

## **POLITICAL SCIENCE 1**

Spring Semester 2009

El Camino College Compton Center

Online section 9482 & 9487

Course web site: [www.compton.edu](http://www.compton.edu)

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**Course Title:** Governments of the United States & California

**Course Description:** Survey of principles of American Government; covers the Constitution, functions, and administration of the governments of the United States and California; emphasis on the impact of federalism on the national and state governments.

**Course Goal:** While satisfying units needed for degree completion, this course allows students to develop a greater understanding of and appreciation for the American Political System. This course is transferable to UC and CSU systems.

**Prerequisites/Co-requisites:** Completion of English 12 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent, is strongly recommended. Tutors and instructional associates are available in the Learning Resource Center to help with writing assignments.

**Method of Instruction:** This course is delivered through multimedia presentations, textbook companion websites, and online group discussions. Online participation is compulsory and contributes to your final grade. E-mail and Internet access are necessary for completion research and political participation assignments. Internet access is available at the Learning Resource Center and Open Computer Labs. Students are expected to have textbooks by the second week of the semester. Students are strongly encouraged to share the reading load with partners. Study groups are recommended.

**Outcome Expectations for Students:** Upon successful completion of the course students should be able to perform the following activities with 70% accuracy:

1. Analyze both the theoretical and the practical workings of the American political system
2. Examine and analyze the concepts of political culture and socialization
3. Describe the effectiveness of major American political institutions in serving the various minority racial, ethnic, and religious communities
4. Address issues of race, ethnicity, social class, age, and gender as they intersect with the distribution of power in society
5. Define the role of citizenship
6. Distinguish between civil rights and civil liberties as practiced in American society
7. Evaluate the role of the mass media in the political process
8. Compare and contrast federal and state government systems with emphasis on California
9. Examine and analyze the major American political institutions including the Presidency, Congress, Judiciary, elections, political parties, and interest groups
10. Identify the four basic principles underlying the Constitution
11. Describe the formal and informal processes of constitutional change
12. Summarize the provisions of each article of the United States Constitution
13. Deliberate on the success or failure of the United States Constitution
14. Describe the formal and informal processes of bureaucratic public policy making
15. Describe the formal procedures of the Supreme Court

### **Course Requirements:**

3 Current Event articles, 15 points each	45 points
Internet research	60 points
Political Participation	35 points

### **Grade Scale:**

440 – 390 points = A
389 – 300 points = B
299 – 250 points = C

Online exams	200 points	249 – 200 points = D
<u>Final exam</u>	<u>100 points</u>	199 or less points = F
Total	440 points	

**Student Responsibilities:**

No make-ups on missed exams, unless prior arrangements are made with the instructor.

Assignments submitted late will have points deducted, 10% per day.

*For example, an assignment worth 40 points submitted 3 days late will be deducted 30% (30% of 40 = 12 points). So the maximum points for a good research paper is 28 points (40 – 12 = 28).*

It is the responsibility of the student to drop the course. The instructor is not responsible for dropping students from the final roster. Students who drop the course must file for a drop or a (W) Withdrawal with admissions & records. Students who fail to do so and appear on the final grade roster will receive a failing grade of F. Important dates to remember:

The last day to add the class is Friday, February 20, 2009.

The last day to drop the class without a notation on student record is Friday, March 06, 2009.

The last day to drop the class with a notation of W on student record is Wednesday, May 08, 2009.

Students must request an (I) Incomplete from the instructor prior to Friday, May 29, 2009.

**Absences and classroom standards:** Completion of course materials is very important and critical for successful passing this course. Students are responsible for material from the textbook as well as online presentations. At any time during the semester, a student with four weeks of inactivity will be dropped from the course. Submit all assignments on time as tardiness will not be tolerated. Instructor reserves the right to make alterations to any assignments or required readings and/or due dates with ample notification in the event of unforeseen events.

**Methods of Evaluation:** All final drafts of written assignments must be submitted word processed, using font size 12, with standard one-inch margins.

1. Current Event articles: Throughout the course, students are required to read 3 articles from major newspapers or magazines about current political events, foreign or domestic, or articles related to the American political process. Students are to write three one-page analysis addressing the following: a) a brief synopsis of the event; b) how the event will impact/change the political process; c) how the event will effect individual lives and/or communities; d) publication or web address and date of the article used. Each current event article should answer these questions in essay format, in 3 – 4 paragraphs. The first one is due April 03; the second is due April 24. The last current event must be submitted by May 15, 2009. These assignments can be emailed or delivered to the mailroom to be placed in box 34.

2. Political Participation: Participation in some political activity is required. This may range from writing and sending a letter to a government official (proof of mailing required), participating in a political organization, working on a political campaign, or attending a speech, forum, or city council meeting. For more information, ask the instructor for help or recommendations. Do not leave this for the end. This assignment is due before May 01, 2009. These assignments can be emailed or delivered to the mailroom to be placed in box 34.

3. Internet Research: A research-based assignment requiring use of the Internet to gain access to political representatives, presidential candidate's web site, and political party web sites will be explained and assigned at orientation. This assignment is due before March 20, 2009. These assignments can be emailed or delivered to the mailroom to be placed in box 34.

4. Online Exams: A collection of chapter practice exams, glossary tests, and chapter study guide assessments for each chapter consisting of multiple-choice questions and true-false study questions. It covers all course content presented in readings and broadcasts. All exams must be completed online by 12 noon on May 29, 2009. There are three sets of exams per chapter.

5. Final exam shall be timed, which means it will be posted on faculty webpage for students to print or download and must be completed and returned within the allotted time. Final exam is Thursday, 6/04/09. Exams are to be emailed back to instructor's address [pflor@elcamino.edu](mailto:pflor@elcamino.edu). There are no exceptions. Students have a 12 hour period to complete the exam; students may use notes and the textbook.

**Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**: Students with verified disabilities requiring accommodations should make a specific request of the instructor in a timely manner at the start of the semester and at least one week prior to the identified need. Special services are available on campus to meet outside needs.

**Course Textbook**: Compiled by Paul M. Flor, *CHOICES: Custom Resources for American Government*. ISBN: 978-0-536-71919-5, latest edition, Prentice Hall

**Orientation**: Friday, February 20, 2009 @ 6:30 - 8:00 pm in Room F-40 to discuss Course syllabus, Course requirements, lectures, online exercises, submission of assignments, and final exam.

### **Course Time Schedule**

Session 1 Course Orientation Course Syllabus Course Requirements Reading for next class: <b><u>Chapter 1</u></b>	Session 10 The Media in American Politics Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 14</u></b>
Session 2 Constitutional Democracy Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 2</u></b>	Session 11 Congress, the Legislative Branch Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 15 &amp; 16</u></b>
Session 3 The Living Constitution Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 3</u></b>	Session 12 Presidency, the Executive Branch Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 17</u></b>
Session 4 American Federalism Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 4</u></b>	Session 13 Court systems, the Judicial Branch Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 18 &amp; 19</u></b>
Session 5 Bill of Rights & Civil Liberties Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 5 &amp; 6</u></b> Internet Research due 03-20-09	Session 14 The Domestic Policy Making Process Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 20 &amp; 21</u></b>
Session 6 Equal Rights Under the Law Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapters 7 &amp; 8</u></b>	Session 15 The Foreign Policy Making Process Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 22 &amp; 23</u></b> Political Participation due 05-01-09
Session 7 Political Culture, Ideology, and the American Political Landscape Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapters 9 &amp; 10</u></b>	Session 16 State Governments Reading for this Session: Handout
Session 8 Political Parties, Public Opinion & Interest Groups Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 11 &amp; 12</u></b>	Session 17 Local Governments Reading for next Session: Handout Last Current Event Articles due 05-15-09
Session 9 Campaigns & Elections Reading for next Session: <b><u>Chapter 13</u></b>	Session 18 Online Exams Due 05-29-08 Final Exam on Thursday noon 06-04-09 Due before midnight