Final Exam Study Guide
American Government, Fall 2007
North Seattle Community College

BRING A BLUE BOOK!

Format: The exam will consist of fill-in-the-blank questions, true-false questions, and one essay. There will be 25 fill-in-the-blank/true-false questions, each worth 2 points. There will be one essay, worth 50 points.

Content

Fill-in-blank/true-false:
Most of these questions will be drawn directly from Quizzes 1 through 3. Make sure you look up the answers to questions that you missed on these quizzes. If you threw out or misplaced any of your quizzes, I will make copies available on http://facweb.northseattle.edu/mmerry. A small number of questions will be on the class discussion of mass media. Below are the concepts you should be familiar with.

From Class Discussion:
How news organizations maximize sales and minimize costs
Four news biases: personalization, dramatization, fragmentation, authority-disorder bias
Focus on the president in political coverage—reasons for this
Coverage of elections—“horse race” and strategy of over issue positions

Essay:
There will be one essay question. Here it is:

1. Throughout the quarter we have looked at many elements of election systems in the United States, including the ways electoral districts are drawn, how political campaigns are financed, and the decision rules that determine who wins (i.e., plurality, winner-take all). Drawing on these diverse topics, evaluate how democratic election systems are in the United States. Make sure that you include the following in your answer:
   --an introductory paragraph with a thesis statement articulating your position on how democratic election systems are
   --a paragraph early in your essay in which you define “democracy,” including specific criteria for democracy (considering revisiting Zinn and Hook!)
   --explicit discussion of at least two topics we have covered this quarter, in which you point out which features of election systems do or do not conform to criteria you have identified.
   --a concluding paragraph in which you summarize the major points you have made in your essay.

Length expectations: I expect you to write no fewer than 5 paragraphs. This is a minimum expectation, and you should feel free to write more; the more you can demonstrate what you have learned this quarter, the better your grade will be. I also expect that you will have thought through your major points and the organization of your essay in advance. However, no notes will be allowed during the exam.