

VILLA JOSEPH MARIE HIGH SCHOOL

B. C. C. C. AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT VJM

Professor M. BUNKIN (215)968-8275 or bunkinm@bucks.edu POL. 111 FALL 2009
ALL CLASS WORK MAY ALSO BE FOUND ON MY WEB SITE <http://www.bucks.edu/~bunkinm>

1. **GOALS**

To give a deeper understanding of the political process at the national level. To illustrate the way that problems and issues are dealt with in our system. To stimulate further reading, thinking and debating about the problems and processes of the American political system.

2. **TEXT**

Thomas E. Patterson, We the People 8th Edition, 2009.

3. **GRADING**

One third (1/3) of your course mark will be based on 5 REACTION PAPERS and weekly NEWS REPORT FORMS. Full credit will be given ONLY if work is completed properly.

REACTION PAPERS: If your paper is properly completed you will earn FULL CREDIT (100) for it. If your paper is not properly completed you will earn NO CREDIT (-20%) for it from this part of your course mark. To earn credit for a Reaction Paper you **MUST**:

- 1-Type a paper of 4 sides (1 per page). **Staple** cover sheet to paper. Sloppy, illegible papers will earn no credit (-20%).
- 2-Have a Reaction Paper which is carefully and intelligently thought out. I expect perfect spelling, perfect grammar, **college-level writing** and a neat format.
- 3-Have paper completely footnoted. It **MUST** have a bibliography. Use two (2) sources for quotes minimum. One quoted source **MUST** be your required textbook. 1/3 of your paper **MUST** be footnoted source material containing **at least 5** footnoted statements and 2/3 of your paper must be your own analysis
- 4-Submit paper in class on "due date."
- 5-Be present to share your point of view.

NEWS REPORT FORMS: A short NEWS REPORT FORM is due every **Friday**. Failure to hand in a NEWS REPORT FORM will result in a -1% reduction from this part of your course mark.

Two thirds (2/3) of your course mark will be based on two tests worth 1/3 each. 1/3 of each test will be multiple choice. 2/3 of each test will be a take home essay.

******Test #1** given on October 26 - collected on Nov.2.

******Test #2** given on December 7 - collected on Dec. 14

(YOU MUST INCLUDE A LARGE STAMPED, ADDRESSED ENVELOPE).

4. **MAKE-UP POLICY**

One unexcused absence is permitted. Each additional UNEXCUSED absence equals a drop of five (5) points PER HOUR from your course grade. Tests may be made up ONLY in an emergency and ONLY IF ABSENT STUDENT PHONES IN ON TEST DATE TO LEAVE A MESSAGE AT (215) 968 8275. You may also E-mail me at < bunkinm@bucks.edu >. If an emergency arises, a Reaction Paper may be sent by "Certified Mail" and will ONLY be accepted if envelope is postmarked on "due date." Mail to: M. Bunkin, Bucks County Community College, 275 Swamp Rd. Newtown, PA 18940.

ALL REQUIRED CLASS WORK IS ON MY WEB SITE <http://www.bucks.edu/~bunkinm>

Messages may be left at 968-8275 or bunkinm@bucks.edu
or Social Sciences Department Office in Penn Hall 301.

***** PLEASE NOTE *****

You **MUST** keep a duplicate copy of all work you hand in. Do not throw out any work until final mark is received from the College. It is your responsibility to understand the U.S. Constitution. It is your responsibility to keep informed day-by-day about national news.

Disability Accommodations:

In compliance with the Bucks County Community College policy and equal access laws, appropriate academic accommodations can be made for students eligible for such support. Students are encouraged to register with the Disability Services Office (215-968-8463) to verify their eligibility for appropriate accommodations. Please speak to your instructor about any requests for academic accommodations or other concerns as early in the semester as possible.

Cheating & Plagiarism:

I strictly enforce the College's cheating and plagiarism policy and will automatically fail any student on any assignment when a student cheats or plagiarizes on tests or papers. I have zero tolerance and will not accept any excuses. Please see me if you do not understand what plagiarism is. Here is the College definition from the BCCC catalogue:

The expectation at Bucks County Community College is that the principles of truth and honesty will be rigorously followed in all academic endeavors. This assumes that all work will be done by the person who purports to do the work without unauthorized aids. In addition, when making use of language and some idea not his or her own, whether quoting them directly or paraphrasing them into his or her own words, the student must attribute the source of the material in some standard form, such as naming the source in the text or offering a footnote.

(Source: BCCC Catalog, College Policy Regarding Cheating and Plagiarism)

Use of Electronic Devices

Use of any type of electronic communication device without explicit permission of the teacher will result in a failing grade for the course. Cell phone use for text messaging or speaking is prohibited unless permission is given by teacher due to a serious personal issue. Use of lap top computers is prohibited unless special permission is given by teacher due to special needs.

ALL REQUIRED CLASS WORK IS ON MY WEB SITE

<http://www.bucks.edu/~bunkinm>

READING ASSIGNMENTS

WEEK OF	TOPIC	READINGS
September 9	Introduction (the origins of our political traditions)	Preface + Chapter 1
14	Introduction (the origins of our political traditions)	Preface + Chapter 1
21	Making the Nation and the Constitution	Chapt. 2 + Chapt. 3
28	Political Parties	Chapt. 8
October 5	Political Parties - The Convention	Chapt. 8
12	Public Opinion and the News Media.. Electing the President	Chapt. 6 + 10
19	Voting	Chapt. 6 + 7
26	The Presidency our Executive Branch (TEST #1-Oct.26)	Chapt.12
November 2	Interest Groups	Chapt. 9
9	Organization and Operation of Congress	Chapt.11
16	The Judicial Branch	Chapt.14
23	The Judicial Branch/Our Liberties	Chapt. 4 +5
30	Our Liberties	Chapt. 4 + 5
December 7	Our Liberties (TEST #2-December 7)	
14	Last class	

REACTION PAPERS

DUE DATE

TOPIC

- *September 18-Examine our military action in Iraq(2002-08) . Did the President's action violate the Constitution? Did the President's action violate the War Powers Act of 1973? **OR** Does the "Patriot Act" and its amendments violate the U.S. Constitution?
- September 28-Many people say that the way politicians raise campaign money obligates them to return favors and might even pervert or corrupt the way our system works. Explain how you and two adults you know feel politicians should get money needed for their campaigns without interfering with their daily professional obligations. For example a presidential candidate needs more than \$300 million, a candidate for the U.S. Senate needs \$3 to \$7 million and a candidate for the U.S. House of Representatives about \$1 to 2 million.
- * October 9- Give your detailed evaluation of the quality and professionalism of the 1992 **or** 1996 **or** 2000 **or** 2004 presidential campaign (Aug. to Nov.). Also, briefly list the 4 major issues of that campaign.
- October 19- Why do so many Americans purposely not vote? Should people who don't vote be prosecuted to the full extent of the law? What realistic suggestions do you have to encourage participation?
- October 13-Evaluate President Clinton's or President G.W.Bush's effectiveness. Interview two adults who agree with your point of view and in essay form explain why they feel that way. Remember that the president is not a representative or a senator. This is to be a professional assessment not a character assessment.
- * October 26- Is America actually controlled by a small group of well-connected people, interest groups and/or businesses?
- November 9- Everywhere I go people tell me that they don't trust or respect politicians. Interview one or two people with whom you feel you can have a serious discussion and develop a constructive formula for reversing this perception.
- * November 30- What prejudices, negative stereotypes or misuses of power affect women who wish to enter politics? Has Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, experienced any such difficulties in her political career?
- *December 23- Are the rights of suspected(alleged) terrorists being violated by improper judicial procedures?

All starred (*) papers **MUST** be footnoted. 2 sources for quotes, minimum. Text **MUST** be one source. Approximately 1/3 of your paper must be source material with minimum of **5** footnoted statements and 2/3 your analysis.