Introduction to Governance (P11.1789 - Fall 2009)

Course Schedule

Dates: August 25-27, 2009 from 6:45-9:00 PM
Location: Silver 405 (100 Washington Square East)

Instructor:

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Course Overview:

This course is intended to provide a brief overview of how the United States is governed as a basis for further coursework as a graduate student at the Wagner School. At the end of this course, it is expected that students will understand the: process through which the current system of governance in America was developed; branches of the federal government, including their powers and composition; election process and the role of political parties and interest groups; dominant US political ideologies; and general functions of state and local governments.

Grading:

There is no grade nor any homework although students are expected to show up prepared for each session by having completed the assigned reading. This course is solely for your review and preparation for Intro to Policy.

Readings:

If you would like to get a text for this review, lectures will be based on:

Copies will be placed on reserve at the Bobst Library for your review. Additionally, you can use alternate versions of this text instead of the 10th Edition – any edition from the 6th edition to the most current is reasonable although students should note that chapters may be in different orders in other editions. Please check with me if you are confused on which chapters to read from an alternate addition.

Daily Lecture Topics & Readings:

August 25th - Chapters 2 & 3
• Systems of Government: Understanding the “Ideal” Types
• History of the US Government and Framing of the Constitution

August 26th - Chapters 13, 14, & 16 (chapter 15 optional)
• The Legislative Branch: Senate and House of Representatives
• The Executive Branch: President, Cabinet, and the Departments
• The Judicial Branch: The Supreme and Circuit Courts

August 27th - Chapters 9, 10 & 11 (chapter 8 optional)
• Political Parties, Interest Groups and Elections
• Political Ideologies in America
• State and Local Governments