Directions: Answer one of the following questions in a 5-8 page term paper, with an additional page for references and one more for the title page. For example, if you write 8 pages of text, you will turn in 10 pages (a title page, 8 pages of text, and a reference page). This paper must be typed and double spaced with 1" margins, formatted for US letter (8.5” x 11” paper). All citations should be enclosed in parentheses as in the following example: “This point reflects . . . my claim that parties are the consequences of the actions of political elites in a republican democracy” (Aldrich 1994, p. 52).

For all questions, it is critical that you demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of the readings. A good essay is well organized with attention to grammar, style, and the layout I introduced the first day of class. I expect you to refer to the readings as you lay out your argument, and I ask that you follow the “paper format” below to facilitate blind grading. A five to eight page paper should be a distilled version of a fifteen page paper, not an overnight job.

Term papers are due on Thursday, March 13 at 5 pm. Rather than burden Mark with a pile of papers that might get lost, I ask that you format your paper for 8.5” x 11” paper and e-mail it to me at <dougherk@uga.edu>. To make sure I can open your file, please save your essay in the format of your original document (one version number earlier) and as a pdf, then attach both files to your email. Although you will have the last week to focus on your papers, you should get started right away to make sure you have time to conduct your research and redraft your paper. Term papers will be lowered one letter grade for every working day they are late (see your syllabus). Good luck and enjoy the assignment!

1. When interpreting the Constitution, judges and commentators often invoke the “original intent of the framers” in support of their position. Some claim that such an interpretative strategy is not only desirable, it was what the drafter's and early interpreters of the Constitution intended. As historians and political theorists, what can we expect from studying the “original intent”? Put differently, is it doable? How might judges proceed in light of your argument? Refer to the readings, take both sides of the argument seriously, and justify your response.

2. Social Contract Theorists, such as Hobbes, Locke, and Montesquieu, argue that government authority comes from the consent of the governed. Some scholars treat the U.S. Constitution as a social contract. Can we accurately think of the U.S. Constitution as a social contract based on popular consent? Why or why not? If the notion of a social contract is useful for understanding the U.S. Constitution, what are the parties to that contract: the people or the states? What are the implications of your argument for our understanding of the legitimacy of the U.S. Constitution and the right to of states to succeed from the union? Refer to the readings as you justify your response.
3. James Madison's mid-career shift from proto-nationalist to republican-democrat launched a
debate about the motivation of his politics and the consistency of his political thought
(Zvesper 1984; Banning 1984; Sheehan 2004; Gibson 2002, 2005). Did Madison maintain a
consistent political philosophy, and a consistent view on politics, throughout his political
career? Did his apparent ideological shift result from environmental changes or from
changes in Madison’s political views? How can his different positions be reconciled? To
get you started, you might consider various readings from class as well as some of the
Republicanism and the Role of Public Opinion,” American Political Science Review, 98(3):
Madisonian Madison and the Question of Consistency: The Significance and Challenge of
Recent Research.” The Review of Politics, 64(2): 311-338.

Writing a Quality Term Paper

There are several things to keep in mind when you set out to write a term paper. First, all three
assignments require argumentative essays. In other words, your paper should contain a clear
argument that you will state in your introduction and sustain throughout the paper. For example,
someone answering the second essay question could argue that “Although both originalism and
living constitution ideas have merit, there are three reasons why textualism, a particular type of
originalism, is more appealing. First, ...” After you make such a claim, you will then need to
back your claim up with logical reasoning and facts in the body. In other words, you will have
to be crystal clear about “why.” Once the argument is set in the paper don’t deviate from it.
Think of the argument as “your theory” or “your point” that you must support before anyone
accepts it.

Second, quality papers require more than one draft. I suggest that you create a preliminary
“theory” early, figure out if your theory fits in with the material we learned in class and the facts
you have gathered, then write your theory as an argument in a first draft. The first draft is for
you. It will help you organize your thoughts and bring together important aspects of your
research, but it will usually be poorly organized and overly wordy. The third, or fourth draft is
for me. It will organize the paper into a readable fashion and make a clear argument that omits
any information that is not directly related to your argument. Of course, there is little room for
quotations in a 5-6 page essay, but there is room for citations.

Third, I look for the following outline in the final draft. Implementing it will help.

<hook> In the May edition of the Wall Street Journal, former Speaker of the House John
McCormack (1962-1971), gave the following advice to incoming freshmen, “whenever you
pass a committee chairman, you bow from the waist. I do” (Davidson and Oleszek, 1998:
139). This is not surprising given that McCormack was Speaker of the House during the
Textbook Years. As Speaker of the House during the Republican Revolution, however, Newt
Gingrich had a different style. He made committee chairmen bow to him. <hook>

The *Textbook Congress* was characterized by strong committees with strong committee chairmen, while the Republican Revolution was characterized by a strong Speaker of the House who bypassed powerful committee chairs. <argument> Both served constituent interests, but the organization of Congress during the *Textbook Congress* led to inflated national budgets while the organization of Congress during the Republican Revolution allowed for control of the budget through dictatorial decision making. <argument> This paper will explain why each Congress organized the committee structure in a different fashion, show that both Congresses were equally effective at serving committee interests, and introduce an argument for why committee structure during the *Textbook Congress* led to inflated budgets while committee structure during the Republican Revolution did not. <outline>

Note: the hook starts at the coding <hook> and ends at the coding </hook>, etc.

**Body:** The body should substantiate the argument you claim in the introduction. A classic mistake is for students to summarize the history of their problem or some theory we discussed in class for 80% of the paper then start their argument in the conclusion. Don’t do that! Start your argument immediately then make references to historical facts and theories we presented in class as they become necessary to make your point. Remember you are making an argument and sustaining it throughout the paper. You are not turning in paragraphs related to the topic.

The hardest thing should be distilling this paper down to 5-8 pages. Here’s how you do it. Write your usual 12 page essay, then ask yourself, “is this paragraph absolutely essential for my argument? If it is not, remove it. Then do this for every sentence. If you can write three words in two, do it. Simple language is always better than flowery language. See William Zinsser, *On Writing Well* for more tips.

**Conclusion:** Rather than summarizing your argument in the conclusion, save the conclusion for the significance of your paper. In other words, if the reader is now convinced that your argument is true, why should they care? What are the implications of your research for legal theory, American politics, or whatever?

Finally, if all this seems overwhelming, don’t worry. There is help. The Writing Center specializes in improving student writing (66 Park Hall, M&W, 9 am-4pm T&Th 10am-2pm; and SLC 341, T-Th, 7-10 pm by appointment). Most students using it are borderline A/B students, not borderline D/F students, so don’t be shy. You can call the Writing Center at (706)542-2119 or visit them on-line at [http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/home.html](http://www.english.uga.edu/writingcenter/home.html) for more information. I have also posted a sheet describing plagiarism on-line. Try to learn about this because penalties for plagiarism can be stiff.

Take the time to master writing. Quality writing is not easy, but it is perhaps the most important skill that you will learn in college. Good Luck!
Paper Format

*You will lose five points for not adhering to the following formatting guidelines! . . . my gosh he’s mean. . . .* To facilitate blind grading please include a title page which includes a title, your name, the course name, and the course number. Number pages throughout starting with page one on the first page of the text (bottom center). Do not include your name on any other page. Only include it on the title page. I will turn over all the title pages so that I can grade blind. This paper must be typed in 12 point font and double spaced with 1" margins (i.e. the page requirement is real). Rather than print the file on A1 paper (used in Britain), save the file on 8.5" x 11" paper (used in the United States). All citations should be enclosed in parentheses as in the following example: “A state is first of all an organization that provides public goods for its members” (Olson 1965, p. 15). An additional reference page (which does not count toward the 5-8 page limit) should also be included.

Grades

You can schedule a time to pick up your term paper when you are back in the states, but I cannot email you your grade or discuss grades over the phone. It violates your right to privacy as stated in the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act. Grade for the course will be posted on OASIS as soon as I have them.

Enjoy the assignment!