American Politics
Comprehensive Examination Reading List
(as of October 2008)

The American Comp is a take-home exam with forty-eight (48) hours allowed for completion, i.e., if the exam begins at 10:00 a.m. on Saturday, the student has until 10:00 a.m. on Monday to turn in the exam. (an additional ten (10) hours are allowed for non-native speakers of English, giving them until 8:00 p.m. on Monday to turn the exam in.) A maximum of 4800 words is allowed in response to each question.

1. Students must earn a passing grade on all three questions of the American comprehensive exam in order to pass the exam. A failing grade on any of the three comprehensive exam essays necessitates that the student retake the entire exam. The option of writing a literature review when failing one comprehensive exam question is not available for the American comprehensive exam, as it is already an open book exam.

2. Beginning in Fall 2008 all students taking the American Politics comprehensive exam must have completed three graduate seminars in American politics at Notre Dame. The American field Seminar counts as one seminar. The other two seminars may not include directed readings. A maximum of one other course may be fulfilled by transferring credit from another political science graduate program, at the discretion of the Director of Graduate Studies.

3. In its present form, the exam consists of two parts:

   Part One asks general, broad questions that bridge or cross sub-areas of the field. They are designed for generalists in American politics. These questions resemble to some degree those on the "American Democracy" portion of prior exams. Students receive four questions of which they must answer two. Everyone taking the exam receives the same questions.

   Part Two is an area of specialization chosen by the student prior to the exam. These may be any of the subject headings on the new reading list (or something similar with approval).

   Everyone choosing the same area of specialization receives the same questions. There are two questions of which students must answer one. These questions will resemble those that have appeared on prior exams under the rubric of Institutions, Public Law, etc.

4. Effective January 2009, the American comp is graded using a committee of faculty members, which will change for every administration of the comp. There will be a general committee to compose and grade each American comp.

   If you have further questions, please contact the American field chair.

American Reading List  (Revised 3/15/05)

Democratic Theory
• Madison, Federalist 10, 51
• Dahl, Preface to Democratic Theory
• Schumpeter, Capitalism, Socialism, and Democracy (Introduction and part IV only)
• Machpherson, Life and Times of Liberal Democracy
• Dahl, Democracy and its Critics
• Riker, Liberalism Against Populism
• Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy
• Lijphart, Patterns of Democracy

Political Parties
• Downs, An Economic Theory of Democracy (1957), esp. chs. 2, 7-8
• Carmines and Stimson, 1986 "On the Structure and Sequence of Issue Evolution" APSR 80:901-920
• Erickson, MacKuen, and Stimson, The Macro Polity (2002), chs. 4 and 5
• Green, Palmquist, and Schickler, Partisan Hearts and Minds: Political Parties and the Social Identities of Voters (2002)

Interest Groups
• Baumgartner and Leech, Basic Interests: The Importance of Groups in Politics and Political Science (1998)
• E.E. Schattschneider, The Semi-Sovereign People (1960)
• Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action (1965)
• Schlozman and Tierney, Organized Interests and American Democracy (1986)

Mass Behavior and Public Opinion

General and Miscellaneous
Note: Students should also be familiar with current debates and articles within the leading
journals (in particular, APSR, AJPS, JOP).

- Key, Southern Politics in State and Nation (1949).

State/Urban


Congress

Books

- Cox, Gary W. and Mathew D. McCubbins, Legislative Leviathan: Party Government
• Poole, Keith T. and Howard Rosenthal, Congress: A Political-Economic History of Roll Call Voting (1997).

Articles

Presidential Politics
• Jon Bond and Richard Fleisher, The President in the Legislative Arena
• Charles Cameron, Veto Bargaining: Presidents and the Politics of Negative Power
• James Ceaser, Presidential Selection
• William Howell, Power Without Persuasion
• Sidney Milkis, The President and the Parties
• Richard Neustadt, Presidential Power (1991)
• Stephen Skowronek, The Politics Presidents Make
• Jeffrey Tulis, The Rhetorical Presidency

Race and Ethnicity

**Public Law List**
The American Founding and the Constitution

**Judicial Review and Democracy**
• Ronald Dworkin, *Taking Rights Seriously* (1977), chapter 5
• Alexander Bickel, *The Least Dangerous Branch*, 2nd ed. (1986)

**Supreme Court as Institutional Actor**
• Louis Fischer and Neal Devins, *The Political Dynamics of Constitutional Law* (2001)

**Internal Politics of the Supreme Court**
• Walter Murphy, *Elements of Judicial Strategy*
• Jeffrey Segal and Harold Spaeth, *The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited* (2002)

**Constitutional Interpretation**

**Cases in American Constitutional Law**
• Marbury v. Madison (1803)
• McCulloch v. Maryland (1819)
• Gibbons v. Ogden (1824)
• Dred Scott v. Sandford (1856)
• The Slaughterhouse Cases (1873)
• Civil Rights Cases (1883)
• Plessy v. Ferguson (1896)
• Brown v. Board of Education (1954)
• Adamson v. California (1947)
• Lochner v. New York (1905)
• Griswold v. Connecticut (1965)
• Roe v. Wade (1973)
• Planned Parenthood v. Casey (1992)
• West Coast Hotel v. Parrish (1937)
• NLRB v. Jones & Laughlin Steel Corporation (1937)
• Wickard v. Filburn (1942)
• United States v. Lopez (1995)
• United States v. Morrison (2000)
• Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer (1952)
• Morrison v. Olson (1988)
• Ex Parte Milligan (1860)
• Ex Parte Quirin (1942)
• Hamdi (2004)
• Schenck v. United States (1919)
• Brandenburg v. Ohio (1969)
• New York Times v. Sullivan (1964)
• Everson v. Board of Education (1947)
• Lemon v. Kurtzman (1971)
• Sherbert v. Verner (1963)
• Employment Division v. Smith (1990)
• Boerne v. Flores (1997)