

# PSCI 1101 - The American Political System

## Fall 2009

Recitation Section 1101-106 - Mondays 8:00am-8:50am, EDUC 136

Recitation Section 1101-107 - Wednesdays 8:00am-8:50am, HLMS 267

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Term: Fall 2009

Office: Ketchum 130

Office Hours: Mondays 9:00-11:00am  
& Tuesdays 10:30-11:30am and by appt.

### Goal of Recitation

Our purpose in this recitation is to develop a deeper understanding of the American political system through reflection on the week's readings. The purpose of this recitation is to help you develop a strong understanding of the American political system, including its institutions, processes and actors. In short, to better equip you to take on the responsibilities of American citizenship. Recitation is a discussion-based, collaborative learning effort that requires the preparation of all participants in order to be successful. This means that you must do the readings and be prepared to ask questions and discuss issues related to the readings. The quality of the recitation and your depth of understanding rests on your own preparation and the quality of reflective discussion by your peers—please do not let each other down!

*Note—This is a supplemental syllabus for PSCI 1101 and should be read in conjunction with the main course syllabus. See Professor Adler's main syllabus on CU Learn for complete course requirements, reading assignments, due dates, and test dates.*

**Requirements and Grading**—20% of the course grade is reserved for work in recitation. Letter Grades are determined using a standard scale (but note that most assignments will be graded on a curve).

- **Attendance** – 5%: Attendance is required at every recitation and will be taken promptly at the beginning of each session at 8:00am. Missing recitation will have a negative impact on your overall course grade. Arriving late to recitation may result in being marked absent and will prevent you from completing the week's quiz in the first few minutes of class (so show up every day and on time!). Additionally, this portion of your grade will include lecture attendance. Attendance at lecture will be taken with iClickers. A "Lecture Absence" occurs whenever you fail to click your iClicker for that day's question(s). Forgotten iClickers, Unregistered iClickers, and other reasons why your iClicker did not register (low battery, wrong signal, etc.) will not be valid excuses and you will be marked absent even if you are physically present in the lecture hall. You will receive an F for your attendance grade if you have six or more absences from recitation and seven or more from lecture (see below for how missing lectures impacts your attendance score).

Lecture Absences	Attendance Grade
0, 1, 2, or 3	A
4	B
5	C
6	D
7 or more	F

- **Participation – 5%:** Your participation will be assessed in several ways throughout the semester ranging from written responses, the quality of your questions, your ability to listen respectfully, and the quality of your contribution to the overall success of each week's activity or discussion. I understand that it is difficult for some students to speak in large groups. The format of recitation allows for participation in large discussions, small groups, and in pairs. If you still find it difficult to participate, please visit my office hours each week to discuss any of the issues around participation or if you are curious about your performance on this part of your grade to date. Note—I consider laptops and mobile devices (cell phones, handheld devices, etc.) as a distraction from discussion and I do not allow their use during recitation.
- **Quizzes and Written Work – 10%:** Over the course of the semester, you will have several quizzes on the week's readings. These may or may not be announced ahead of time so be prepared each week for the possibility of a quiz. These quizzes will be in short answer and/or short essay format and standards of grammar and mechanics should be followed. Each quiz is an opportunity for you to demonstrate your understanding of a theme in each week's reading and to both identify important concepts and critically analyze arguments. Other written assignments will contribute to my assessment of your overall understanding of each week's material. If you miss a quiz as a result of not coming to recitation or arriving late, you will not be able to make it up. I will drop the lowest quiz score at the end of the semester.

### **Class Email List**

I will periodically send out emails to the class list. You are automatically subscribed to the list if you are enrolled in the recitation through your campus email account. The list will allow me to inform you of changes in assignments, schedule, policies, etc. You will be responsible for assignments sent out over the list, including assignments not mentioned in recitation. If you have any questions, please see <http://www.colorado.edu/ITS/emaillists/faq.html> and/or talk to me.

### **Civility and Classroom Environment**

Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Faculty has the professional responsibility to treat all students with understanding, dignity and respect, to guide classroom discussions and to set reasonable limits on the manner in which they and their students express opinions. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender variance, and nationalities. Please speak with me promptly if you feel there is a civility problem in the classroom. See policies at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html> and at [http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student\\_code](http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code).

### **Academic Integrity**

Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. All work is expected to be original, and not previously or simultaneously turned in for credit in another course (unless you get explicit permission from me beforehand). All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the aca-

ademic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council ([honor@colorado.edu](mailto:honor@colorado.edu); 303-725-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). All forms of academic dishonesty will result in an "F" for the course. Ignorance of the University plagiarism policy is irrelevant to the assignment of an "F" in the course for academic dishonesty. Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>.

All students will be required to turn in an electronic version of their written assignments to be checked by Turnitin.com or a similar plagiarism website. By choosing to stay in this class, you are explicitly permitting the professor and TAs to submit your work to this website for confirmation that this plagiarism policy has not been violated.

### **Disabilities Accommodation**

The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) provides protection from illegal discrimination for qualified individuals with disabilities. Students requesting instructional accommodations due to disabilities must arrange for such accommodation. If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs may be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact: 303-492-8671, Willard 322, and <http://www.Colorado.EDU/disabilityservices>

### **Religious Observation**

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to reasonably and fairly deal with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please be sure to notify me *ahead of time* if you know you will need to miss recitation due to a religious observance. See full details at [http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac\\_relig.html](http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html)

### **Sexual Harassment**

The University of Colorado at Boulder policy on Discrimination and Harassment (<http://www.colorado.edu/policies/discrimination.html>), the University of Colorado policy on Sexual Harassment and the University of Colorado policy on Amorous Relationships applies to all students, staff and faculty. Any student, staff or faculty member who believes s/he has been the subject of discrimination or harassment based upon race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Judicial Affairs at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://www.colorado.edu/odh>



## Other Information

If you need to contact me or set up a time to meet outside of my regularly scheduled office hours, please do not hesitate to speak to me after class or send me an email. I check my email at least once daily and usually multiple times per day (although usually not before 7:30am or after 5:00pm). Please note, however, that I usually do not check or respond to emails over weekends so if you need anything from me, please get in touch by 4:00pm on Friday. Otherwise, I will probably not get back to you until Monday morning. If you have questions or do not understand the material, please come to my office hours early in the semester before major due dates and exams. For any other issues or questions you may have, please speak to me personally throughout the semester. This syllabus is subject to change. Changes will be posted online, via email, and/or through handouts.

**Readings for PSCI 1101–Recitation Schedule** Note: Readings are due the week listed and you will be quizzed on them in recitation (i.e. Monday recitations may be quizzed on readings that are not discussed until Tuesday's lecture).

Kernell, Jacobson, and Kousser, *The Logic of American Politics*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (referred to as **KJK**)

Kernell and Smith, eds., *Principles and Practices of American Politics*, 4<sup>th</sup> Edition (referred to as **KS**)

- Week of August 24th: Course Introduction–KJK Preface and Note to Students
- Week of August 31st: Logic in American Politics?–KJK Chp. 1, KS 1-1 and 1-2
- Week of September 7th: The Constitution and its motivations–The Constitution (KJK Appendix), KJK Chp. 2
- Week of September 14th: State Rights versus Federal Supremacy–KJK Chp. 3, KS 3-2
- Week of September 21st: What difference do rules make? A Look at Congressional organization–KJK Chp. 6, KS 6-1
- Week of September 28th: Representation: What does a Representative do?–KS 10-2 and one other reading (TBD)

### \*\*\*October 1st: First Midterm Examination\*\*\*

- Week of October 5th: Presidents, Power, and Policy–KJK Chp. 7, KS, 7-1 and 7-3
- Week of October 12th: Bureaucracy as Agent–KJK Chp. 8, KS 8-1
- Week of October 19th: Composing courts as policy makers?–KJK Chp. 9, KS 9-4
- Week of October 26th: What is the point of parties?–KJK Chp. 12, KS 12-1
- Week of November 2nd: Party Polarization: Is it all that bad?–KS 10-4 and 11-2

### \*\*\*November 3rd: Second Midterm Examination\*\*\*

- Week of November 9th: Do elections and voting matter?–KJK Chp. 11 and KS 11-2 and 12-2
- Week of November 16th: Interest Groups (and Campaign Finance)–KJK Chp. 13, KS 13-2

\*\*\*November 19th: Research Paper Due\*\*\*

- Week of November 23rd: No classes–Thanksgiving Holiday (give thanks).
- Week of November 30th: Should lawmakers listen to public opinion?–KJK Chp. 10
- Week of December 7th: The Media: Informer or Agenda-setter?–KJK Chp. 14, KS 14-3

\*\*\*Monday, December 14th at 7:30pm: Final Examination\*\*\*

*The first duty imposed on those who now direct society is to educate democracy; to put, if possible, new life into its beliefs; to purify its mores; to control its actions; gradually to substitute understanding of statecraft for present inexperience and knowledge of its true interests for blind instincts; to adapt government to the needs of time and place; and to modify it as men and circumstances require.*

*A new political science is needed for a world itself quite new.*

-Alexis De Tocqueville, Democracy in America

