Syllabus – PSI 243 Contemporary Political Issues
Doane College, Grand Island

Credits: 3 hours

Instructor: Peter Kortum  E-Mail: peter.kortum@doane.edu  Phone: 402-705-9674

Day & Time: Wednesday - 6:00 P.M.  Location: College Park - Grand Island

Course Description:
A course in policy analysis. Includes selected policy issues facing government.

Course Learning Outcomes:
Students will:

1. Gain an understanding of contemporary political issues facing government.
2. Develop the critical thinking skills necessary to evaluate and formulate persuasive positions to assigned political issues.
3. Develop the skills necessary to recognize the themes that are present within each political issue.

Learning Strategies and Instructional Methods:
This course will attempt to achieve the course learning outcomes through reading material, video, lecture, in class debate, writing assignments, and student presentations.


Advance Assignment: Prior to our first meeting read:
Pages 7-11 in our text: Introduction – Labels and Alignments in American Politics.
Pages 75-84 in our text: Should the Courts Seek the “Original Meaning” of the Constitution?

Grading and Assessment of Student Performance:
Grading points (100 maximum) will be a combination of class participation, miscellaneous assignments, and a final paper with an in-class presentation.

This class is heavily weighted on participation and weekly presentations. Attendance is critical to student success in this class. All projects are due as assigned with no credit given for late assignments.
Participation – 40 points
Miscellaneous Assignments - 40 points
Final Paper/Presentation – 20 points

Grading:

- 90-100 = A
- 85-89 = B+
- 80-84 = B
- 75-79 = C+
- 70-74 = C
- 65-69 = D+
- 60-64 = D
- 59 or less = F

Course Policies:

The Doane College Academic Integrity policy will be adhered to in this class. All projects and exams will represent you or your group’s work. Any use of others’ ideas and words without proper citation or sources is plagiarism and will result in penalties to be determined by the instructor and/or the dean of undergraduate studies.

In the event a student needs to miss a class, any assignments that were due will need to be turned in via email or by the opening of the next scheduled class, to be determined by the instructor. The student will be unable to earn class participation points for any missed class. Loss of presentation points will depend on the circumstances and on any particular week’s schedule of assigned presentations or debates.

If a student misses more than one class session, additional assignments will be required to confirm to the instructor that the student thoroughly understands all of the learning objectives. The additional assignments will be extensive. It would be much better to attend class.

Papers/Assignments are due as assigned, otherwise, no credit.