

## **POLITICAL SCIENCE 1**

Fall Session 2008, Section 9272

Tuesday & Thursday 8am - 9:25pm

Classroom: E10

Facilitator: Paul M. Flor

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Office hours: M & W 11am – 12:30

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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 1A 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 lectures, multimedia presentations, and group discussions. Class attendance and participation are compulsory and contribute to your final grade. Outside of class, 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 day of class. 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:**

Attendance & class participation	20 points
3 Current Event essays, 10 points each	30 points
Political Participation	40 points

### **Grade Scale:**

400 – 350 points = A
349 – 300 points = B
299 – 250 points = C

Internet research	60 points	249 – 200 points = D
3 Quizzes, 30 points each	90 points	199 or less points = F
Midterm exam	60 points	
<u>Final exam (cumulative)</u>	<u>100 points</u>	
Total	400 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, September 05, 2008.

The last day to drop the class without a notation on student record is Friday, September 19, 2008.

The last day to drop the class with a notation of W on student record is Friday, November 14, 2008.

Students must request an (I) Incomplete from the instructor prior to Friday, December 05, 2008.

**Absences and classroom standards:** Class attendance is very important and critical for successful completion of this course. Students are responsible for material from the textbook as well as class presentations. At any time during the semester, a student with four unexcused absences will be dropped from the course. Be prompt, as tardiness will not be tolerated. Leaving the class early without prior notice is considered an absence. Pagers and mobile phones should be turned off or on silent mode so not to be nuisance. 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 essays: Throughout the course, students are required to read three 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 analyses 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 affect 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 last day to submit an article is December 05, 2008.
2. Political Participation: Participation in some political activity is required. This may range from writing a letter to a government official, participating in a political organization, working on a political campaign, or attending a speech, forum, or city council meeting. More information and instructions will be provided later. This assignment is due before December 01, 2008.
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 later in the course. This assignment is due before September 19, 2008.
4. Quizzes: There are three quizzes scheduled throughout the course as shown in the syllabus schedule. Each quiz consists of twenty multiple-choice questions and two short answer questions covering assigned materials outlined in the syllabus schedule. Failure to bring a scantron, #2 pencil, writing paper, and a pen may equate to forfeiture of opportunity to take the quiz.

5. Mid-term Exam: There is one mid-semester exam scheduled for 10-23-08. The exam consists of 45 multiple-choice questions and three short answer questions covering course content presented in readings and lectures.

6. Final Exam: Scheduled for Thursday, December 11, 2008, this cumulative exam consists of 70 multiple-choice questions and six short answer essays. It covers all course content presented in readings and lectures.

7. Attendance & class participation: Perhaps the simplest points awards for attendance, punctuality, and participation in class discussions and in-class activities.

**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 needs outside of class.

**Course Textbook**: David B. Magleby, David O'Brien, Paul Light, et. Al., *Government by the People*, 22nd edition, Prentice Hall

Topic 1 Course Introduction  
Course Syllabus  
Course Requirements  
Reading for next class: Chapter 1

Topic 10 Mid-term Exam review  
Mid-term Exam – Ch. 4 to 10  
Bring scantron, paper, pen, and #2 pencil. Reading for next topic: Chapter 11

Topic 2 Constitutional Democracy  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 2

Topic 11 Congress, the Legislative Branch  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 12 & 13

Topic 3 The Living Constitution  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 3

Topic 12 Presidency, the Executive Branch  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 14

Topic 4 American Federalism  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 15

Topic 13 Court systems, the Judicial Branch  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 18 & 19  
Quiz #3 – Ch. 11 to 14

Topic 5 Quiz #1 – Ch.1 to 3  
Bill of Rights & Civil Liberties  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 16 & 17  
Internet Research Due

Topic 14 The Domestic Policy Making Process  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 20 & 21  
Political Participation Assignments Due

Topic 6 Equal Rights Under the Law  
Reading for next topic: Chapters 4 & 5

Topic 15 The Foreign Policy Making Process  
Reading for next week: Chapter 22

Topic 7 Political Culture, Ideology, and the American Political Landscape  
Reading for next topic: Chapters 6 & 7

Topic 16 State Governments  
Reading for this topic: Chapter 24, 25  
Current Event Articles Due

Topic 8 Quiz #2 – Ch.15 to 17  
Political Parties, Public Opinion, & Interest Groups  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 8 & 9

Topic 17 Local Governments  
Reading for next topic: Chapter 27  
Review for Final

Topic 9 Campaigns & Elections  
Reading for next meeting: Chapter 10  
Mid-term Exam review

12/11/08 Final Exam Bring scantron, paper, pen, and #2 pencil