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COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will examine the development of the United States Constitution in the context of comparison to other democracies. The course focuses on the core concepts of political engineering and comparative institutions.

COURSE READINGS

This course will utilize two books (only one of which must be purchased):

Dahl, Robert A. 1998. *On Democracy*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Taylor, Steven L., Matthew S, Shugart, Arend Lijphart, and Bernard Grofman. *A Different Democracy: American Politics and Government in Comparative Perspective*. Unpublished draft manuscript.

Additionally a variety of additional readings will be provided either via online sources or as handouts.

Most "handouts" will be in electronic form and will be distributed via Blackboard.

Also: please review my [classroom rules page](#).

GRADING/EVALUATION

Students will be evaluated on a standard 100 point scale (A=100-90, B=89.9-80, C=79.9-70, D=69.9-60, F=59.9-0). Grades will not be curved.

Keep in mind the following: A=Outstanding, B=Above Average, C=Average, D=Below Average and F=Failing. If you need a particular grade, start working towards it from DAY ONE. It is difficult to be sympathetic to students who "need to get X, but who did not put effort into the course from the start of the term.

Breakdown:

Two Exams (2@25%*)	50%	10/3 & 12/12
Research Project	50%	
Proposal (5%)		10/10
Book Review (5%)		Start 11/2
Constitution Report (5%)		Start 10/12
Presentation (5%)		12/1 or 12/5
Research Paper (30%)		12/1 or 12/5
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	100%	

*10% of each exam comes from your participation in constructing the online study guide

Exam Information

1. Exams will consist of short-answer and short essay questions.
2. No student will be seated for any exam once any other student has completed the exam and left the room.
3. If you are absent for an examination, you must provide verifiable evidence that your absence was unavoidable (e.g., doctor's note). Note: doctor's appointments made for convenience and not medical necessity do not qualify as excused.
4. Make up exam dates will be determined by the professor.
5. All make-up exams will be in a short essay format.

Online Study Guide. Students will be expected to contribute weekly based on the readings and the lectures, leaving comments concerning why they added what they added. I will go back and edit the document as needed. The study guide will be constructed within Blackboard.

The exam will be based off the study guide.

Students who fail to participate will not only lose 10% off their exam, but will not be provided the final version of the guide. Also, students who do not contribute to the study guide will not be allowed to participate in in-class reviews.

The exact process will be discussed in class.

Research Project. Each student will be assigned a country for their research project, which will include a research proposal and annotated bibliography, a book review, a constitution report, an in-class presentation, and a research paper.

- The proposal will consist of a half page to a page statement and an annotated bibliography of 10 sources (8 of which must be scholarly and at least 3 must be books). Course materials do not count towards the 10.
- The constitution report consists of a 1 page summary (handed out in class) and brief (no more than 5 minutes) presentation to the class. The report should include a basic

description of your country's constitution (along the lines of the basic info in Taylor, et al., C3) and ways in which it is similar or different to the US Constitution.

- The book review consists of a 1-2 page review of a book (handed out in class) from your proposal and a brief (no more than 5 minutes) presentation about the book.
- A ~15 pp research paper analyzing a democracy (list will be provided) in a manner along the line of the variables presented in Taylor, et al. Each student will do their own case.
- A 10-12 minutes classroom presentation on your country (including a PowerPoint presentation).

Participation. All students are expected to read the assigned materials prior to the start of class. Class discussion is a vital part of any college class. Students who fail to read and participate will be penalized.

ADA Policy: Troy University supports Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, which insure that postsecondary students with disabilities have equal access to all academic programs, physical access to all buildings, facilities and events, and are not discriminated against on the basis of disability. Eligible students, with appropriate documentation, will be provided equal opportunity to demonstrate their academic skills and potential through the provision of academic adaptations and reasonable accommodations. Further information, including appropriate contact information, can be found at the following link: <http://www.troy.edu/humanresources/ADAPolicy2003.htm> .

Cell Phone and Other Electronic Device Policy. Use of any electronic device by students in the instructional environment is prohibited unless explicitly approved on a case-by-case basis by the instructor of record or by the Office of Disability Services in collaboration with the instructor. Cellular phones, pagers, and other communication devices may be used for emergencies, however, but sending or receiving non-emergency messages is forbidden by the University. Particularly, use of a communication device to violate the Troy University "Standards of Conduct" will result in appropriate disciplinary action (See the Oracle.)

In order to receive emergency messages from the University or family members, the call receipt indicator on devices must be in the vibration mode or other unobtrusive mode of indication. Students receiving calls that they believe to be emergency calls must answer quietly without disturbing the teaching environment. If the call is an emergency, they must move unobtrusively and quietly from the instructional area and notify the instructor as soon as reasonably possible. Students who are expecting an emergency call should inform the instructor before the start of the instructional period.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE

Note: The Professor reserves the right to make adjustments to this schedule as needed.

8/17 Course introduction and overview.

I. Setting Context: Democracy

A. Overview

Taylor, et al. C1 (8/19)

B. Democracy

Dahl, C1-C7 (8/22, 8/24, 8/26)

Dahl, C8-C15 + appendices (8/29, 8/31, 9/2)

9/5 Labor Day Holiday

II. Political Engineering and Constitutions

A. Political Engineering and the US Constitution

1. Overview

Taylor, et al., C2 (9/7)

2. The US Example (9/9, 9/12)

Articles of Confederation

Plans: Virginia, New Jersey, Hamilton, Pinckney

US Constitution

3. Madisonian Thought (9/14, 9/16, 9/19)

Federalist 10 & 51

Dahl, Robert A. 2005. "James Madison: Republican or Democrat?"
Perspectives on Politics, 3,3 (September): 439-448.

McLean, Iain. 2003. "Before and After Publius: The Sources and Influence of Madison's Political Thought." in Samuel Kernell, ed. 2003. *James Madison: The Theory and Practice of Republican Government*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Kernell, Samuel. 2003 “The True Principles of Republican Government’: Reassessing James Madison’s Political Science.” in Samuel Kernell , ed. 2003. *James Madison: The Theory and Practice of Republican Government*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

B. Constitutions

Taylor, et al., C3 (9/21)

Elkins, Zachary, Tom Ginsburg, and James Melton. 2009. *The Endurance of National Constitutions*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press., C1-C3. (9/23, 9/26)

Tsebelis, George. 2000. “Veto Players and Institutional Analysis” *Governance: An International Journal of Policy and Administration*, 13, 4 (October): 441–474. (9/28, 9/30)

10/3 Mid-Term Exam

III. Federalism (10/5, 10/7, 10/10)

10/10 Proposals Due

Taylor, et al., C3

Article IV (and other relevant portions of the Constitution)

Federalist 39

Stepan, Alfred. 2004a. “Toward a New Comparative Politics of Federalism, Multinationalism, and Democracy: Beyond Rikerian Federalism.” in Edward L. Gibson, ed. *Federalism and Democracy in Latin America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Stepan, Alfred. 2004b. “Veto Players in Unitary and Federal Systems.” in Edward L. Gibson, ed. *Federalism and Democracy in Latin America*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

IV. Elections, Parties and Interest Groups

10/12 Constitution Reports Start

A. Elections and Electoral Systems (10/12, 10/14)

Taylor, et al., C5.

Norris, Pippa. 1997. "Choosing Electoral Systems: Proportional, Majoritarian and Mixed Systems." *International Political Science Review/Revue internationale de science politique*, Vol.18, 3 (July): 297-312.

B. Political Parties (10/17, 10/19)

Taylor, et al., C6

Reading on parties TBA

C. Interest Groups (10/21, 10/31)

Taylor, et al., C7

Streeck and Kenworthy

V. Legislative Power (11/2, 11/4, 11/7)

11/2 Book Reviews Start

Taylor, et al., C8

Article I (and other relevant passages)

Tsebelis and Money, *Bicameralism*: C1 and C2.

VI. Executive Power (11/9, 11/14, 11/16)

Taylor, et al., C9

Article II (and other relevant passages)

Shugart, Matthew Soberg and Stephan Haggard. 2001. "Institutions and Public Policy in Presidential Systems" in Stephan Haggard and Mathew D. McCubbins, eds. *Presidents, Parliaments and Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Reading on mixed systems TBA

11/11 Veteran's Day Holiday

VII. Judicial Power (11/18, 11/28)

Taylor, et al., C10

Article III (and other relevant passages)

Reading on constitutional interpretation/judicial review TBA.

11/21-11/25 Fall Break/Thanksgiving Day Holidays

VIII. Public Policy (11/30)

Taylor, et al., C11

12/1 & 12/5 Presentations/Paper's Due

12/12 (Monday): Final Exam, 2-4pm