

Government 201

Fall Semester, 2017
MWF 10-10:50 a.m. (S01)
MWF 11-11:50 a.m. (S02)
Tyler Hall 133
Blackboard Course Website
Facebook Group Page

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Office Hours: Mondays 2:00-4:00, or by
appointment

Introduction to American Government and Politics

Americans report record levels of dissatisfaction with their government. Only 19% trust the federal government to do what is right most or all of the time, and 60% think that the federal government has too much power. Approximately three-quarters of Americans say that most elected officials put their own interests ahead of the interests of the country. Moreover, Public Policy Polling opinion polls consistently find that when asked to compare the favorability of Congress to the favorability of a series of people, processes, groups, and other things, the American people rate Congress lower than root canals, head lice, cockroaches, and used-car salesmen.¹

Our task in this course will be two-fold. First, we will identify why so many Americans have become disenchanted with their government and elected officials. Second, we will critically assess the validity of these perceptions. In order to address these complicated and multi-faceted issues, we will deeply explore the origins, operations, and consequences of our political institutions, as well as how those institutions shape the preferences and behaviors of voters and the people they elect to represent them. The goal of this course is to help you better understand the incentives and motivations of these various actors in the American political system so that you can interpret what you read and hear about American politics in a more analytical fashion. Consequently, this course serves simultaneously as both an introduction to American government and an introduction to the theories and methods of studying political science more generally.

We will focus on applying the ideas and theories generated by scholars in the discipline to understand the contemporary political and policy issues facing our country, including challenges to our country's political norms; the societal debate over freedom of speech and association; the seemingly perpetual stalemate over policy negotiations; and concerns about fake news during the 2016 election. We will discuss these and other current topics in order to address broader questions about American politics, including:

- How do the constitutional “rules of the game” structure the choices that political actors make?
- What are political norms and why do they matter?
- Why have debates about the proper role of the federal government persisted for over 200 years?
- Why is Congress so dysfunctional?
- What is the relationship between the public and their elected representatives?
- How has growing polarization altered the political behavior of both elected officials and voters?

¹ Fortunately for Congress, it has a higher approval rating than telemarketers, the ebola virus, meth labs, and Lindsay Lohan. More information can be found [here](#) and [here](#)

Developing informed answers to these questions will guide us in the central pursuit of the course: a critical evaluation of Americans' attitudes toward their government. Are Americans frustrated with their system's features or its bugs? Are their criticisms based on an accurate understanding of how government operates, or on misperceptions and unrealistic expectations?

Teaching Philosophy

The subject matter of a course serves as a tool to help you develop skills to become a better thinker and communicator. As a professor, in all of my courses, I hope that my students will improve their ability to:

Ask good questions. Learning necessitates curiosity.

Assess and synthesize information. Use the course material to arrive at informed opinions.

Engage in analytical reasoning. Respectfully discuss and deliberate ideas.

Communicate effectively. Continue to improve the skills necessary to write or present a clearly argued and well-developed discourse.

Course Philosophy

The goals of this particular course are multi-faceted.

To serve its function as a required, entry-level course in the Government Department—and as the foundational course in American politics required by many upper-division classes—the course is designed to teach you a set of fundamental concepts about the structure and function of American government. It should give you the cognitive infrastructure and vocabulary to put your future course material in context. The primary purpose of the three Concepts Tests (described elsewhere) is to assess your progress on this dimension—the mastery of key ideas and terms in the course.

To serve its function as a course in a liberal arts curriculum, this course is designed to facilitate critical thinking and communication skills. Long after you've forgotten what the line item veto is, for example, I hope that what will endure is what you learn in this course about how to think analytically, how to read effectively, and how to write clearly. This is the secondary dimension on which I will be able to evaluate your progress in the course, but the gains on this dimension will be most visible only to you and to your professors in future courses.

Finally, to serve its function as preparation for your post-collegiate life, this course is designed to help give you the tools to be an engaged member of society. Only you will be able to evaluate yourself on this dimension. I hope this course motivates you to action—whether that is working “inside the Beltway” in Washington, D.C., helping to register people to vote, or applying what you learn about how our government functions to help your friends and family move beyond the simplistic conclusion that “the system is broken” to articulate why the system operates the way it does.

My Expectations

I aim to make class worth your time, and I ask for the same in return. I expect that you will read the course material before the beginning of class and come prepared to participate in the discussion. I have posted a variety of handouts on Blackboard that I hope will help you get the most out of the course. Attendance every day and active class participation are essential components of this class. However, I

recognize that GOVT 201 is only one of your classes in a full course load, and that many of you have important work and family obligations outside of school. If you take your education seriously and communicate with me (with plenty of advance notice) about obstacles or challenges that may affect your performance in the course, I am happy to work with you to find solutions to help you succeed.

Course Requirements

Part of my teaching philosophy is that students should have choice and flexibility in the course assignments and should take ownership over their learning. Thus, in addition to flexibility and choice on which assignments to complete, you will have options on the weight assigned to the various elements of the course. You will complete a Grade Contract due on **Wednesday, September 13th**, which will be a binding commitment of the assignments you plan to do, the weight of those assignments, and the due dates of those assignments.

1. Participation and Engagement: A total of 25% of your overall grade will come from requirements related to your active participation in the course. This includes in-class participation and your engagement out of class (coming to office hours, posting on the course Facebook page, and participating as a subject in department research studies). Also included in this category is one required short (2-3 double-spaced pages) critical analysis paper, and an optional data visualization blog assignment.

2. Core Comprehension: The remaining 75% of your grade will be composed of the conceptual examination and written assignments in the course. There will be three concepts tests, a final exam essay, and an independent assignment (5-7 double-spaced pages).

See the Grade Contract handout for more information about the assignments.

Writing Expectations

My standards for writing are high. Because of this, I do my best to 1) make my expectations clear at the outset of the course, 2) offer you low stakes opportunities to get feedback on your writing early in the semester, 3) highlight the writing mistakes frequently made by students. I also offer optional writing workshops in advance of the Independent Assignment due dates. More information will be provided closer to the workshop dates, but you must have a complete—albeit rough—draft of your paper printed out for the workshop.

Independent Assignment A
M, October 30th, 8:00 a.m.
M, October 30th, 4:30 p.m.

Independent Assignment B
M, November 13th, 8:00 a.m.
M, November 13th, 4:30 p.m.

Independent Assignment C
M, November 27th, 8:00 a.m.
M, November 27th, 4:30 p.m.

Grading Policies

Quality

I reserve A's for excellent work. B's are for solid, above-average work while C's are for work of average quality. D's indicate work that is below average, and F's indicate work that is substantially below expectations.

100-93	A	89-87	B+	79-77	C+	
92-90	A-	86-83	B	76-73	C	
		82-80	B-	72-70	C-	etc.

Attendance

Class attendance is required, though participation points will not be awarded simply for showing up. You have three unexcused absences; each unexcused absence after the third will result in a two-point deduction in your participation grade. Habitual tardiness to class bothers me and extreme cases can affect your participation grade; if you anticipate that you will be late with some frequency (for example, if you have a class on the other side of campus with a long-winded professor), please make me aware of the situation and plan to sit near the door. In the case of an extended absence (missing more than three consecutive days of class), you will need to provide documentation from the Dean of Students Office.

Late Policies—Exams

In fairness to everyone, students who arrive late for an exam may not work overtime. The only valid reasons for missing and rescheduling an exam are due to a university-approved reasons (a documented illness, religious observance, death in the family or similarly grave family emergency, or a W&M-sponsored travel commitment that you have discussed with me before the assignment is due), or, during final exams only (as W&M allows), you have several exams in a row. If you are sick enough to miss a test, you must be sick enough to go to the doctor. You must 1) email me before the exam to let me know about your illness and 2) make every effort to take the test in the most expeditious manner possible. I prefer to give students the benefit of the doubt, but if I perceive that you are taking advantage of the situation, you will be subject to a penalty.

If you miss an exam for another reason, you can take a makeup exam for which the maximum grade you can earn is a C (75%).

Late Policies—Written Assignments

Part of the Grade Contract is the opportunity to request an extension on one of the two written assignments. Because I give you this option in advance, I do not grant extensions without penalty on assignments except in the case of the university-approved reasons outlined above. (The earlier you let me know about a situation that may affect your ability to turn in your paper on time, the better.)

However, I believe it is a lose-lose situation if you scramble to complete a paper for a deadline and don't turn in your highest quality work: you've missed out on an opportunity to become a better thinker and writer, and I have to grade a sub-par paper. Therefore, I have created a grade penalty system for extensions and late work that I hope incentivizes you to prioritize turning in your best work, even with a slight penalty, as opposed to adhering to a deadline and turning in sloppy work.

Up to two weeks before the due date, you can fill out a Grade Contract Addendum to request a change in topic (e.g. switching Independent Assignment A to C) or an extension (of up to one week in length).

You will receive a 1% deduction on the assignment for making the request. An additional 1% deduction is added each day you delay your request within the two-week window. Therefore, if you ask for a change on the day the assignment is due, the maximum grade you can receive is an 85%.

I will collect assignments at the beginning of class, and assignments turned in after class are subject to a 10% penalty. After that first day, assignments will be penalized an additional half-letter grade (5%) for each day (or fraction there of) they are late until the maximum grade possible is a 60. Weekend days count. So, if you turn in an assignment after class but before midnight on the day the assignment is due, the maximum grade possible is a 90. An assignment turned in the day after the due date will receive a maximum score of 85; two days late will receive a maximum of 80; three days late, 75, etc. If you are submitting your paper late, you must email it to me for time-stamping purposes and submit a hard copy ASAP.

I will not accept assignments after the Friday of the last week of classes. Computer malfunctions will not be considered a legitimate excuse for the late submission of assignments, so plan accordingly.

Action	Days +/- Due Date	Penalty	Max Grade
Assignment switch or extension requested (Grade Contract Addendum submitted electronically to Professor Settle)	-14 or more	1%	99
	-10	5%	95
	-5	10%	90
	-2	13%	87
	-1	14%	86
	Due Date	15%	85
Assignment submitted (Assignment submitted electronically to Professor Settle for time-stamping; hard copy submitted ASAP)	Due Date, after class	10%	90
	+1	15%	85
	+2	20%	80
	+3	25%	75
	+4	30%	70
	+5	35%	65
	+6 or more	40%	60

Extra Credit

Extra credit will rarely, if ever, be available. Consequently, it is imperative that you do your best on each and every assignment.

Grade Appeals

I do not communicate about grades over email. If you are not in class the day an assignment is passed back, it is your responsibility to come to my office hours or make an appointment to pick it up. If you are dissatisfied with your grade on an assignment, you can choose between two options. If you want to talk about your work and discuss ways you can improve on *future* assignments, I am happy to meet with you in office hours or by appointment. You cannot appeal your grade after we have this conversation. Therefore, if you are positive that you want to appeal your grade, you need to write a one-page double-spaced explanation of why you think your work merits a higher grade. After reading your appeal, I will re-grade your assignment. Your grade can go up, stay the same, or go down. We will *then* schedule a meeting to talk about your work.

Plagiarism

I assume that students take the Honor Code and plagiarism as seriously as I do and that academic

misconduct will not become an issue in this class. For any questions about policies regarding cheating, plagiarism, or other types of academic dishonesty, please see the William & Mary Honor Council's web site and the discussion of the Honor Code and plagiarism in the Student Handbook. I will initiate an Honor Council proceeding for any student whom I judge to have plagiarized any part of their work or to have cheated in any way, and at a bare minimum, I will recommend that the student receive an F for the course.

Misc. Policies

Turn off your cell phones before coming to class. If you are expecting an important call, tell me before class, keep your phone on vibrate, sit near the door, and leave quietly when you receive the call.

I prefer that you do not use your laptop in class. We will discuss this in more detail on the first day of class, but if you feel that you must use your laptop, please be especially conscious of the signals you are sending to me and to your peers with your body language and eye contact.

William & Mary accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who needs an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2509 or at sas@wm.edu to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see www.wm.edu/sas.

Course Materials

I recommend that you purchase the following book, although there will be copies of the book available on reserve in the library. While it is on sale in the campus bookstore, I am confident sleuthing on Amazon, half.com, or abebooks.com will result in used copies at lower cost. There will be a copy of the textbook available at the library.

Kernell, Sam, Gary Jacobson, and Thad Kousser. 2016. *The Logic of America Politics*, 7th Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

I encourage all students to use the website set up for *Logic* (<https://edge.sagepub.com/kernell7e>). The website has useful links to chapter study guides, quizzes, flash cards, and vocabulary crossword puzzles.

In addition to this text, additional original research articles and readings will be available via the course website on Blackboard.

I also encourage you to regularly read the news from a reliable source, such as the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, or the *Wall Street Journal*. There are dozens of other good sources of information.

Readings and Calendar

I reserve the right to make minor modifications to the assigned reading but I will not increase the reading load¹

Books

Kernell, Sam, Gary Jacobson, and Thad Kousser. 2016. *The Logic of America Politics*, 6th or 7th Edition. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press.

Articles and Book Excerpts (available on Blackboard)

Azari, Julia R. and Jennifer K. Smith. 2012. "Unwritten Rules: Informal Institutions in Established Democracies." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(1): 37-55

Barber, M, and N McCarty. 2013. "Causes and Consequences of Polarization." In *Negotiating Agreement in Politics*, ed. Jane Mansbridge and Cathie Jo Martin. American Political Science Association: Washington, D.C.

Barnett, Randy. "A Bill of Federalism" in *Forbes Magazine*, May 20, 2009

Bernstein, Jonathan. "The 1960 Book That Explains Why Trump is a Failure." Bloomberg News. August 16, 2017.

Binder, and Maltzman.

Cox, Gary and Mathew McCubbins. Excerpts from *Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives*

Cruz, Ted and Ron DeSantis. "If Republicans Really Want to Drain the Swamp, Here's How to Do It." *Washington Post*, December 9, 2016.

Dodd, Lawrence and Bruce Oppenheimer. 2013. "The House in a Time of Crisis: Economic Turmoil and Partisan Upheaval." *Congress Reconsidered*.

Drezner, Daniel. "Weakest. Commander in Chief. Ever." *Washington Post*, August 15, 2017.

Epstein, Lee and Thomas G. Walker. 2009. *Constitutional Law for a Changing America: Rights, Liberties, and Justice*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press

Farmer, Rick et al. *Legislating Without Experience*. Excerpts

Flynn, D.J., Brendan Nyhan, and Jason Reifler. 2017. "The Nature and Origins of Misperceptions: Understanding False and Unsupported Beliefs About Politics." *Advances in Political Psychology* 38(1):127-150.

Frum, David. "The Seven Broken Guardrails of Democracy." *The Atlantic*. May 31, 2016

Geiger, Abigail. "16 Striking Findings from 2016." Pew Research Center. December 21, 2016.

Gelernter, David. "Back to Federalism: The Proper Remedy for Polarization." *The Weekly Standard*. April 10, 2006.

Gerhardt, Michael and Richard Painter. 2017. "Majority Rule and the Future of Judicial Selection." *Wisconsin Law Review*.

Green, Donald, Bradley Palmquist and Eric Schickler. 2002. *Partisan Hearts and Minds*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Grier, Peter and Linda Feldmann. "Democracy Experts to Trump: Just Because You Can, Doesn't Mean You Should." *The Christian Science Monitor*. May 17, 2017

Hetherington, Marc J. 2009. "Review Article: Putting Polarization in Perspective." *British Journal of Political Science* 39: 413-448.

Huddy, Leonie, Lilliana Mason, and Lene Aarøe. 2015. "Expressive Partisanship: Campaign Involvement, Political Emotion, and Partisan Identity." *American Political Science Review* 109(01): 1-17.

Jones, Sarah. "How Donald Trump Poisons Free Speech." *New Republic*. August 23, 2017.

Kernell, Sam. *Going Public*. Excerpts

Lelkes, Yphtach. 2016. "Mass Polarization: Manifestations and Measurements." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 80(S1): 392-410.

Levinson, Sanford. "If We Have an Imperfect Constitution, Should we Settle for Remarkably Timid Reform?" in *Northwestern University Law Review Colloquy*

Mann, Thomas and Norm Ornstein. *It's Even Worse Than It Looks*. 2012.

Olson, Mancur. 1982. *The Rise and Decline of Nations: Economic Growth, Stagflation, and Social Rigidities*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Rohde, David and John Aldrich. "Consequences of Electoral and Institutional Change." 2010.

Taub, Amanda. "Comey's Firing Tests Strength of 'Guardrails of Democracy.'" *The New York Times*. May 12, 2017

Additional supplementary readings TBD

¹ * and blue font indicates a non-lecture day

ALL CAPS and red indicates a due date or aberration to the schedule

Topic

Readings

Introduction

Aug 30	Why are Americans so dissatisfied with government? <i>What are popular conceptions about how American politics operates?</i>	Prep exercise; refer to class email
Sept 1	Course Logistics Day <i>Class logistics</i>	Syllabus
Sept 4	Toolkit and Analytical Framework: The Logic of American Politics <i>What are the different ways political scientists approach the study of American politics?</i> <i>How does the textbook approach the study?</i> <i>What are the key assumptions underpinning this approach to the study of American politics?</i>	Logic, "A Note to Students" (p. xxix-xxx) Logic, Chapter 1, up until "Collective Action Problems" (pp. 1-8)
Sept 6	Collective Action Problems and Solutions <i>What are collective action problems?</i> <i>Why are they prevalent in politics?</i> <i>How do we solve collective action problems?</i> <i>How do we apply the logic of collective action to the study of politics?</i> <i>What institutions exist to overcome these problems?</i> <i>What collective action problems have we not solved?</i>	Logic, Chapter 1 (pp. 8-35) Olson 1982 (excerpt)
Sept 8	*The Norms of American Politics <i>What are norms and why do they exist?</i> <i>What norms exist in American politics?</i> <i>How important are norms to the operation of the political system?</i>	Azari and Smith 2012 (excerpt)

Constitutional Foundations

Sept 11	Context and the Build Up to the Constitution <i>What were the design flaws in the Articles of Confederation?</i> <i>What were the key problems facing the country before the Constitution was ratified?</i> <i>What were the major points of disagreement among the Framers?</i> <i>How is the system of "checks and balances" designed?</i>	Logic, Chapter 2 (pp. 39-56) The Declaration of Independence
Sept 13	Key Provisions in the Constitution <i>What compromises were made in the Constitution? How does the U.S. Constitution compare to the constitutions in other advanced democracies?</i> <i>What was the debate about between the Federalists and Antifederalists?</i> <i>What were the concerns of the Antifederalists?</i>	Logic, Chapter 2 (pp. 57-79) The Federalist No. 10 The Federalist No. 51 U.S. Constitution

GRADING CONTRACT DUE

Legislative Branch

- Oct 2 **Legislative Organization**
*How did the Framers intend for legislation to be made?
What collective actions problems does Congress need to overcome? What rules and/or structures exist to help solve these problems?*
- Oct 4 **Political Parties and Polarization in Congress**
*What is the role of political parties in the legislature?
How do we measure polarization in Congress?
What are the causes of polarization in Congress?
In what ways do our institutions facilitate polarization?
If Americans hate Congress so much, why do incumbents get re-elected at such high rates?*
- Oct 6 **Negotiation, Bargaining Constraints, and Strategic Manipulation of the Rules**
*What is the connection between public opinion and lawmaking?
Are binding pledges good or bad for representation?
What's the deal with the filibuster?
How do the President and Congress negotiate?
Why can't Congress seem to get anything done?*
- Oct 9 ***Case Study: Health Care Reform**
*Why couldn't Congress pass a bill repealing the Affordable Care Act in 2017 when they did in 2015?
What predictions can we make about the 115th Congress based on the theories of "conditional party government" and "legislative cartels"?*

Executive Branch

- Oct 11 **Institutional Powers of the Presidency**
*What are the institutional powers of the presidency?
How has the presidency changed over time?*
- Oct 13 **Power and Authority in the American Presidency**
*What powers does the president actually have?
What unilateral actions can a president take, and what are the costs of doing so?
Do Americans have reasonable expectations for what a president can accomplish?*
- Oct 16 **NO CLASS - FALL BREAK**
- Oct 18 ***"Going Public" and Trump's Tweets**
*What is theory of "going public"?
On what, if any, issues has President Trump "gone public"?
Does tweeting count as "going public"?*

- Oct 20 ***Norm Violation in Contemporary American Politics** Frum 2016
What American political norms have been violated recently? Taub 2017
When is it a good thing to violate norms? Grier and Feldmann 2017
What are the dangers of norm violation?

Bureaucracy and Judiciary

- Oct 23 **Principal-Agent Problems in the Bureaucracy** Logic, Chapter 8 (pp. 317-355)
Who controls the bureaucracy?
What incentives do bureaucrats have?
What are the implications of the "revolving door" between government, industry, and "K Street?"
- Oct 25 ***High Stakes Nominations** Logic, Chapter 9 (pp. 371-377, 385-396)
Why have judicial nominations become so polarized? Gerhardt and Painter (pp. 263-275)
What are the consequences of this polarization? Binder and Maltzman (optional)

Oct 27 **CONCEPTS TEST 2**

Mass Public

- Oct 30 **Political Attitudes - Public Opinion and Political Knowledge** Logic, Chapter 10 (pp. 398-422)
How do people form opinions about the political world? Huddy, Mason and Aaroe 2015 (pp. 1-5)
Do people have stable and coherent opinions?
Is public opinion meaningful?
How do we interpret public opinion?
How do ideological and psychological processes affect the formation of public opinion?
- Nov 1 **Partisanship, Ideology, and Polarization** Green, Palmquist and Schickler 2002 (pp. 32-51)
What is partisan self-identification? Lelkes 2016 (pp. 392- 403)
How are partisanship and ideology different?
Is the mass public polarized? In what ways?
If so, what causes the public to be polarized?
What are the consequences of increased polarization in the public?
- Nov 3 ***Misconceptions and Fact Checking** Flynn, Nyhan, and Reifler 2017
What kind of information do people have about politics?
Can people process political information in an unbiased manner?
What kind of information do people need to make good political decisions?

INDEPENDENT ASSIGNMENT OPTION A DUE

- Nov 6 **Turnout and Participation** Logic, Chapter 10 (pp. 434-439)
Why do people turnout to vote? Logic, Chapter 11 (pp. 445-449)
What unique factors affect voter turnout for racial and ethnic groups?

minorities?
How does race matter in political behavior?

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VISUALIZING AMERICA ASSIGNMENT DUE

Aggregating Preferences: Parties and Interest Groups

Nov 8	Social Characteristics and Preferences on Social Issues	Geiger 2016 Addtl. reading TBD
Nov 10	Economic Conditions and Preferences on Economic Issues	Geiger 2016 Addtl. reading TBD
Nov 13	Political Parties and Interest Groups: Hyperpluralism and Unequal Voices <i>What is the function of political parties in the electorate?</i> <i>Why do we have only two political parties?</i> <i>What are interest groups supposed to do?</i> <i>Are interest groups valuable for democracy?</i> <i>Which kinds of interest groups are most successful?</i>	Review Chapter 12 (pp. 483-492) Logic, Chapter 13 (pp. 529-555, 561-563) Mann and Ornstein (pp. 67-80)

Campaigns and Elections

Nov 15	Campaigns and Elections <i>How was the party system functioned historically?</i> <i>How do election law and party rules affect campaigns?</i> <i>Why do candidates raise so much money?</i> <i>Why do outside groups air so many negative ads?</i>	Logic, Chapter 11 (pp. 443-445, 458-466) Chapter 12 (pp. 493-525)
Nov 17	Campaign and Interest Group Spending <i>What was the impact of the Citizens United case on campaign finance?</i> <i>Should citizens know who pays for campaign ads?</i> <i>Does money buy influence?</i>	Logic, Chapter 11 (pp. 466-479) Logic, Chapter 13 (pp. 555-563)

INDEPENDENT ASSIGNMENT OPTION B DUE

Nov 20	*Draining the Swamp <i>What is the “swamp” and what would it mean to “drain” it?</i> <i>How effective are Trump’s executive orders on ethics reform?</i> <i>Would term limits accomplish their intended goals?</i>	Excerpts from Farmer et al. 2007 Watch video of Trump’s ethics pledges during 2016 campaign Cruz and DeSantis 2016
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Nov 22/24 **NO CLASS – THANKSGIVING**

Media

Nov 27	Structural Media Bias <i>What incentives encourage the media to cover politics the</i>	Logic, Chapter 14 (pp. 567-581)
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way it does?
Do the media and political campaigns influence the public?
If so, how?

- Nov 29 **Ideological Media Bias**
Is the media ideologically biased? How could we know?
How does the news media contribute to polarization?
Logic, Chapter 14 (pp. 581-606)
Mann and Ornstein (pp. 58-67)
- Dec 1 ***Public Opinion about the Media**
How do changes in technology and society affect the way news is produced and consumed?
What is fake news and how is it different from “FAKE NEWS”?
What is the relationship between trust in the media and trust in government?
Supplemental reading TBD

INDEPENDENT ASSIGNMENT OPTION C DUE

Institutional Reform

- Dec 4 **Institutional Reform**
What institutional fixes have been proposed for various problems in the American political system?
What is the process for amending the Constitution?
Scanned textbook chapter
- Dec 6 ***Debating Reform**
What solutions are most likely to actually occur? Why?
What solutions are likely to be most effective? Why?
Are institutional changes the right approach to fixing the country’s problems?
Skim:
Mann and Ornstein Chapters 5-6. *Focus on the parts most interesting to you*
- Dec 8 **Review Day**
- Dec 12/14 **CONCEPTS TEST 3 AND FINAL EXAM ESSAY**