



PS 1010

Foundations of Government



Instructor: S. Morris
Peck Hall 209-A
sdmorris@mtsu.edu
Office Hours: 9-12 M-F

Fall 2009
8:00-8:55 MWF
Peck Hall 211

Course web site: <http://elearn.mtsu.edu>

SYLLABUS

Introduction/ Course Objectives

The purpose of this introductory course is to learn something about the nature of politics. By the end of the course, you should have a basic understanding of: a) some of the major concepts and debates related to power, authority, the role of government, legitimacy, the rule of law, nationalism, modernism, androcentrism, etc, b) the scientific study of politics; c) the major differences among nation-states, including their internal organization and operation, different forms of elections and electoral system, democracy, the nature of authoritarianism, etc; and d) the basic mechanics of the relationship among nation-states along political and economic lines. The course strives to ignite some interest in politics by demonstrating both the importance of politics and the dynamic nature of its study. In short, we want to raise as many questions as we do answers. This course will help you understand what goes on around you and help prepare you for more advanced courses in political science and international relations.

Texts

- Martin Slann, *Introduction to Politics: Governments and Nations in the Twenty First Century* 4th edition. Thomas, 2008.
- George Orwell, *1984*.
- Other short readings will be made available.

Methods/ Assignments/Activities

We will try to use a range of methods in this class to accomplish these objectives. This includes lecture/presentations, active in-class discussion, simulations, radio news stories, and readings. There is no outside research assignment *per se*, but everyone will prepare a short paper on one of two supplemental readings. There is also a take-home portion of the exam dealing with the novel *1984*.

1. Lectures and In-Class Activities. The lectures, simulations and in-class discussions will acquaint you with the basic tools of politics. Powerpoint presentations will be made available on-line. You are expected to attend class and participate in the in-class activities. I take roll on randomly selected days and excessive absences will affect your final grade.

2. Readings. The Slann text book is rather short and easy to read. I will not cover the materials from the book in class since I assume that you can read it and understand it on your own. The book supplements what we do in class. The book *1984* should be read during the course of the semester. We will jointly discuss the book later in the semester and work together to draft essays (the take home portion of the final exam) where we relate the book to what we have learned in the course. See the course schedule for the list of readings.

3. Essay. Everyone will prepare a brief 2- page paper based on one of two historic debates. Both require some brief background reading:

A) *The Enlarged Republic*. This looks at the historic debate between Federalists and Antifederalists

on expanding the power of the federal government in the U.S.

B). *Fate of Melos Debate*. This is the historic debate contained in Thucydides's *The Peloponnesian War*. The debate exemplifies competing worldviews and dilemmas on international relations.

4. Exams. They had to be in here somewhere. Right? Two exams: a mid-term and a final covering everything we do in class and the Slann text. The final will include an in-class portion and an out-of-class essay on the novel. The final is not comprehensive. Everyone must take these exams.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS – GRADE DISTRIBUTION

- Attendance, Participation, and Essay on *The Enlarged Republic* OR *Fate of Melos* (**20% of the final grade**)
- Exam 1 and Exam 2 (**60% of the final grade**)
- Out-of-class portion of the Final on *1984* (**20% of the final grade**)

Extra Credit?

We could all use some extra credit! Two ways to obtain additional points on both exams:

a) Listen to NPR stories on recent political happenings preferably abroad. The web site provides instructions. After you have listened to the story, send me two very short paragraphs (half a page) by email: one paragraph should briefly summarize the story; the other should relate it to something from the class. Two stories are equal to 5 extra points on an exam, but 5 stories will earn you 10 points (I am not real good at math); OR b) attend a pre-approved event on campus focusing on politics. I will keep you informed of acceptable events. One event is worth 5 points, but it takes 3 to get 10 points. Maximum 10 points extra per exam.

OTHER

Since all classes do not progress at the same rate, the instructor may wish to modify the above requirements or their timing as circumstances dictate. For example, the instructor may wish to change the number and frequency of exams, or the number and sequence of assignments. However, the students must be given adequate notification. Moreover, there may be non-typical classes for which these requirements are not strictly applicable in each instance and may need modification. If such modification is needed, it must be in writing and conform to the spirit of this policy statement.

Inclement Weather and Class Cancellation Policy

If Rutherford County Schools are closed (closings are posted by 6:00 a.m. and can be found on all local networks and at <http://newschannel5.com/snow/closings.html>), check your email before coming to campus. I will announce class cancellations via email only. If you do not hear from me, we will meet as scheduled. If the university is closed for any reason, we will not have class.

Withdrawal and Drop Policy

The deadline to drop this course without a grade is September 11. Scholarship recipients need to be especially cognizant of the impact of dropping a course on scholarship eligibility (see below).

ADA Accommodation Policy

If you have a disability that may require assistance or accommodation, or you have questions related to any accommodation for testing, note takers, readers, etc., please contact the Office of Disabled Student Services (898-2783) with questions about such services.

Tennessee Lottery Scholarship

To retain Tennessee Education Lottery Scholarship eligibility, you must earn a cumulative TELS GPA of 2.75 after 24 and 48 attempted hours and a cumulative TELS GPA of 3.0 thereafter. You may qualify with a 2.75 cumulative GPA after 72 attempted hours (and subsequent semesters), if you are enrolled full-time and maintain a semester GPA of at least 3.0. A grade of C, D, F, or I in this class may negatively impact TELS eligibility. Dropping a class after 14 days may also impact eligibility; if you withdraw from this class and it results in an enrollment status of less than full time, you may lose eligibility for your lottery scholarship. Lottery recipients are eligible to receive the scholarship for a maximum of five years from the date of initial enrollment, or until a bachelor degree is earned. For additional Lottery rules, please refer to your Lottery Statement of Understanding form, review lottery requirements on the web at <http://scholarships.web.mtsu.edu/telsconteligibility.htm>, or contact the Financial Aid Office at 898-2830.

Should the information in this paragraph conflict with the information provided by the State, the latter should be considered accurate and binding.

D2L

This course has an accompanying Desire to Learn (D2L) site where you can access the course documents, assigned readings, and internet links. You can access the course page by logging in with you Pipeline ID at <http://elearn.mtsu.edu>.

Course Schedule		
Date	Topics/Assignments	Readings
Week 1 – Aug 31, Sept 2, 4	Introduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course overview • Bruce’s Road 	Slann, Chapter 1: Introduction
Week 2 – Sept 9, 11 (Labor Day Monday)	Guiding Ideas <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Politics, Authority and Government, Nationalism 	Slann, Chapter 2: Government, the State, and Political Philosophy
Week 3 – Sept 14, 16, 18	Guiding Ideas, con’t <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modernism/Postmodernism • Androcentrism/Feminism • Baranga 	Slann, Chapter 3: Political Culture
Week 4 – Sept 21, 23, 25	Internal Aspects of the Nation-State <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the political system • participation • elections 	Slann, Chapter 4: Political Democracy and Authoritarian Government Chapter 5: Legislatures
Week 5 – Sept 28, 30, Oct 2	Internal Aspects, con’t <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different forms of Democracy 	Chapter 6: The Executive: Presidential and Parliamentary Government
Week 6 – Oct 5, 7, 9	Internal Aspects, con’t <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different forms of Authoritarianism • Star Power 	Chapter 7: The Law and the Judiciary
Week 7 – Oct 12, 14, 16	Internal Aspects, con’t <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public policy • Debate/Discussion: <i>The Enlarged Republic</i> 	Chapter 8: Political Parties and Electoral Systems • <i>The Enlarged Republic</i>
Week 8 – Oct 21, 23 (Fall Break)	Review & Mid-term exam (Friday Oct 23)	
Week 9 – Oct 26, 28, 30	External Aspects of the Nation-State <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Interstate System 	Slann, Chapter 9: The Global Political Economy
Week 10 – Nov 2, 4, 6	Interstate System, con’t <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools of Thought: Realism, Idealism, Neomercantalism 	Chapter 10: Political Geography and Demography Chapter 11: Political Violence
Week 11 – Nov 9, 11, 13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Debate/Discussion: <i>The Fate of Melos Debate</i> • Globalization and Globalism 	Chapter 12: The International Constellation
Week 12 – Nov 16, 18, 20	Global Economy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schools of Thought: Modernization, Dependency, World Systems 	Chapter 13: Ethnic Conflict and the International Constellation Chapter 14: Political Terrorism
Week 13 – Nov 23 25 (Thanksgiving Break)	Global Economy, con’t <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Trade Game 	Chapter 15: Summary and Conclusions
Week 14 – Nov 30, Dec 2, 4	Global Environmental Issues <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carbon Mitigation Game Discussion of <i>1984</i>	• <i>Fate of Melos Debate</i>
Week 15 – Dec 7, 9	Review/Discussion	
Wed. 12/16 @ 7:30	Final Exam	