

**Required Readings:**

Theodore Lowi and Benjamin Ginsberg 2002 *American Government: Freedom and Power, Brief 7e.*  
Barbara Norrande and Michael Corbett 2005 *American Government: Using Explorit, 9e.*  
*The New York Times*, daily <<http://www.nytimes.com/>>

**Course Description:**

This course addresses the structure and processes of the American political system. The course is divided into four sections: 1) The Foundations; 2) Institutions; 3) Linkages: People and Representation; and 4) Public Policy. Each section highlights a different aspect of our political system. We study the founding era and the evolution of government to understand how our current system developed. We study institutions to understand how government functions. We study linkages, the connections between people and the government, to understand how and how much we can influence government. We study public policy to understand what government does. In addition to these objectives, the course promotes critical thinking and introduces the methods and practices of the social sciences. The course format includes readings, quizzes, lectures, exercises, tests, discussion, and a comprehensive final exam.

**Course Requirements:**

- 1) Students must complete readings before attempting other course requirements. Readings, exercises, and drafting of answers to discussion questions will be completed offline. Interaction with other students and the instructor, submission of answers to exercises, quizzes, tests and the final will all take place online in the WebCT environment. <http://webct.samford.edu/>
- 2) Course requirements must be completed during the available window for each assignment. Current assignments must be completed before the next unit of the course may be taken. **Missed assignments will result in a score of zero.** Missed assignments may be excused with verifiable documentation of accident, illness, or legal obligation.
- 3) Cheating is giving or receiving unauthorized information on graded work. Plagiarism is the presentation of another's ideas or language as your own. Cheating and plagiarism are unacceptable and will result in disciplinary action. Each student is expected to complete all work independently.
- 4) Students performance will be evaluated in these areas:

Class Participation 20%	<b>Grades:</b> (ascending order)	greater than 80%= B-
Quizzes daily 10%		greater than 83.3%= B
Unit Tests 30%		greater than 86.6%= B+
Exercises 20%		greater than 90%= A-
Final exam <u>20%</u>		greater than 93.3%= A
100%	greater than 76.6%= C+	

**Class participation:** Class participation is required. Your original contributions and responses in the discussion area will be evaluated in terms of frequency, quality, content, responsiveness, grammar and style. Simulations and other exercises may be assigned and will be counted as part of the participation grade.

**Quizzes:** Each unit will begin with a multiple-choice quiz covering the assigned Lowi reading. **Very helpful** sample quizzes and other study aids are available at <http://www.wwnorton.com/lowi7brief>

**Exercises:** Exercises are drawn primarily from the Norrander book. Complete the homework assignments offline and then enter your answers in the Quizzes and Homework area.

**Unit Tests:** At the end of each unit, a test will cover material presented in the lectures, readings, discussion, and homework.

**Final exam:** The final exam (01/20/2005) is cumulative and is worth 20% of the semester grade.

### Class Schedule

<b>Unit /Session Topic</b>	<b>Unit reading assignments and exercises: see agenda and discussion area for additional assignments.</b> <i>Note: some units have more readings/exercises than others.</i>
<b>01/03 Introduction Unit 1 01/03 First Principles</b>	Tour WebCT; Go to discussion area and introduce yourself to the class. Lowi 1, Norrander 1, Declaration of Independence (in Lowi Appendix) Availability: January 2, 2006 12:00pm - January 4, 2006 8:00am
<b>Section 1: The Foundation of the American Republic</b>	
<b>Unit 2 01/04 The Founding</b>	Lowi 2, Constitution (in Lowi Appendix), Norrander 2 Availability: January 3, 2006 12:00pm - January 5, 2006 8:00am
<b>Unit 3 01/05 Federalism</b>	Federalist 10 & 51 (in Lowi Appendix), Lowi 3, Norrander 3 Availability: January 4, 2006 12:00pm - January 6, 2006 8:00am
<b>Unit 4 01/06 Civil Rights &amp; Liberties</b>	Lowi 4, Norrander 4 & 5 Availability: January 5, 2006 12:00pm - January 9, 2006 8:00am
<b>Section II: Institutions</b>	
<b>Unit 5 01/09 The Congress</b>	Lowi 5, Norrander 12 Availability: January 6, 2006 12:00pm - January 10, 2006 8:00am
<b>Unit 6 01/10 The Executive</b>	Lowi 6, Norrander 13 & 14 Availability: January 9, 2006 12:00pm - January 11, 2006 8:00am
<b>Unit 7 01/11 The Judiciary</b>	Lowi 8, Norrander 15 Availability: January 10, 2006 12:00pm - January 12, 2006 8:00am
<b>Section III: Linkages</b>	
<b>Unit 8 01/12 Public Opinion</b>	Lowi 9, Norrander 6 & 7 Availability: January 11, 2006 12:00pm - January 13, 2006 8:00am

<b>Unit 9 01/13 Elections</b>	Lowi 10, Norrande 8 & 10 Availability: January 12, 2006 12:00pm - January 17, 2006 8:00am
<b>Unit 10 01/17 Parties</b>	Lowi 11, Norrande 9 Availability: January 13, 2006 12:00pm - January 18, 2006 8:00am
<b>Unit 11 01/18 Interest Groups</b>	Lowi 12, Norrande 11 Availability: January 17, 2006 12:00pm - January 19, 2006 8:00am
<b>Section IV: Public Policy</b>	
<b>Unit 12 01/19 Domestic Policy</b>	Lowi 13 & Epilogue Availability: January 18, 2006 12:00pm - January 20, 2006 8:00am
<b>Final Exam 01/20</b>	Online, 75 minutes Availability: January 19, 2006 12:00pm - January 21, 2006 8:00am

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