February 27, Test 1; Begin Section 2.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 6 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 6 Friday – **Test 1**

E-Reader – Chapt. 4: What Does an Election Tell You? (50 – 53)

Summary: Introduction to and beginning matter for Section 2, Political Behavior. Particularly focusing on political participation.

Test 1: Friday, February, 27th: Same class time and room. Bring a No. 2 pencil!! Test will consist of 50, multiple choice questions.

Week 7: March 2 – March 6, Politics and the Media

Monday – M&K Chapt. 7 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 7 Friday – M&K Chapt. 7

Summary: A discussion on politics and the media. **See Blackboard for supplemental readings for class!**

Week 8: March 9 – March 13, Campaigns and Public Opinion.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 6,8 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 6,8 Friday – M&K Chapt. 6,8

E-Reader – Chapt. 5: The Logic of Collective Action.

Summary: A discussion regarding the formation of public opinion, campaigns, and the logic (or lack there of) in collective action. **See Blackboard for supplemental readings!**

Week 9: March 16 – March 17, Interest Groups, Lobbying, and the Political Parties.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 9 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 9 Friday – M&K Chapt. 9

E-Reader – Chapt. 5: The Scope and Bias of the Pressure System

Summary: An examination of how interest groups lobby and effect policy (if they have any effect at all!). Further, how do political parties react to lobbying, lobby for policy change themselves, and ultimately seek to reflect their constituency in policy outcomes.

Week 10: March 23 – March 27, NO Class, Spring Break!

Monday – NO CLASS Wednesday – NO CLASS Friday – NO CLASS

Summary: NO CLASS. MU Spring Recess. Study for **Test 2!**

Week 11: March 30 – April 3, Test 2, Begin Section 3.

Monday – M&K Chapt.10,11 Wednesday – Chapt.10,11 Friday – Chapt. 10,11

E-Reader – Chapt. 6: Congress: The Electoral Connection
The Power to Persuade

Summary: Begin Section 3, Institutions and Policy Making. Focus this week is on Congress, the president, and the interplay between the two.

Test 2: Friday, April 3rd. Same class time, same classroom. Bring a No. 2 pencil!! Test will consist of 50 multiple choice questions.

Week 12: April 6 – April 10, The Bureaucracy.

Monday – M&K Chapt.12 Wednesday – M&K Chapt.12 Friday – M&K Chapt. 12

E-Reader – Chapt.6: Bureaucracy and the Public Interest.

Summary: Beginning of a lengthy discussion regarding the bureaucracy and its place in American political life. **See Blackboard for supplemental readings!**

Week 13: April 13 – April 17, The Bureaucracy, Cont'd.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 12 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 12 Friday – M&K Chapt. 12

E-Reader – Chapt.6: Bureaucracy and the Public Interest.

Summary: Conclusion of a lengthy discussion regarding the bureaucracy and its place in American political life. **See Blackboard for supplemental readings!**

Week 14: April 20 – April 24, The Judicial Branch.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 13 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 13 Friday – M&K Chapt. 13

Summary: One week on the American judiciary system.

Week 15: April 27th – May 1, Policy Making.

Monday – M&K Chapt. 14 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 14 Friday – M&K Chapt. 14

E-Reader – Chapt. 8: Showdown in the Show-Me State.

Summary: Beginning of a long discussion on policy making, both domestic and foreign. This week's focus will be primarily domestic policy. **See Blackboard for supplemental readings!**

Week 16: May 4 – May 8, Policy Making, Cont'd; class wraps up!

Monday – M&K Chapt. 14 Wednesday – M&K Chapt. 14 Friday – **NO CLASS**

Summary: Closing remarks on policy making, this time focusing on foreign policy making. **See Blackboard for supplemental readings!** Also **NO CLASS** Friday, May 8th: MU reading day! Study for your final!

Week 17: May11 – May 15, FINALS WEEK

Summary: **FINAL, Wednesday May 13th, 7:30 – 9:30am, Agriculture Building Room 2-10.**



Evaluation of Instruction and Course

University of Missouri



Complete this COVER SHEET and place on top of each group of evaluations.

Department: Political Science

Contact Person: Anissa Cox

Phone: 882-2843

Instructor Name: Bowersox

Course Name: American Government

DIRECTIONS:

1. Use a #2 black lead pencil.
2. Write the correct number in the box and fill in the corresponding bubble below.
3. Darken the bubbles completely.
4. Erase ANY stray marks.
5. Erase completely or use correction tape (NOT a liquid) to make any corrections.

REQUIRED INFORMATION:

This information must be correct. Reports cannot be generated from the accompanying evaluation sheets unless all columns are filled in and the information is current and accurate.

— 8 digits

This is the employee ID number of the instructor of this class. If ID number has leading 0s, these zeros must be entered so that all columns have a number. For student instructors, use their student ID number.

Reminder: To avoid errors, confirm that the instructor is listed correctly in PeopleSoft before submitting evaluation forms.

— 5 digits

This number is in the Current Class Offerings (Schedule of Classes), column heading "Class #." Each class session (e.g., lecture, lab, discussion) will have a unique number. This number will be different each semester.

The semester the class was taught. The year will automatically be added.

1 4 1 4 5 4 2 6

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5 3 7 9 5

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Assessment Resource Center

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Bowersox,Zachary Hume-AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

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Evaluation of Instruction and Course

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Evaluation of Instruction and Course

University of Missouri

Group Report for: Bowersox, Zachary Hume; Course: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Course: **POL_SC 1100** Section: **04** Semester: **SP2015** Class Number: **53795**

Respondents: 42

Standard Form Report		Percent of Responses						
Choices: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree, Strongly Disagree		Percent of Responses						
Course Content and Structure		SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	# Rsp	Mean
The syllabus clearly explained the course objectives, requirements, and grading system.		55%	45%	0%	0%	0%	42	4.55
Course content was relevant and useful (e.g., readings, online media, classwork, assignments).		24%	55%	17%	2%	2%	42	3.95
Resources (e.g., articles, literature, textbooks, class notes, online resources) were easy to access.		33%	50%	10%	7%	0%	42	4.10
This course challenged me.		24%	55%	17%	2%	2%	42	3.95
Teaching Delivery		SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	# Rsp	Mean
This instructor was consistently well-prepared.		60%	38%	2%	0%	0%	42	4.57
This instructor was audible and clear.		57%	40%	2%	0%	0%	42	4.55
This instructor was knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the topic.		60%	33%	5%	2%	0%	42	4.50
This instructor effectively used examples/illustrations to promote learning.		50%	43%	5%	2%	0%	42	4.40
This instructor fostered questions and/or class participation.		37%	46%	15%	2%	0%	41	4.17
This instructor clearly explained important information/ideas/concepts.		46%	49%	2%	2%	0%	41	4.39
This instructor effectively used teaching methods appropriate to this class (e.g., critiques, discussion, demonstrations, group work).		40%	36%	21%	2%	0%	42	4.14
Learning Environment		SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	# Rsp	Mean
This instructor responded appropriately to questions and comments.		60%	36%	5%	0%	0%	42	4.55
This instructor stimulated student thinking and learning.		48%	38%	10%	5%	0%	42	4.29
This instructor promoted an atmosphere of mutual respect regarding diversity in student demographics and viewpoints, such as race, gender, or politics.		57%	36%	7%	0%	0%	42	4.50
This instructor was approachable and available for extra help.		49%	44%	7%	0%	0%	41	4.41
This instructor used class time effectively.		50%	40%	7%	2%	0%	42	4.38
This instructor helped students to be independent learners, responsible for their own learning.		38%	48%	14%	0%	0%	42	4.24
Assessment		SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	# Rsp	Mean
I was well-informed about my performance during this course.		19%	55%	17%	5%	5%	42	3.79
Assignments/projects/exams were graded fairly based on clearly communicated criteria.		40%	55%	2%	2%	0%	42	4.33
This instructor provided feedback that helped me improve my skills in this subject area.		36%	38%	21%	2%	2%	42	4.02





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Teaching Effectiveness	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	# Rsp	Mean
This instructor taught effectively considering both the possibilities and limitations of the subject matter and the course (including class size and facilities).	46%	49%	5%	0%	0%	41	4.41
Feedback for Other Students (IDK = I Don't Know)	% Yes	% No	% IDK			# Rsp	
Would you recommend this class to other students regarding...?							
CLASS CONTENT	69%	26%	5%			42	
CLASS STRUCTURE (E.G., ORGANIZATION, PACING)	83%	12%	5%			42	
POSITIVE LEARNING ENVIRONMENT	98%	2%	0%			42	
INSTRUCTOR'S TEACHING SKILL/STYLE	81%	12%	7%			42	
FAIRNESS OF GRADING	93%	5%	2%			42	

Student Information (NA = Not Applicable, NR = No Response)															
Course		Expected Grade		Gender		Class Year		Classes attend		Extent use online		Outside hours per week		Complete work	
Requirement	79%	A	57%	Male	43%	Freshman	45%	0-25	0%	None	79%	0-3	21%	0-25	24%
Elective	14%	B	36%	Female	45%	Sophomore	36%	26-50	0%	Little	17%	4-7	31%	26-50	14%
Other	0%	C	0%	Transgend	0%	Junior	10%	51-75	10%	Some	5%	8-11	19%	51-75	24%
NR	7%	D	0%	Prefer no	5%	Senior	2%	76-90	24%	Moderate	0%	12-15	19%	76-90	17%
		F	0%	NR	7%	Graduate	0%	91-100	67%	Large	0%	> 15	0%	91-100	21%
		S	0%			Other	0%	NA	0%	NA	0%	NA	10%	NA	0%
		U	0%			NR	7%	NR	0%	NR	0%	NR	0%	NR	0%
		None	0%												
		NR	7%												

Grade A & B = The mean score of students who reported an expected grade of A or B.

Construct Means (21 Questions)									
Content/Struct		Teaching		Environment		Assessment		Effectiveness	
Mean	4.14	Mean	4.39	Mean	4.39	Mean	4.05	Mean	4.41
Grade A & B	4.12	Grade A & B	4.40	Grade A & B	4.40	Grade A & B	4.05	Grade A & B	4.42

COMPOSITE SCORE of the 21 Construct Questions							
Mean	4.29						
Grade A & B	4.30						

Construct Means and Composite Score are calculated based on the number of respondents for each question in order to apply less weight to questions not applicable to a class.



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Bowersox,Zachary Hume-AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

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Evaluation of Instruction and Course

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Group Report for: Bowersox, Zachary Hume; Course: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Course: **POL_SC 1100** Section: **04** Semester: **SP2015** Class Number: **53795**

Section VI: Your Comments Are Valued

What aspects of the teaching or content of this course were especially good?

Was a very fair grader and taught well considering the subject matter.

Fair

Easy to learn from

Posting slides and creating study guides for the tests were both very helpful and improved the course.

He told you exactly what you needed to know, and provided a very usefull study guide



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Bowersox, Zachary Hume-AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

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Power points

Teacher was really interesting & knowledgable about subject. Book was sort of okay to read.

Style of teaching & class structure.
Fairness of grading and exams.

-Actually smiled and was happy in class
-Able to relate with

I liked the videos that went along with what we were learning.



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Very laid back comfortable teaching style
The book was inaccurate multiple
times.
Government just flows in general.

I really liked examples w/ TV shows
or movies. Made it interesting

using news/tv clips relevant to class

LECTURES & E. C. QUIZZES

All good.



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use of images + explanations.

- really good instructor

Really enjoyed his passion + the opportunities within the class

He kept things interesting

All ppt's in blackboard



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good professor. I enjoyed MO
constitution assignment

Understanding & Communication

He kept the class moving. Offered help & extra credit



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What changes could be made to improve the teaching or the content of this course?

Make it a little more interesting.

Textbook / e-Reader

If possible, maybe have a review day before tests

the quizzes seemed a little unfairly placed. & if
your quiz grade fell behind you can't really get
it back up

more relevant book readings,
not just reading



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get rid of the stupid e-reader. I have enough to do already. I don't want to pay money to read what self-important white men have to say about a class I'm only taking bc I have to

Add powerpoints each week + not all of them at the end before a test. And possibly study guide too. That way it can be filled in as the lectures go. would help with unanswered questions.

• Sometimes went through slides too fast

We would go quickly through notes which occasionally made it hard to write everything down and slides wouldn't be posted until days or weeks later

Please add a little bit more homework during the semester so the grade isn't just determined by 3 tests, quizzes, and the missouri packet



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More Grades Besides Just tests and Quizzes

Just a bit boring

Get Rid of It as a required
course. Or make one for
Journalists.

kind of worried she might be a Republican

go slower when going through
powerpoints



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None

Put grades up more often

For some reason the tests were
ridiculously hard

- nothing

Need more place for points
besides tests, putting in
grades faster



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none

less rigidity in teaching style
more abstract. (He's boring)

Power point slides very boring,
only helpful for test. Need more
interaction in class.

None

N/A