

## **Introduction to American Government POL102 Summer II 2005**

Social and Behavioral Sciences Building (SBS) N310  
M-W 9:30-12:55

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**Office Hours: M-W 2:00 –4:00 PM or by appointment**

### **Textbook**

The readings are selected chapters of

Wilson& Dilulio **AMERICAN GOVERNMENT: THE ESSENTIALS** (9<sup>th</sup> ed).

We will read almost this entire book except for a few chapters. The textbook is ordered through the university bookstore, which is located in the library. You can also find the book at Stony Books, a bookstore located across the railroad station.

From time to time I will post additional interesting pieces of reading on the website of this course which will be located on the blackboard site. If you have not used Blackboard before here is information provided by the Blackboard concerning access to the site.

You can access class information on-line at: <http://blackboard.sunysb.edu>  
If you have used Stony Brook's Blackboard system previously, your login information (Username and Password) has not changed. If you have never used Stony Brook's Blackboard system , your initial password is your SOLAR ID# and your username is the same as your Stony Brook (sparky) username, which is generally your first initial and the first 7 letters of your last name.

For help or more information see:

<http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/helpdesk/docs/blackboard/bbstudent.php> For problems logging in, go to the helpdesk in the Main Library SINC Site or the Union SINC Site , you can also call: 631-632-9602 or e-mail: [helpme@ic.sunysb.edu](mailto:helpme@ic.sunysb.edu)

## Course requirements

**1.Exams:** There will be a midterm and a final examination. The final will be on August 17<sup>th</sup>, 2005. The exact date of the midterm will be announced at least one week prior to the exam. I will also announce the coverage of the midterm exam at least one week before the exam. Midterm exam will count as **forty** percent of the course grade. The final exam will count as **forty** percent of the grade.

**2. Unannounced quizzes.** There will be 5 unannounced quizzes during the term. In the quizzes I will ask one or two questions which you should answer with no more than a few sentences. Quizzes will cover the material we covered on that class period. Each quiz counts for 5 percent of your course grade. I will only count the highest 4 quizzes. In total quizzes will count for twenty percent of your grade.

**3. Attendance:** There is no mandatory attendance for this course. So you are perfectly free not to attend but this means risking missing quizzes. Five quizzes means on half of our meetings there will be a quiz administered. Still, your physical existence in the class is not required for passing this course.

**4. Extra credit:** Students in this course are encouraged to participate in research conducted by the Department of Political Science. Time and place of each research study will be announced promptly. A research study will typically take no more than an hour. If there are multiple studies offered and if you participate in more than one study you will still get credit for only one participation. If you choose to participate in a research study you will receive 10 points. For example if your final grade is 75 out of 100 and you participated in one research experiment you will be given an additional 10 points and complete the course with 85 out of 100.

In order to get the credit for an experiment you must participate in the experiment before the last class of the experiment. Make sure you indicate you are in Pol 102 to the experimenter and sign the participation sheet legibly in order to get the credit.

<b>Midterm exam:</b>	40 %
<b>Final exam:</b>	40 %
<b>Four highest quizzes:</b>	20%
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<b><u>Total:</u></b>	<b>100%</b>

I do not hold you responsible for attending the course however every student is strongly encouraged to attend the course. For most of the course we will follow the textbook but lectures and the text will not overlap perfectly. I will expect you to show your knowledge not only about what is in the text but what is in the lecture as well. The exams will cover both the textbook and my lectures.

You will get the maximum benefit from the course if you are familiar with the material to be covered in the lectures. Try to read the relevant chapters before we discuss it in class.

Finally, if you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may impact your coursework, please contact Disability Support Services, 128 ECC Building 632-6748. They will determine with you what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential.

Students requiring emergency evacuation assistance are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and with DSS. For procedures and information see <http://www.sunysb.edu/facilities/ehs/fire/disabilities.shtml> .

## **Course Topics and Readings**

### **July 11**

**Overview and course organization.**

**Reading:** No readings

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## **Part I : Setting the Framework**

### **July 13**

Setting the Framework: Constitution and Federalism

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapters 2 and 3

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## **Part II: Mass Political Behavior**

### **July 18**

**Political Culture and Public Opinion I**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapters 4

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### **July 20**

**Political Culture and Public Opinion II**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapter 5, read chapter 10 pages 263-270, scan the rest of the chapter.

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### **July 25**

**Political Participation and Elections**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapters 6 and 8

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**July 27**

**Political Parties**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapter 7

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**August 1**

**Interest Groups**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapter 9

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**August 3**

**Midterm Exam**

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**Part III Institutions of Government**

**August 8**

**The Congress**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapter 11

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**August 10**

**The Presidency**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapter 12

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**August 15**

**The Bureaucracy and the Judiciary**

**Reading:** Wilson & Dilulio Chapters 13 and 14

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**August 17**

**Final Exam**

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