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PSC 383.01: Montana Politics - The Real Story

Bob Brown

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POLITICAL SCIENCE 383
MONTANA POLITICS: THE REAL STORY

SPRING 2007

Instructors: Bob Brown and Mike Halligan

Class time: Wednesday, 4:10 – 6:30 p.m.

Room: Gallagher Building L11

Course description:

The course introduces students to modern and significant developments in the foundations of Montana politics and state government, how Montana politics function from a practitioner's standpoint and opportunity for reform.

Course objectives:

1. To acquire an understanding of the Montana political landscape and the factors and trends that continue to influence public policy in 2007.
2. To introduce students to a wide array of public figures who shape electoral politics and public policy in Montana and to allow for an exchange of thoughts and ideas during each class.
3. To acquire a substantive knowledge of the structure and operation of state government and how Montana's political system functions and guides public policy.

Course requirements:

- A. Submit two plans: Each plan should be approximately 10-12 pages in length, double-spaced. They should be concise, tightly written and to the point.
 1. Campaign plan designed to defeat an incumbent Montana legislator running for re-election in 2008. Deadline: March 14.
 2. Strategic plan to secure the enactment of either of two proposals: a bill to enable Montana to coordinate our presidential primary with other western states, or a bill mandating all-day kindergarten in all public schools in Montana. Deadline: May 2.
- B. Personal journal
 1. Keep a personal journal of impressions of Montana politics for the duration of the course.
 2. Prior to each class, record ideas and concepts you found most interesting from the required readings. After each class record impressions about the ideas and concepts presented in class.

Grading:

1. 40% for each plan (total 80%)
2. 20% for the journal

Schedule:

January 24 Review course outline and objectives
Overview of recent Montana history

January 31 Constitutional Reform

Readings:

1. Helena Independent Record. "Constitutional Convention." Newspaper insert. January 16, 1972.
2. Highlights of the Proposed Constitution. Montana Constitution, 1971-72.
3. Montana Law Review. Richard Roeder. "Background: The 1972 Montana Constitution in Historical Context." Winter 1990.
4. Montana Law Review. Harry Fritz. "The 1972 Montana Constitution in a Contemporary Context." Winter 1990.
5. Montana Law Review. Dale Harris. "Some Comments on Our Experience as a Constitutional Convention." Winter 1990.
6. Montana Law Review. Jim Goetz. "Interpretations of the Montana Constitution: Sometimes Socratic, Sometimes Erratic." Winter 1990.
7. Montana Law Review. John Dudis. "Apportionment: Past to Future." Winter 1972.
8. Montana Law Review. "The 1972 Montana Constitution: Thirty Years Later." The 2002 Honorable James R. Browning Symposium. Winter 2003.
9. Montana Law Review. Greg Petesch. "The State of Montana Constitution – Turkey Feathers on the Constitutional Eagle." Winter 2003.

Guests:

1. Jean Bowman, Member – Montana Constitutional Convention.
2. Marshall Murray, Member – Montana Constitutional Convention.

February 7 Party Politics: How the Montana Republican and Democratic Parties Function and Influence Montana Politics

Readings:

1. Breaking the Copper Collar: The Sale of the Anaconda Newspapers. John Thomas McNay. Thesis. 1991.
2. Atlas of Montana Elections: 1889-1976. Ellis Waldron and Paul B. Wilson. Selected readings.
3. "For the People..." A Common Cause/Montana Report on the Necessity for Reform in Montana Politics." C.B. Pearson. December 1990.

4. Balance of Power in Montana Legislature and Office of Governor: 1961-2005.
5. Montana Republican Party website
6. Montana Democratic Party website

Guests:

1. Carl Ohs, Chairman – Montana Republican Party;
2. Bob Ream, former Chairman – Montana Democratic Party.

February 15 Campaign Plan Development: How to Organize and Conduct a Successful Campaign for the Montana Legislature

Readings:

1. “Who Will Vote for You and Why: Designing Strategy and Theme,” Joel Bradshaw. Campaigns and Elections American Style. 1995.
2. “Strategy and Tactics for Campaign Fundraising.” David Himes. Campaigns and Elections American Style. 1995.

Guests:

February 21 Montana Legislature: Structure and Processes

Readings:

1. Apportionment and the Montana Legislative Assembly. Douglas C. Chaffey. 1964.
2. “*One Cow, One Vote – A Strenuous Session in the Montana Legislature*.” Margaret Scherf. Harpers Magazine. 1966.
3. Montana Law Review. Ellis Waldron. “The Legislative Assembly in a Modern Montana Constitution.” Winter 1972.
4. <http://www.leg.state.mt.us/css/research/informatin/default.asp> (Legislator Information)

Guests:

1. Fred VanValkenburg, former president of the Montana Senate
2. John Mercer, former speaker of the Montana House of Representatives

February 28 Lobbyists: How the Montana Legislature functions from a lobbyist’s perspective

Readings:

Guests:

1. Mike Pichette, Registered Lobbyist
2. George Ochenski, former registered lobbyist

March 7 Significant Legislative enactments in recent legislature session

Readings:

1. “*Montana in the Twenty-first Century.*” Harry Fritz. Montana Legacy: Essays on History, People and Place. 2002.

Guests:

1. Bob Raney, Member, Montana Public Service Commission
2. State Representative Alan Olson

March 14 Human Rights and Montana Minorities

Guests:

1. Janice Doggett, Chief Legal Council, Montana Secretary of State
2. Dr. Ray Cross, law professor, University of Montana

Note: First paper due — Campaign plan against incumbent

March 21 Executive Reorganization: Structure before and after Reorganization

Readings:

1. Reorganization in Executive-Administrative Branch of Montana Government. Grimes. Selected readings.
2. Executive Reorganization. Montana Legislative Council. November 1962.
3. Executive Reorganization. Montana Commission on Executive Reorganization. December 1970.
4. Montana Law Review. Richard B. Roeder. “Energy in the Executive.” Winter 1972.
5. “Major Problems and the Executive Branch.” We The People of Montana. James J. Lopach, editor. 1983.

Guests:

1. Duke Crowley, former director – Montana Executive Reorganization Commission
2. Mark Simonich – Member of 1994 Blue Ribbon Committee to Renew State Government

March 28 Spring Break.

April 4 Money: the Budget and Appropriations Processes

Readings:

Guests:

1. Clayton Schenck, Director, Legislative Fiscal Division
2. Mick Robinson, Associate Commissioner of Higher Education for Fiscal Affairs, and former director of the Montana Department of Revenue

April 11 Judiciary: Structure and Operation

Readings:

1. Judicial Selections Practiced under the 1972 Constitution. Eileen Sheehy. 1994.

Guests:

1. Jim Rice, Associate Justice, Montana Supreme Court
2. Karen Townsend, former Chief Deputy County Attorney, Missoula County

April 18 The Initiative and Referenda Processes and their places in the political process

Readings:

1. Montana Law Review. Richard J. Ellis. "Signature Gathering in the Initiative Process: How Democratic Is It?" Winter 2003.
2. Initiatives and Referendum Issues since the adoption of constitutional amendment, Article V, Section 1 [1889 Montana Constitution] permitting the referendum and initiative. Montana Legislative Council. January 2006.
3. Amendments to the 1972 Montana Constitution. Montana Legislative Council. January 2006.
4. "Post 1972 Developments – Direct Democracy." We The People of Montana. James J. Lopach, editor. 1983.
5. Federal Court decision overturning two referenda proposing to change the signature gathering process (Constitutional Revision – C 37) and (Statutory Revision – C 38) adopted by the 2001 Legislature, referred to the voter and approved by the voters in November 2002.

Guest:

1. Montana Secretary of State Brad Johnson

April 25 Board of Public Education: Autonomy, Powers and Function

Readings:

1. Montana Board of Public Education v. Montana Administrative Code Committee. March 1992.

Guest:

1. Diane Fladmo, Chair, Montana Board of Public Education

Board of Regents: Autonomy, Powers and Functions

Readings:

1. Implementing a New Governance System for Higher Education in Montana. Lawrence K. Pettit. December 31, 1978.
2. Proposed Constitutional Amendment 30 to Eliminate the Montana Board of Regents. David Aronofsky. October 1996.

Guest:

1. Steve Barrett, Member, State Board of Regents

May 2

Reinventing the Legislature

Guests:

1. State Senator Dave Wanzenreid
2. State Senator Jim Shockley

Note second paper due: Plan to secure enactment of a bill by the legislature.

May 10

Final Class – 3:20-5:20 p.m.