

Course Syllabus
GOVT 2360-01, Understanding Politics
Spring 2012
Government Department
MWF 13:00-13:50

COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to major concepts and institutions of governance and to techniques of political analysis. Emphasis is placed on a comparative study of governmental processes in the United States and other major political systems.

COURSE SEQUENCE IN CURRICULUM AND PREREQUISITE INFORMATION

Introduction to Political Science is a freshman-level course, generally taken by students who are interested in becoming political science majors. There are no prerequisites for taking this course.

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

Name	Dr. Michael Bordelon
E-mail	mbordelon@hbu.edu
Office Phone	281-649-3203
Office Location	University Academic Center, Room 139
Office Hours	MWF 9:30 - 10:00 MWF 2:00 - 4:30 T-TH 1:00 - 2:00

LEARNING RESOURCES

Course Text(s):

Roskin, Michael G., Et al. *Political Science: An Introduction*. Longman: New York, 2012.
ISBN # 13: 978-0-205-07594-2

RELATION TO THE PURPOSE STATEMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY

The mission of Houston Baptist University is to provide a learning experience that instills in students a passion for academic, spiritual, and professional excellence as a result of our central confession, “*Jesus Christ is Lord.*”

This course is designed to enable the student to develop critical standards of academic excellence and to access the complexities of today’s world. Class discussions related to current issues will be conducted in an atmosphere of academic freedom and objectivity.

RELATION TO COLLEGE GOALS AND PURPOSES

This course is designed to support the mission of the College of Arts and Humanities:

“ To develop intellectual, moral and aesthetic growth in its students.”

RELATION TO DEPARTMENTAL GOALS AND PURPOSES

A knowledge of the material covered in this course should acquaint the students with the philosophic underpinnings and the practical political processes of the governments of a variety of countries around the world, and this knowledge should be of use to students seeking careers in law or public service.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Overview/ purpose of the course:

This course is designed to enable the students to better understand the basic concepts of government both in theory and in practice. Included among the various topics for consideration will be the great political theorists, the actual practices of governments around the world, and such broad concepts as the political spectrum, globalization, dependency theory, and other themes relevant to executive, legislative, and judicial practices.

Aims for the course:

This course is designed to introduce the student to both the principles and practices of political science as they have been developed in theory and implemented by governments in practice all over the world.

On completion of this course:

- The students should be able to classify and discuss the characteristics of various different modern political systems of thought;
- The students should be able to analyze, compare, and contrast different philosophies of government, including evaluation of their respective strengths and weaknesses;
- The students should be able to describe and discuss the essential characteristics of various governmental systems in operation in different countries around the world today;
- The students should be able to compare and contrast the operations of government in various countries, including evaluations of the respective strengths and weaknesses of those governments.

Technology, Writing, or Oral objectives:

- The reading assignments should enhance the student's reading proficiency;
- Graded essay questions on the major tests should enhance the student's writing proficiency.

TOPICAL OUTLINE

WEEK	TOPIC	Assignments	Tests
1	Is Politics a science?	Roskin, Ch. 1	
2	Political theories: Ancient and Modern	Roskin, Ch. 2	
3	Ideologies: On the left Last day to drop without a "W": January 25, 2012	Roskin, Ch. 3	
4	Ideologies: On the right	Roskin, Ch.3	
5	Types of Government: The One, the Few and the Many	Roskin, Ch.4	
6	Natural Right and History	Roskin, Ch.5	Test #1
7	Democracies, Good and Bad	Roskin, Ch.6	
8	Politics and Culture	Roskin, Ch. 7 & 8	
9	Political Parties	Roskin, Ch. 10& 11	
10	Parliaments and Legislation	Roskin, Ch.13	
11	Executive and Judicial System Last day to drop (with "W"): March 23, 2012	Roskin, Ch. 14 & 15	Test #2
12	Political Economy	Roskin, Ch. 16	
13	Terrorism and Revolution	Roskin, Ch. 17	
14	International Relations	Roskin, Ch. 18	
15	Democracy Reconsidered	-----	
16	FINAL EXAM (Ugh!!!)		Final Exam

TEACHING STRATEGIES

The traditional lecture format, accompanied by a substantial class discussion component, will be the primary method of classroom instruction. Audio and/or visual aids may occasionally be used to supplement classroom instruction.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING

Course requirements:

The student's grade will be determined by the results of three tests given during the semester and a final examination given at the end of the semester. Of the first three tests given during the semester, the lowest score will be dropped, with each of the two remaining test scores counting 33% each. The final examination will be comprehensive, will be objective in character, and will be one-third of the student's semester grade.

Grading standards:

Each of the three tests will count as one-third of the student's grade. Participation in class discussions will be considered as a positive factor in computing the student's grade.

A	=	90-100%
B	=	80-89%
C	=	70-79%
D	=	60-69%
F	=	less than 60%

The grading standards will adhere to the general policy on grades as stated in the Houston Baptist University *Bulletin of Information*.

Student appraisal:

Student opinionnaires will be distributed and reviewed as determined by administration authorities.

CLASS POLICIES

Absence and Tardy Policies

Regular attendance in class is important for student success, and it is university policy that students must attend class. Absences are recorded beginning from the first class session after the student has enrolled in the course. Professors are not obligated to allow students to make up work they miss due to unexcused absences. Any student who does not attend at least 75% of the scheduled class sessions will receive a grade of "F" for the course, regardless of his performance on other assessments such as tests, quizzes, papers, or projects. Professors may apply additional attendance policies as appropriate to individual courses. Likewise, the college or school may also apply additional attendance requirements as necessary. Please see the catalog currently in use for the university's policy on classroom absences caused in the course of student representation of the university, such as athletics, chorale, and mock trial activities.

Academic Honesty

Please refer to the current catalog for the university's policy and procedures regarding academic honesty. Note that the university utilizes "Turn-It-In" and other programs to investigate possible plagiarism activities. All major papers for this course will be submitted to the plagiarism prevention software, **Turnitin.com** on or before a paper's due date. No paper will be graded without meeting this requirement beforehand. A separate handout will be provided to give detailed instructions on this process which must include the class identification number and class password. In accordance with FERPA, and to best protect the students' privacy, no personal identification (e.g., name, social security number, H number) should be uploaded with the text of student papers. However, Turnitin will ask for the student's name and e-mail address when setting up a personal account. This identifying information will be used by the professor to evaluate the student's paper and cannot be viewed by other faculty or students. To further increase confidentiality, the student may choose to use a pseudonym (false name) when setting up his or her personal Turnitin account. If a pseudonym is used for Turnitin, the student must provide this identifier next to his/her typed name on the paper copy which is submitted to the professor. Five (5) points will be deducted if the professor is unable to easily match the paper copy to the Turnitin submission of the student's paper.

Children in Classroom

In almost all instances, children are not allowed in the classroom nor are they allowed to be on campus unattended. Class sessions are for enrolled students only unless other arrangements are approved by the instructor in advance.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

The classroom environment is to be conducive to learning and is under the authority of the instructor. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are expected to demonstrate civil behavior in the classroom and show appropriate respect for the instructor and other students. Inappropriate behavior toward the instructor, in or out of the classroom, may result in a directive to the offending student to leave the classroom or the course entirely. Classroom behaviors that disturb the teaching-learning experiences include the following behaviors: activated cellular phone or other device, demands for special treatment, frequent episodes of leaving and then returning to the class, excessive tardiness, leaving class early, making offensive remarks or disrespectful comments or gestures to the instructor or other students, missing deadlines, prolonged chattering, sleeping, arriving late to class, dominating discussions, shuffling backpacks or notebooks, disruption of group work, and overt inattentiveness. It is at the discretion of the instructor as to whether laptops will be allowed for use in the classroom.

Early Alert

As an instructor, I am committed to your success, not only in this class, but in all aspects of HBU life. To ensure that every student takes full advantage of the educational and learning opportunities, HBU has implemented an *Academic Early Alert Referral System (EARS)*. If I think you would benefit from some of these special programs or services available to you, I will make the appropriate referral. You, in turn, will be expected to take advantage of the help offered to you.

Email Policy

All university and class email communication will be sent to your HBU email account. You are responsible for checking this frequently. If you choose, you may reroute your HBU email to another email address. Your emails should be in a professional format with correct spelling, capitalization, and grammar.

Grievance Procedures

The Academic Grievance Policy may be found in the catalog currently in use, in the Academic section of the HBU Forms section of the HBU Portal, and on the Registrar's page on the HBU Website.

Late Work

Not relevant in this course

Learning Disabilities/Academic Accommodations

Houston Baptist University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. Any student who needs learning accommodations should inform the professor immediately at the beginning of the semester that he/she will be requesting accommodations. In order to request and establish academic accommodations, the student should contact the Coordinator for Learning Disability Services 504@hbu.edu to schedule an appointment to discuss and request academic accommodation services. Academic Accommodations must be applied for and written each semester. If academic accommodations are approved, a Letter of Accommodations will then be sent to the professor(s). Please refer to the website, www.hbu.edu/504 for all accommodation policies and procedures.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

Students are full partners in fostering a classroom environment which is conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are expected to demonstrate civil behavior in the classroom. Unless otherwise approved by the instructor, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of behavior that detracts from the learning experience of fellow students. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom may result in a request for the offending student to leave the classroom.

Classroom behaviors that disturb the teaching-learning experiences include the following behaviors: activated cellular phone or other device, demands for special treatment, frequent episodes of leaving and then returning to the class, excessive tardiness, leaving class early, making offensive remarks or disrespectful comments or gestures to the teacher or other students, missing deadlines, prolonged chattering, reading newspapers during class, sleeping, arriving late to class, dominating discussions, shuffling backpacks or notebooks, disruption of group work, and overt inattentiveness.

Early Alert

As an instructor, I am committed to your success, not only in this class, but in all aspects of HBU life. To ensure that every student takes full advantage of the educational and learning opportunities, HBU has implemented an *Academic Early Alert Referral System (EARS)*. If I think you would benefit from some of these special programs or services available to you, I will make the appropriate referral. You, in turn, will be expected to take advantage of the help offered to you.

Email Policy

All university and class email communication will be sent to your HBU email account. You are responsible for checking this frequently. If you choose, you may reroute your HBU email to another email address. Your emails should be in a professional format with correct spelling, capitalization, and grammar.

PERSON RESPONSIBLE FOR DEVELOPING SYLLABUS

Dr. Michael Bordelon, Professor of Political Science

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS REGARDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE COURSE IN TERMS OF HISTORY, MOMENT, MOVEMENT, TRENDS, TIMELINESS, BODY OF BASIC KNOWLEDGE, ETC.

None

The content of this outline and the attached schedule are subject to change at the discretion of the professor.

Instructor's Signature

Date