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PSCI 349.09: Montana Government and Politics

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Montana Government & Politics
Political Science (PSCI) 349
University of Montana
Tuesdays 3:00 – 5:20
North Underground Lecture Hall
Fall 2020

Robert Saldin
robert.saldin@umontana.edu

Office Hours:
Tues. 10-12 & by
appointment

Course Description

This course offers an overview of Montana politics and government, with a focus on the state's political history, constitutional structure, political institutions, campaigns and elections, and contemporary policy issues. Upon successful completion of this course, students should: 1) understand the origins and nature of Montana's constitutional system; 2) appreciate key moments in Montana political history and how they have influenced the state's contemporary political culture and public policy debates; 3) and have improved their research, writing, and oral presentation skills.

Required Text and Other Readings

The following book is required for this course:

- Mike Dennison, *Inside Montana Politics* (History Press, 2019).

Additionally, there will be three other types of readings, all of which will be posted on the course's Moodle website: 1) additional readings listed on the syllabus; 2) a weekly selection of written material and other multi-media content, most of which will focus on this year's campaigns and elections; and 3) additional background materials in preparation for sessions with guests.

Requirements and Grading

1. *Weekly Reaction Outlines (33.3% of final grade); due weekly prior to class*
2. *Campaign Strategy Memo or Policy Memo (33.3% of final grade); due Friday, November 20*
3. *Class Participation (33.3% of final grade)*

Grades: Grades will be assigned according to the following percentages:

A	93-100	B+	87-89.9	C+	77-79.9	D+	67-69.9	below 60	F
A-	90-92.9	B	83-86.9	C	73-76.9	D	63-66.9		
		B-	80-82.9	C-	70-72.9	D-	60-62.9		

Optional PSCI 400 Writing Project

All Political Science majors are required to take PSCI 400, Advanced Writing in Political Science (1 credit), in conjunction with an upper-level PSCI course. Students may choose to do so as part of this course. *This opportunity is strictly optional and has absolutely no influence on your performance in, or grade for, Montana Government and Politics.* Students wishing to enroll in this co-requisite option must meet with the instructor prior to starting their project to discuss its aim, scope, sources, and style. Such a meeting should occur in the first few weeks of the semester.

Academic Honesty

All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the instructors up to and including failing the course and a disciplinary sanction by the University. Academic dishonesty may also imperil future bids for the U.S. Senate. All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available online at <http://www.umt.edu/student-affairs/community-standards/default.php>. I take academic honesty very seriously, and will do my utmost to prevent, uncover, and penalize any form of cheating. Please contact me if you have any questions or concerns about academic honesty.

Accessibility

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students (DSS). Students requesting accommodations on exams, papers, or other course requirements must contact the instructor as soon as possible and must contact DSS in order to arrange for and provide the instructor with a letter of approval for accommodations as soon as possible. DSS is in Lommasson Center 154; phone: (406) 243-2243.

COVID-19

In accordance with UM and state policies, students are reminded of the following:

- Mask use is required within the classroom
- Each student is provided with a cleaning kit. The expectation is that students will clean their personal work space when they arrive for class, and before they leave the classroom
- Classrooms may have one-way entrances / exits to minimize crowding
- Students are discouraged from congregating outside the classroom before and after class
- Specific seating arrangements will be used to ensure social distancing and support contact tracing efforts
- Class attendance will be recorded to support contact tracing efforts
- Drinking liquids and eating food is discouraged within the classroom (which requires mask removal)
- Stay home if you feel sick and/or if exhibiting COVID-19 symptoms
- If the student is sick or displaying symptoms, please contact the Curry Health Center at (406) 243-4330

- Up-to-Date COVID-19 Information from the University of Montana
 - UM Coronavirus Website: <https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus>
 - UM COVID-19 Fall 2020 website: <https://www.umt.edu/coronavirus/fall2020.php>
 - Students are encouraged to remain vigilant outside the classroom in mitigating the spread of COVID-19

Class Schedule

Week 1, Aug. 25: Introduction

Week 2, Sept. 1: Montana Political History

Week 3, Sept. 8: The 1972 Montana Constitution

Week 4, Sept. 15: The Montana Executive

Week 5, Sept. 22: The Montana Legislature and the Judiciary

Week 6, Sept. 29: The Congressional Delegation

Week 7, Oct. 6: Tribal Government in Montana

Week 8, Oct. 13: Media and Politics in Montana

Week 9, Oct. 20: Money and Politics in Montana

Week 10, Oct. 27: Campaigns and Elections, Part I

Week 11, Nov. 3: Election Day!

Week 12, Nov. 10: Campaigns and Elections, Part II

Week 13, Nov. 17: Preview of the 2021 Legislative Session

Week 14, Nov. 18-25: Finals Week