This course will examine fundamental aspects of U.S. government, focusing on the language and logic used by political institutions in the governing process. Current public policy issues will help illustrate and analyze the concepts of U.S. government. The class will explore larger questions about the kind of society we want and the roles government should play in achieving that society.

Course requirements and grading system:
1. Four Unit Exams and a Comprehensive Final Exam
   Unit tests will include identification of major terms, informational and analytical multiple choice questions, and possible short essays or data analysis. The objective questions will be drawn from the text, lecture material and outside readings. Essay answers are to include information from both the text and assigned readings. Students who are not present for a unit exam must have prior approval of instructor, a physician-written excuse or a parental phone call to the instructor on the day of the illness in order to make up the exam.

2. Research Paper
   Supreme Court Analysis Paper tied to Field Day topics. Due December 21, 2015

3. Senior Studies Project
   School Board/City Council Meeting and Analysis

4. Current Political Issue Analysis
   Students will be assigned specific days to report on a current political issue from the New York Times, Washington Post or Wall Street Journal. Students will present a two-minute oral analysis. The issue should relate to our unit and include an analysis of public policy. Students may trade days, but there is no makeup for missed dates.

5. Chapter Reading and Lecture Quizzes
   There will be periodic quizzes on the content of PowerPoint lectures and assigned readings. There is no makeup for missed quizzes, but you may take an announced quiz early and you may drop two scores at semester’s end.

6. Discussion Group Facilitation
   Each group will be assigned chapter(s) on which to write discussion questions. Students will direct class discussion for their assigned chapter(s). Students will be expected to add additional resources such as current events and/or articles.

7. Unit Activities
   Activities will include weekly notes and also may include web assignments, video guides, data analysis, etc.

8. Field Trip to the University of Minnesota
   This mandatory activity will take place on January 6th, 2016. There is no makeup for this activity.

9. Participation
   Five participation points may be earned during Friday discussions.

Final grades will be assessed according to your percentage of total possible points.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>86-87</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-85</td>
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<td>B-</td>
<td>82-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>76-78</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>73-75</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>69-72</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>66-68</td>
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<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>63-65</td>
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</tbody>
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For undergraduate courses at the University of Minnesota, one credit is defined as equivalent to an average of three hours of learning effort per week (over a full semester) necessary for an average student to achieve an average grade in
the course. For example, a student taking a four-credit course such as this should expect to spend an additional eight hours a week on coursework outside the classroom.

Each category accounts for the approximate listed percentage of the overall grade: Unit tests = 35%, Final exam = 15%, Field Day = 10%, Election assignments = 10%, Quizzes = 9%, Current event and discussion leader: 9%, Daily assignments = 8%, Participation = 4%.

Course outline and tentative test dates:

Unit I: Introduction and Foundations (Chapters 1-4)
The class begins with a discussion of critical thinking skills. We then examine why governments exist, their costs and benefits, which values are reinforced when government makes policy choices, and how the growing importance of globalization impacts these decisions. The first chapter presents a conceptual framework for analyzing the purposes and problems of government, as well as in-depth discussions of the ideologies of government and the majoritarian and pluralist models of democracy. The second and third chapters review the historical conflicts and resulting compromises of the Constitution, focusing on the links between the historical and contemporary dilemmas inherent within this document. One compromise, federalism, will be analyzed by examining the historical theories and the contemporary application of those theories.

Tentative Test Date: September 30

Unit II: Linking People with their Government (Chapters 5-10)
This unit examines various linkages between U.S. citizens and their government. We examine how public opinion fits into the models of democracy and how political socialization stresses the formation of political ideology. A main focus of this unit is on mass media, which play an increasing role in political socialization and political policy formation. We examine theories about why the United States has various types of voter turnout and whether it matters. We investigate the power of political parties and how their influence impacts elections and the development of public policy. Daily current events will help us examine the ongoing developments and issues in these public policy areas. Finally, we study interest groups, why they exist, how they have changed over time, and why they are criticized for negatively impacting public policy.

This unit emphasizes data analysis. Students will examine public opinion polls to understand the components of specific polling and to detect bias in public opinion polls. Students will examine demographic data from elections through the use of exit polling and use that data to draw conclusions about changes and trends in voting patterns. Students will examine data about members of Congress and analyze descriptive representation. Additionally, students will use maps to examine redistricting and understand the challenges and impacts of drawing congressional boundaries.

Tentative Test Date: November 18

Unit III: Government Institutions (Chapters 11-14)
We will examine whether Congress is the most important branch of our government, studying in detail how Congress works and how its significance has changed over time. We will question what role Congress should play within the dilemmas of our Constitution and the parameters of contemporary society. Students will explore how and why the initial conception of the presidency has changed and further dissect the contemporary role of the president, examining how 9/11 impacted the power of the president, whether we have an imperial or an imperiled president, and how a president’s personality and time in history influence the role. Students learn about the agencies created to assist the president in meeting his responsibilities and consider whether this bureaucracy helps or hinders his goals. This unit will also examine the federal court system structure, explore the process through which judges are selected, and reflect on the link between judicial rulings and public policy.

Tentative Test Date: December 16

Unit IV: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (Chapters 15-16)
We examine how adjudication influenced the freedoms guaranteed in the Bill of Rights, later focusing on the historical and contemporary struggle for equality and civil rights in the United States. How have the civil rights of individuals and groups expanded over time and what contemporary conflicts have surrounded these developments?

Test Date: Included in Final
Attendance policy:
There is no makeup for quizzes (you may drop your lowest two), your assigned group discussion days, or your assigned current events presentation days. Per University of Minnesota policy, absences for unit tests require pre-approval, a doctor’s note or a phone call from your parent of the day of illness for makeup. Papers turned in after the due date will result in a lower grade. You may turn papers in before the due date. Discussion is an important part of this course; therefore, accumulation of several absences (excused or not) may negatively impact your final grade.

Plagiarism and other academic dishonesty:
You are expected to maintain academic honesty in your work at all times. In this class, the penalty for failing to do so is a "0" on the assignment and a grade of "F" on your University of Minnesota transcript. See the end of this syllabus for a detailed explanation of scholastic dishonesty, as defined by the University of Minnesota.

The following rules from the University of Minnesota apply to this course:
Grades
✓ The grade you receive in a CIS course is recorded on a University of Minnesota transcript and automatically becomes part of your permanent U of M academic record.
✓ The College of Liberal Arts grading policy states that “University grade definitions establish the qualities of performance expected at different grade levels. Instructors define grade standards for their courses in conformity with their departmental policies.”
   A: Achievement outstanding relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements
   B: Achievement significantly above the level necessary to meet course requirements
   C: Achievement meeting the basic course requirements in every respect
   D: Achievement worthy of credit even though it does not fully meet the basic course requirements in every respect
   F: Performance failing to meet the basic course requirements
✓ Pluses and minuses are used: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, C-, D+, D, and F. A+ and D- are not allowed by the University.

Student Classroom Conduct
Students are responsible for complying with the University of Minnesota’s Student Conduct Code, which is available in the college student affairs office and Student Judicial Affairs (612-624-6073). The code is published regularly and on the Web at www.sja.umn.edu/conduct.html and http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/academic/StudentConduct.pdf. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment for others may be subject to disciplinary action under the code. College of Continuing Education reserves the right to cancel current or future registration for such students.

Disabilities Services
It is University policy to provide, on a flexible and individualized basis, reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disability conditions (e.g., physical, learning, psychiatric, vision, hearing, or systemic) that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Disability Services and their instructors to discuss their individual needs for accommodations. Disability Services is located in Suite 180, McNamara Alumni Center, 200 Oak Street. Staff can be reached by calling 612-626-1333, voice or TTY. For further information, visit their web site: http://ds.umn.edu/

Scholastic Dishonesty
Students are responsible for maintaining scholastic honesty in their work at all times. Students engaged in scholastic dishonesty will be penalized and their name may be reported to University of Minnesota Student Judicial Affairs. The University’s College of Liberal Arts defines scholastic dishonesty as “any act that violates the rights of another student with respect to academic work or that involves misrepresentation of a student’s own work. Scholastic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) cheating on assignments or examinations, plagiarizing (misrepresenting as one’s own anything done by another), submitting the same or substantially similar papers (or creative work) for more than one course without consent of all instructors concerned, depriving another of necessary course materials, and sabotaging another’s work.”
For more information, visit www.cla.umn.edu/advising/dgep/stucondu.
Sexual Harassment
Definition: “Sexual Harassment means unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors and/or other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature...” The policy strictly prohibits sexual harassment by or toward a member of the University community and requires appropriate reporting and investigation of such reports. The definition and policy can be seen in its entirety at http://www1.umn.edu/regents/policies/humanresources/SexHarassment.pdf.

Expectations:
1. No late work is accepted. The amount of homework in this class is reasonable. Assignments are due at the time I collect them, typically the start of class. After that, they are late and you should focus on the new topic being discussed. Only some assignments will be collected for points, but you will not always know which assignments those are. Do every assignment to learn the subject matter and to ensure that you have completed the work that is collected.
2. An unexcused absence results in a zero for that day’s work, including quizzes and tests. Multiple unexcused absences may result in loss of credit for the course.
3. You have one additional school day to make up assignments following an excused absence. Some in-class activities are not possible to make up. No make up work will be accepted after that unit’s exam is completed.

Tips for success:
1. Be responsible for your own learning. Come to class prepared and with the materials you will need. Ask questions. If you miss a class and have not yet checked the BHS website, talk to a classmate and then me.
2. Student participation makes class more enjoyable and interesting. More learning occurs when more opinions and perspectives are shared. Respect others’ rights to have their opinions, and expect the same respect from your classmates. And stay relevant to the subject being discussed.
3. Listening is the other half of participation. When the teacher or another student is speaking, it is your job to listen.
4. Be a positive part of class. You are free to think anything you want, but you are not free to say whatever you want. Anything that contributes negatively to the classroom will not be tolerated.
5. Each class has various types of learners. Take advantage of opportunities to differentiate your learning. The material may seem overwhelming on some days and easy on others. Respect everyone’s differences and treat others accordingly.
6. Working as a group will make class easier and more enjoyable. We can have fun, but remember our first priority is learning about Government. Keeping each other on task will give us more time to learn the concepts and do our work in class, meaning more learning, better grades and less homework!

You are responsible for knowing the policies and expectations above. Keep this syllabus and refer to it if you have any questions. I look forward to a great semester!