Since we can’t escape from politics in our lives, we might as well learn to appreciate and enjoy them. In this class we explore American politics: its rules (the Constitution), its institutions (the Presidency, Congress, the courts, and the bureaucracy), its participants (individual voters, parties, interests groups, and the media) and its product (social, economic and foreign policy). We not only cover the facts of American politics, we also focus on becoming informed critics and intelligent consumers of the daily barrage of news from the media.

This course has two lectures and one discussion/review section a week. Every third Friday, there is a quiz (multiple choice and I questions) worth 10% of the final grade; otherwise, Friday lecture sessions do not meet. Other requirements include two very short essays (each worth 10% of the final grade), attendance and participation in discussion section (20%) and a final exam (20%).

Optional feature-length movies are shown at night for extra credit. Readings average 50 pages of textbook per week, and a daily newspaper of your choice. This course is designed for non-majors, beginning majors, and people considering becoming political science majors.

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