Mohawk High School
Kenyon Academic Partnership 2010-2011 (Revised 7/29/2010)
Course Syllabus – Political Science 200: Liberal Democracy in America
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Room H113

You have been accepted into this course based on your past academic performance, your demonstrated desire to learn, your leadership, and your service to the community. Please remember that although you are attending a public high school, you are now college students, as well. I will treat you as such, and expect you to comport yourselves accordingly.

Course Description

Mastered by Professors Dr. John Elliott, Dr. Pamela Camerra-Rowe, and Dr. H. Abbie Erler of Kenyon College in Gambier, this course explores the guiding principles, major institutions, and national politics of the American system of government. The Founders’ view of liberal democracy and of the three branches of our government will provide the basis for consideration of the modern judiciary, presidency, bureaucracy, congress, news media, political parties and elections, and will conclude with a broad overview of American democracy and its efforts to reconcile liberty and equality. This course will be exemplified by references to current political issues, events and personalities, and will include civic service and research components. This course satisfies the high school American Government requirement.

Required Readings (Books will be issued):


Other readings will be assigned, as appropriate.
Student Responsibilities

I expect you, as KAP students, to complete all readings prior to class, to complete all assignments in a professional manner, and to turn in work on time.

I expect you to participate actively in and to make significant contributions to all lectures and seminar discussions.

I expect you to keep up with major events by reading a major print or online newspaper (The Wall Street Journal, Washington Post, or Christian Science Monitor, etc.).

I expect you to attend all classes. I will penalize you 5% of your grade for each unexcused absence over three that you incur. You must also satisfy Mohawk attendance policy (90% attendance to receive credit).

I expect you to maintain extensive e-mail communications with each other and with me.

I expect you to use CHICAGO or TURABIAN REFERENCE citation style and for you to properly and fully cite and footnote as appropriate.

I expect you to maintain your textbooks for the next generation of KAP students, or to purchase them. I strongly encourage you to purchase “keeper” sets of Democracy in America and the Federalist Papers for future reference and study.

I expect you to speak boldly, honestly, and professionally about your concerns.

Instructor Responsibilities

I will plan and teach the course in agreement with Kenyon College requirements.

I will provide you the text books you require for the course.

I will set aside as much time as possible in the lab for you to read, write, and conduct research.

I will provide you the information you need to meet course requirements.

I will assign you an objective (to the extent that I am able), rubric-based grade on your assignments. I will mentor and guide you toward success.

I will hold you to a challenging but fair standard of academic professionalism that will allow you to achieve the level of success for which you are willing to work.

I will make myself available to you by phone, e-mail or conference appointment to discuss your work.
Academic Honesty

As a KAP student, you are bound to the academic policies outlined in the Kenyon College and Mohawk High School handbooks and board policy. Work you submit must be your own, and must be properly cited. See me if you have any doubts.

Accommodations

It is your responsibility to notify me in private if you require accommodation for a learning difference.

Course Requirements and Grades

Major assignments for this course include:
- A three-to-four page analytical-reflective paper based on your critical reading of a course-relevant book (*not* one of the course texts!)
- A five-to-seven (minimum) page paper (I will give you a list of possible topics)
- A reflection-supported civic service project (It's an election year!)
- A visually-supported Supreme Court case briefing
- Several 1- to 2-page responses to course readings
- Participation in the Fantasy Government pilot
- On-line Government quizzes
- Unit exams
- Successful completion of a final comprehensive examination

I will administer the final in the regularly scheduled exam period. Your papers must be typed in double-spaced 11-arial font. I will not accept papers that are not professionally prepared. Your papers should be well-written, logically argued, and self- as well as peer-edited. Late work may earn a maximum score of 50% of its assigned value.

In addition to these major requirements, I may periodically administer both announced and unannounced oral and written quizzes over the readings. I may also ask you to write short reflective essays on current events and their relationship to course readings.

I will grade you on seminar participation using a rubric that accounts for the frequency, scholarship, and usefulness to the class of your contributions.

Your final grade for the course will be based on points earned and will be determined as follows:
- Seminar Participation: 10 points per week
- Paper # 1: 100 points (weighted 2)
- Paper # 2: 100 points (weighted 3)
- Quizzes: 50 points each
- Reflections: 50 points each
- Civic Service project and reflection: 200 points
- Fantasy Congress: 100 points plus bonus
- USSC Briefing: 100 points (weighted 2)
- 1st Semester exam: 100 points
- Final Exam: 200 points
The grade I submit to Kenyon College may be lower than the grade you receive on your high school transcript. Conversely, because Kenyon College acknowledges the ‘A+’ grade, truly exceptional work on your part may result in an “A+” on your Kenyon transcript.

**Extra Credit**

From time to time I may offer extra credit for such things as attending public lectures, participating in citizenship awareness activities, tutoring, doing additional reading, or for exceptional scholarship. Extra means just that; in order to earn extra credit, you must be in good standing (‘C+’ or better course work).

**Tentative Course Calendar: August 23, 2010 to May 27, 2011**

**Quarter 1**


Week Two (08/30 – 09/03): Origins of classical liberalism.

Week Three, Four (09/06 – 10; 09/13 – 17): Liberal Democracy in America: What makes us special? Alexis De Tocqueville. **NO SCHOOL 9/6, 16, 17**

Week Five, Six (09/20 – 24; 09/27 – 10/01): Initial paper assigned; Failure of the Confederation

Week Seven, Eight (10/04 – 08; 10/11 - 15): the Constitutional Convention; the New Republic; The Federalist argument

Week Nine (10/18 – 22): Federalist argument / Federalism, cont; final planning for political service unit

Week Ten (10/25 – 29): **MAYHEW ASSIGNED**; introduction to Rational Choice and Mayhew’s Congress

**Quarter 2**

Week Eleven, Twelve (11/01 – 5; 11/08 - 12): The 2010 midterm elections – Political Service Unit; **WRITING LAB. No school 11/05. SERVICE PROJECT reflective essays are due 11/10.**

Week Thirteen, Fourteen (11/15 – 19; 11/22 - 26): Mayhew's Congress; The role of the public in American democracy: The Media as mirror and shaper of public opinion; **NO SCHOOL 11/24 – 26.**

Week Fifteen (11/29 – 12/03): The Media as mirror and shaper of public opinion; Interest Groups; Political Parties; Writing Lab.
Week Sixteen, Seventeen (12/06 – 10; 13 - 17): Writing Lab. **PAPER # 1 DUE 12/13; Mayhew concluded; NEUSTADT ASSIGNED. HAPPY HOLIDAYS. NO SCHOOL 12/20 – 1/02**

Week Eighteen (01/03 – 07): Introduction to the Presidency; Review for exam.

Week Nineteen (01/10 – 14): The Presidency; **MIDTERM EXAM**

Week Twenty (01/17 – 21): The Presidency, cont.; **FINAL PAPER ASSIGNED; NO SCHOOL 1/17**

**Quarter Three**

Week Twenty-one (01/24 – 28): The Presidency, cont.; Writing lab

Week Twenty-two (01/31 – 02/04): The Presidency, cont.; Writing lab;

Week Twenty-three (02/07 – 11): The Presidency, concluded. **AGRESTO ASSIGNED**

Week Twenty-four (02/04 – 18): The Weakest Branch? Writing lab

Twenty-five (02/21 – 25): The Weakest Branch? Cont. **NO SCHOOL 2/21.**

Week Twenty-six (02/28 – 3/04): The Weakest Branch? Cont.; Writing lab

Week Twenty-seven (03/07 – 11): The Weakest Branch? Cont; Writing lab

Week Twenty-eight (03/14 – 18): The Weakest Branch? Agresto concluded

Week Twenty-nine (03/21 – 25): **NELSON ASSIGNED; USSC briefings**

**Quarter Four**

Week Thirty (03/28 – 04/01): The Elections of 2008 and Beyond; Writing lab.

Week Thirty-one (04/04 – 04/08): The Elections of 2008 and Beyond, cont. Writing lab.

Week Thirty-two (04/11 – 15): The Elections of 2008 and Beyond, concluded. **FIRST DRAFT, LONG PAPER due 04/11.**

Week Thirty-three (04/18 – 22): Writing labs Monday and Tuesday. **April is the Best Month celebration 4/20. NO SCHOOL 4/21 – 25.**

Week Thirty-four (04/25 – 29): The Fourth Branch. Writing Lab

Week Thirty-five (05/02 – 05/06): DeTocqueville, Revisited. Writing Lab

Week Thirty-six (05/09 – 13): De Tocqueville Re-visited; Bowling Alone; Final Writing Lab
Week Thirty-seven (05/16 – 19): Conclusions about the American Regime; **FINAL DRAFT OF ALL PAPERS DUE 05/16.**

Week Thirty-eight (05/22 – 27): **FINALS WEEK.** Congratulations, seniors, and fare well.

I reserve the right to alter this syllabus at the direction of the course masters and as unforeseen events necessitate that I do so.
**Student Affirmation**

I have read and understand this syllabus.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date______________

**Parent Affirmation**

I have read and discussed this syllabus with my student.

Signature ___________________________________________ Date______________

Comments/Questions: