

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
Political Science 2335 FA
Politics, Government and Society in the USA

Dr. Gary Munro
Office: RB 2035
Telephone: 343-8284
E-Mail: gary.munro@lakeheadu.ca

Tuesday & Thursday: 2:30-4:00 p.m.
RB 3024

SUGGESTED ESSAY TOPICS

- length 3,000 words
- Keep a copy of your essay
- Due October 26, 2010
- Cite material systematically.

Students may seek permission to write on other topics.

1. Does the election of Barack Obama indicate the emergence of a post racial American politics? Is Obama a black president or is he a president who happens to be black?
2. Assess the impact of information technology on American politics. Does it make it easier to challenge the party establishment? Did it help Obama secure the Democratic nomination for the Presidency?
3. What is the impact of primaries on American parties? Do they undermine the strength of parties as organizations?
4. American Presidents have been promising Americans energy security for a generation without changing the actual situation. Why have they consistently failed to achieve this goal?
5. Examine language policy in the United States. A number of states have made English their official language. The proportion of the American population speaking Spanish is growing. Is the United States likely to adopt a Canadian pattern of language relations?

6. Is China a threat to American hegemony? It has been projected that the Chinese gross domestic product will overtake that of the United States by 2025, This increase in wealth may result in greater military power. How should the United States respond to these concerns?
7. Was the 2010 health care bill an important achievement? Will it revolutionize American politics by creating a new dominant coalition in electoral politics?
8. Examine attempts to use private sector management approaches in American government.
9. Is America sinking in a sea of debt? Is this a problem? Does Chinese ownership of United States treasuries increase Chinese influence on American policy?
10. The United States spends 48% of the world's spending on defence. Is American defence spending excessive? Is it a worthwhile investment?
11. Is the United States the leading beneficiary of globalization? Should the United States promote free trade and other aspects of globalization?
12. What is meant by the term "American exceptionalism"? Is the United States unique?
13. Is California still the golden state or has it become a failed state? Examine the fiscal position of American states giving particular attention to California. California's constitution requires a two thirds majority to pass a budget.
14. Why does the United States incarcerate so many people? (About 2.4 million people are currently incarcerated.) Consider the adoption of "three strikes and you're out" laws in states like California.
15. Was the United States justified in its war on Iraq? When is preemptive war justified? Is it justified to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons?
16. Examine some aspect of the impact of religion on American politics. Consider the impact of the first amendment on politics and religion. Is America a Christian country?
17. Examine the evolution of same sex marriage in the United States.