PS 101 is not a Civics class, in which you learn how to be a good citizen or how to get involved in politics. It is not a Social Studies class, in which you memorize details about the political process. It is not a Current Events class, in which you study the personalities in government. It is not a Persuasive Speaking class, in which you debate hot policy issues or argue the virtues of popular candidates and political parties. And it is certainly not a Church, in which you are told what is right and wrong with the hope that you will change your beliefs or actions.

Rather, the purpose of PS 101 is to introduce you to the science of American politics – to teach you how to think critically and analytically about the relationship between Americans and their government. Our goal will be to question why government works as it does and to trace the effects of the country’s method of conducting public business. Because PS 101 is only an introductory course, and therefore must skim rather quickly over a multitude of topics, your factual knowledge about particular components of the political system certainly will not be complete by the end of the semester. More advanced offerings in political science will provide you that depth, if you wish to achieve it.

That being said, students who attend lecture regularly and do their best to stay up with the assigned readings should leave the course with a much better understanding of

1. how the nation’s historical experience molds current events,
2. how the public communicates values, opinions, and attitudes to public officials, and
3. how political institutions shape the connection between policies and public demands.

If you also pick up advice along the way about how to be a good political activist, or add to your knowledge base of political trivia, or develop a firmer sense of what you believe – so much the better. But those insights go beyond the academic purpose of the course.
Sources of Required Reading Material


Evaluation (computational weight of each assignment):

- 23%: exam taken on February 14, during the scheduled 50-minute class
- 23%: exam taken on March 28, during the scheduled 50-minute class
- 24%: two response papers of 2-3 pages in length; due date determined by chosen topic
- 30%: final examination on 4 May 2005, from 10:30 am – 12:30 pm, in regular classroom

Despite the enormous size of our class, none of the examinations in PS 101-002 will involve fill-in-the-bubble testing. Rather, all three exams ask open-ended questions and your answers will be graded by a human being. The first two exams are non-cumulative – that is, they only include material from one third of the course – and will consist of a mixture of short answer, identification, and multiple choice questions. Even the multiple choice questions will be graded by hand, allowing you to explain your answers if necessary. The final exam also will include a non-cumulative portion worth 23 percentage points of the course grade, offering the same mix of question formats covering material from the final third of the course. It adds a 7-point long essay question, though, which you must answer with material drawn from across the entire semester.

A single form of evaluation is not sufficient to test true knowledge and effort. Thus, the exams are not the only opportunity for you to receive direct feedback on your performance in the course. Rather, you will be asked to sign up for two topics featured in the syllabus outline (e.g., Public Opinion, the Judiciary). You then will be responsible for writing a 2-3 page response to the readings assigned for each topic you have chosen, either answering a question posted to the course Web page or answering a question of your choice (if approved by Adam or Kirill). The papers, worth 12 points each (for a total of 24% of your course grade), are due Monday before class on the day when the topic is scheduled to begin. Students also are encouraged to participate in class discussion, as opportunities permit, during the weeks for which they have signed up.

Each assignment will be graded on a 10-point scale (in theory, A = 90-100, B = 80-89, C = 70-79, D = 60-69, E = 0-59). However, the examinations for the course are particularly rigorous, generally producing numerical averages far lower than found in other UK social science courses. Should that occur, final grades will be curved upward significantly before marks are reported to the registrar for inclusion on your transcript, so that they are representative of what you would find in comparable courses at the institution (roughly 2.65 GPA with 1/5 of the class receiving an “A” grade). Because your ultimate grade will depend on your relative performance, you are welcome to seek clarification on
your standing in the course at any time. Please note that students taking the course on a Pass/Fail basis must complete the final examination and receive a passing score in order to receive a grade of “P.”

Because there will be no attempt to take attendance during class, you obviously are not forced to participate in, or even show up for, most meetings of PS 101 (the exceptions being testing days and perhaps days on which you have a response paper due). However, do not take this lack of hand-holding to mean that skipping class will have no serious consequences. Not all of the information presented in the lectures will appear in the assigned readings, yet you are responsible for all lecture material. Furthermore, important organizational policies will be announced during class meetings, and lectures will be the best means available for determining what material is likely to appear on the exam. You cannot perform well in a course that you do not attend faithfully, and this course is no exception in that regard.

This course will follow university policy on make-up exams/essays. Extensions are available only under the most dire and clearly documented circumstances: a death in the family, or an illness or debilitating injury spanning a majority of the time during which you should have worked on the assignment. Even in these exceptional cases, you are responsible for informing the professor ahead of time, when circumstances permit, that an assignment will be late. Failure to do so will remove any chance of having the absence excused. Late assignments will be penalized five points per day if the delay is not excused, and it is your responsibility to ensure that late work reaches the teaching staff (i.e., simply placing something in a mailbox is not enough). Note: Adam and Kirill do not have authority to grant extensions, even under the permissible instances; only Steve may do this.

All of the material you submit for class is supposed to reflect your own work. If you copy answers from someone else’s exam, that constitutes cheating and can result in serious disciplinary action on the part of the professor and/or the university. If you submit someone else’s writing as though it is yours, even if the copied portion only amounts to an uncredited sentence or paragraph, you have committed plagiarism and again can expect to face harsh disciplinary action. Check with the teaching staff if you are not certain whether a particular form of borrowing constitutes plagiarism.

Course Outline - Readings are organized on a weekly basis, as reflected on the following pages. You should try to read the assigned material before or during the week for which it is scheduled. Note that, although the topics are listed in week-long chunks, some topics actually may take more or less time. For that reason, it is important to pace your reading according to the schedule rather than according to the content of lectures in class.
AMERICA'S LAST SUICIDE ATTEMPT

THE PERMANENT CAMPAIGN
FPV, pp. 3-25
Cronin, "Direct Democracy"
SL, pp. 450-457

PART I - FOUNDATIONS OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

THE TWO REVOLUTIONS
FPV, pp. A-3 thru A-6
Declaration of Independence
FPV, pp. 28-40
Chap. 2
SL, pp. 59-64
Hofstadter, "The American Political Tradition"
SL, pp. 676-682
Friedman, "Free to Choose"

THE CONSTITUTION
FPV, pp. 40-54
Chap. 2
SL, pp. 105-109
Madison, "Federalist #51"
SL, pp. 57-74, 82-85
Chap. 3 (skip "State and Local Government" section)
SL, pp. 138-141
Osborne, "Laboratories of Democracy" (end: ...new national agenda)
SL, pp. 691-693
Thompson, "Power to the People" (end: ...out closer to home)
FPV, pp. A-7 thru A-24
U.S. Constitution (skim)

AMERICAN POLITICAL CULTURE
FPV, pp. 89-118
Chap. 4 (all)
SL, pp. 3-6
Tocqueville, "Democracy in America"
SL, pp. 7-10
Bryce, "The American Commonwealth"
SL, pp. 17-26
Putnam, "Bowling Alone"
SL, pp. 26-39
Ladd, "The Ladd Report"

PART II - COMPONENTS OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

CONGRESS
FPV, pp. 279-309
Chap. 9 (all)
SL, pp. 183-185
Starobin, "Pork: A Time-Honored Tradition..."
SL, pp. 185-190
Ellwood/Patashnik, "In Praise of Pork"
SL, pp. 190-203
Sinclair, "Unorthodox Lawmaking"
SL, pp. 158-164
Fenno, "Home Style"

February 14
First Examination (covers material up through Week 4)
Week 5 (2/16-2/18) THE PRESIDENCY
FPV, pp. 312-347 Chap. 10 (skip "The Two Presidencies") 36 48
SL, pp. 253-262 Gergen, "Eyewitness to Power" 10
FPV, pp. 496-497 Chap. 14 (Aftershock only) 2

Week 6 (2/21-2/25) THE BUREAUCRACY
FPV, pp. 350-378, 387-392 Chap. 11 (skip Monetary Policy and Foreign Policy parts) 35 64
SL, pp. 280-295 Reich, "Locked in the Cabinet" 16
SL, pp. 305-312 Osborne/Gaebler, "Reinventing Government" 8
SL, pp. 395-399 SCOTUS, PGA Tour v. Casey Martin (start: As we have noted...) 5

Week 7 (2/28-3/4) POLITICAL PARTIES
SL, pp. 65-71 Madison, "Federalist #10" 7 43
SL, pp. 573-582 Guinier, "Tyranny of the Majority" 10
FPV, pp. 237-256 Chap. 8 (end before "Parties versus Interest Groups") 20
SL, pp. 595-600 Baer, "Reinventing Democrats" (end: ...Clinton's second term) 6

Monday, March 7 MIDTERM OF SEMESTER

Week 8 (3/7-3/11) INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP PARTICIPATION
FPV, pp. 256-276 Chap. 8 (starting with "Parties versus Interest Groups") 21 57
SL, pp. 482-491 Greider, "Who Will Tell the People" 10
SL, pp. 490-503 Balz/Brownstein, "Storming the Gates" 5
SL, pp. 474-482 Birnbaum, "The Lobbyists" 9
FPV, pp. 176-187 Chap. 6 (all) 12

Week 9 (3/14-3/18) SPRING BREAK! NO CLASS!!!

PART III - INPUTS INTO THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

Week 10 (3/21-3/25) NATIONAL ELECTIONS
FPV, pp. 196-233 Chap. 7 (all) 38 62
SL, pp. 541-550 Johnson, "No Place for Amateurs" 10
SL, pp. 557-564 Ansolabehere/Iyengar, "Going Negative" 8

Monday, March 28 Second Examination (covers material for weeks 5 though 10)
FOCUS ON AMERICAN CYNICISM

Week 11 (3/30-4/1)
SL, pp. 79-86  
Mills, "The Power Elite"  
Voss, "The Story of the Two Ivans" (on course Web page)  
SL, pp. 611-618  
Ventura, "I Ain't Got Time to Bleed"

PUBLIC OPINION AND THE MEDIA

Week 12 (4/4-4/8)
FPV, pp. 121-167  
Chap. 5 (skip "Mass Media and the Election Connection")  
SL, pp. 659-670  
Patterson, "The White House Staff: The Advance Office"  
SL, pp. 642-649  
Sabato, "Feeding Frenzy"  
SL, pp. 434-438  
Patterson, "The Phantom Public"  
SL, pp. 444-449  
Jacobs/Shapiro, "Politicians Don't Pander"  
SL, pp. 621-29  
Salisbury, "A Time of Change"

PART IV - OUTPUTS FROM THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

THE JUDICIARY

Week 13 (4/11-4/15)
FPV, pp. 395-427  
Chap. 12 (all)  
SL, pp. 341-347  
Yalof, "Pursuit of Justices" (start: These changes in the political...)  
SL, pp. 328-333  
Irons, "Brennan vs. Rehnquist"

CIVIL LIBERTIES AND CIVIL RIGHTS

Week 14 (4/18-4/22)
FPV, pp. 431-436, 451-461  
Chap. 13 (intro, Criminal Justice, Aftershock sections)  
FPV, pp. 465-487, 494-500  
Chap. 14 (skip after "Hispanics" to "Rights of Americans...")  
SL, pp. 39-46  
West, "Race Matters"  
SL, pp. 368-375  
Kluger, "Simple Justice"  
SL, pp. 550-557  
Jamieson, "Dirty Politics"

PUBLIC POLICY

Week 15 (4/25-4/29)
FPV, pp. 502-515, 529-534  
Chap. 15 (skips parts of Economic Policy)  
SL, pp. 365-368  
Posner, "Security versus Civil Liberties"  
SL, pp. 717-727  
Huntington, "The Clash of Civilizations"  
SL, pp. 699-706  
Funiciello, "Tyranny of Kindness"

Wednesday, 4 May 2005, at 10:30 am in regular classroom  
Final Exam!!!