

POLITICAL SCIENCE 1

Spring Semester 2012

El Camino College Compton Center

Online section 9162

Course web site: www.etudes.org

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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: Eligibility for English 1A, or equivalent, is strongly recommended. Tutors & 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 to complete the internet research and political participation assignments, to access lectures and handouts, and to communicate with the instructor. 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 and tutoring 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. Identify the theoretical foundations and the applications of the American political system;
2. Deliberate on the successes or failures of the United States Constitution;
3. Describe the formal and informal processes of constitutional change;
4. Examine political culture and the function of political socialization;
5. Evaluate the role of the mass media in the political process;
6. Examine and analyze the major American political institutions including the Presidency, Congress, Judiciary, the bureaucracy, elections, political parties, and interest groups;
7. Address issues of race, ethnicity, social class, age, and gender as they relate to the distribution of power in the political process;
8. Distinguish between civil rights and civil liberties as practiced in American society
9. Define the role of citizenship and assess the concept and implementation of citizenship;
10. Describe the formal and informal processes of bureaucratic public policy making;
11. Describe the formal procedures of the federal & state judicial systems & their impact on public policy;
12. Describe the relationship between economics and politics;
13. Compare and contrast the relationship of federal and state government systems and processes with emphasis on California.

Student Learning Outcome: All students in this course should be able to summarize a minimum of four basic provisions and principles of each article and amendment of the United States Constitution.

Course Requirements:

Writing Assignment	50 points
Political Participation	50 points
Etudes Exercises	180 points
Midterm exam	60 points
Final exam	100 points

Grade Scale:

440 – 390 points = A
389 – 330 points = B
329 – 270 points = C
269 – 210 points = D
209 or less points = F

Total

440 points

Student Responsibilities: Students must receive an assigned username and password to use for logging into the course website. Contact the Distance Education office to obtain one.

No make-ups on missed exams or assignments, 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 drop with an enrollment refund is Friday, February 24, 2012.

The last day to add the class is Friday, February 24, 2012.

The last day to drop the class without a notation on student record is Friday, March 9, 2012.

Spring Recess, No classes, is April 7 - 13, 2012.

The last day to drop the class with a notation of W on student record is Friday, May 11, 2012.

Students must request an (I) Incomplete from the instructor prior to Tuesday, May 29, 2012.

Spring Semester ends Friday, June 8, 2012.

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. Assignments are to be emailed, submitted as attachments on Etudes, delivered to instructor's mail box 34 in the administration building, or the distance learning office in G-39.

1. Writing Assignment: As major topics in the American political process are introduced, students will answer six short essay questions in essay format, in 2 to 4 paragraphs. The assignment will be distributed through Etudes under the Assignments tab and is due May 25. The project can be submitted by email via Etudes before the due date.

2. Political Participation: This assignment has two parts. Part one requires researching contact information to various political representatives. Part two involves writing and sending a letter to a government official (proof of mailing required) on a salient issue. For more information, ask the instructor for help or recommendations. Do not leave this for the end. This assignment is due before Thursday, March 29. This assignment can be submitted by email or via Etudes before the due date.

3. Online Exercises: A collection of multiple-choice, true-false, and fill-in-the-blank questions for each topic consisting. They cover all course content presented in readings and lectures. All exercises have assigned due dates and the last one must be completed by June 8, 2012.

4. Midterm exam shall be timed, which means it will be posted on the course webpage. It must be completed within the allotted time. Midterm exam is Friday, 04/20/12. There are no exceptions. Students have a 18 hour period to complete the exam; students may use notes and the textbook.

5. Final exam is Friday, 06/08/12 and will be posted on the course webpage. Student must follow similar instructions as the midterm exam. Students have a 12 hour period to complete the exam.

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

of class. Contact that office as soon as possible.

Course Textbook: Compiled by Paul M. Flor, *CHOICES: Custom Resources for American Government*. ISBN: 978-0-558-62573-3, latest edition, Prentice Hall

Course Time Schedule

Session 1 Course Orientation, Syllabus & Requirements First Reading: Chapter 1	Topic 10 The Media in American Politics Reading for next Session: Chapter 14
Topic 2 Constitutional Democracy Reading for next topic: Chapter 2	04/20/12 Midterm Exam – online on Etudes
Topic 3 The Living Constitution Reading for next topic: Chapter 3	Topic 11 Congress, the Legislative Branch Reading for next topic: Chapter 15 & 16
Topic 4 American Federalism Reading for next topic: Chapter 4	Topic 12 Presidency, the Executive Branch Reading for next topic: Chapter 17
Topic 5 Bill of Rights & Civil Liberties Reading for next topic: Chapter 5 & 6	Topic 13 Court systems, the Judicial Branch Reading for next topic: Chapter 18 & 19 Writing Assignment due 05-25-12
Topic 6 Equal Rights Under the Law Reading for next topic: Chapters 7 & 8 Political Participation due 03-29-12	Topic 14 Economic & Regulatory Policy Foreign & Defense Policy Making Process Reading for next topic: Chapter 20 & 21
Topic 7 Political Culture, Ideology Reading for next topic: Chapters 9 & 10	Topic 15 Domestic Policy Making Process Reading for next week: Chapter 22
Topic 8 American Political Landscape, Political Parties, Public Opinion, & Interest Groups Reading for next topic: Chapter 11 & 12	Topic 16 State & Local Governments Reading for this topic: Chapter 23 & Handout
Topic 9 Campaigns & Elections Reading for next meeting: Chapter 13	06/08/12 Final Exam & Etudes Exercises