Introduction to American Government
Political Science 1
Fall 2006
Ticket# 22155

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Course Description
Political Science 1 is an introductory survey course in American Political Institutions, politics, and policy, including government and politics in California. This course satisfies the general education requirement.

Course Objectives
The objective of this course is to introduce the student to the theoretical and practical working of the United States political system. Topics reviewed are analysis and appraisal of major political institutions, role of the mass media, the political economy, the United States constitution, elite and pluralist models of democracy, and the policy making process.

Instructional Objectives
Upon completion of the course, the student will be able to:
1. Analyze both the theoretical and the practical workings of the American political system.
2. Examine and analyze the major American political institutions, the Presidency, bureaucracy, congress, judiciary, elections, political parties, and interest groups.
3. Compare and contrast the various political models: elitism, democracy, and pluralism.
4. Evaluate the role of the mass media in the political process.
5. Examine and analyze the concept of political culture and socialization.
6. Compare and contrast the federal and state governmental systems with emphasis on California.
7. Appraise the American economic system as it affects the political process.
8. Appraise the status of civil rights and civil liberties as practiced in American society.
10. Evaluate the public policy process both foreign and domestic.
11. Examine the role of citizenship.

SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE:
This is an online course therefore, you, as a student, need to be able to: use a computer, a web browser to navigate the Internet, word processing program, send and receive e-mail. You must be independent, self-motivated, willing to learn in isolation, good at expressing yourself in writing, and aware of technology as a convenience and not as a barrier. You will want to be sure that your computer's settings are optimized for running a Blackboard course. This means that you will need to enable Java and set the cache to reload every time. One of the following browsers must be used to download assignments and to take the quizzes: Netscape Navigator, Netscape Communicator or Internet Explorer. Note: AOL requires special attention so please contact your service administrator for additional assistance. Additional software includes a media player and Adobe Reader 5.0 or newer.

Contacting the Instructor:
I will try respond to emails and phone calls within 24-hours. When emailing me, please use the following format – class-section#, and assignment - example: RE: PS1-1111, Term Paper. Be sure to state your name in the body of the email so I know who you are. Use a similar format when a voicemail: state your name, class- section# and what it regards – example: Hi. This is Joe Smith from your PS-1 class, section 1111 and I have a question regarding the term paper…
Required Texts and Related Issues
There are three textbooks and one website required for this class. All the textbooks are available in the bookstore and are on reserve in the campus library. The website link to access this course is http://socccd.blackboard.com/.

This site contains an on-line version of the textbook Struggle for Democracy, a student workbook, chapter summaries, review questions, on-line quizzes, and exercises for each chapter. Regular usage of these additional resources within the website will assist you in obtaining a higher grade in this course.

This is a condensed course necessitates approximately 125 PAGES OF READING EVERY WEEK, in addition to reviews before exams. Class discussions will encompass important points of reading assignments.

   Included in this custom book are the following two books:
   b. Empty Dreams, Empty Pockets (2000, second edition) by Harrigan, (referred to as EDEP)

   Packaged free with the new textbook purchases are:
   3. Coursecompass Access code card
   4. You are required to stay informed regarding current events, topics, and issues that are relevant to the class. It is highly recommended that you read a daily newspaper, preferably the Los Angeles Times, the Sacramento Bee or the New York Times in order to remain informed on current events. All are available via the internet. Listen and/or watch the news on the following stations: KCET – Lehrer News Hour, KOCE – BBC News Hour, KCRW-NPR (89.9 FM), KPFK-Pacifica (90.7), and KPCC-NPR (89.3)

Recommended Readings
I will incorporate other publications relevant to topics of the class. Take note of these important titles, authors, and key ideas or concepts for possible future reference on quizzes, tests, and exams.

Course Requirements
Your course grade will be based on the assignments below. Your grade is based on a fixed scale, not a curve. The total number of points accrued during the semester will determine your grade. Opportunities for extra-credit points will be given throughout the course so be sure to check the announcements. Therefore, your participation is important. **There are no make-ups for quizzes.** If you are unable to take the exam on the scheduled date, please contact me, well in advance so you will not lose points. Failure to notify me in advance will result in a zero score for your grade.

Assignments
The following is a list of assignments that you will receive throughout the semester. Additional information regarding each assignment is available online under the “Assignments” tab and must be saved in a rich text format (rtf) will be submit in “turnitin”

- Annotated Bibliography (20 points)
- Discussion Boards (60 points)
- Group Work & Group Policy Paper (50)
- Term Paper (50 points)
- Email Assignment (10 points)
Quizzes
There will be quizzes as needed to encourage reading and will be posted in the announcements when they are required. They will cover the reading assignment and are worth 10 points each.

Exams
There will be two exams (one midterm and one final). Both exams are worth 100 points each. Note: I do not give study guides for the exams. However, I do post practice exams which have proven to increase student test scores.

Discussion Boards
There are numerous lab exercises in mypoliscilab.com to help your understanding of political science and American Government. While they are not graded, they are assigned to assist you with the discussion boards which are graded. It is your responsibility to work through the exercises and post your answer on the discussion board. Failure to incorporate what you learned from the lab will lower your score. Each discussion board is worth 10 points

Participation
As discussed below, attendance is important. When you are in class you should be prepared for the discussion that day. In other words, read the assignment before class. The questions asked are often an indicator as to how well you understand the material. If you don’t understand something, ask. There is a strong chance that someone else has a similar question. Class participation is worth 50 points.

Term Paper & Group Policy Paper
The term paper will be based on your acquired knowledge of a specific topic that relates to the course. Drawing from the textbook, articles and class discussions, you will type a double-spaced three to five-page paper. The paper will have Times New Roman font, 12 dpi, with one-inch margins. Additional information regarding the project will be distributed. The American Psychological Association in-text citation method is suggested. Remember to cite all work that is not your own! See the section titled “Expectations” for additional information.

Grading

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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tr>
<td>Quizzes and Assignments</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups &amp; Policy Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>50</td>
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<td>Participation/Attendance</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Points Available</strong></td>
<td><strong>500</strong></td>
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<td>Extra Credit: TBD</td>
<td>Max 25</td>
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The grading scale for the course will be based on a 10% distribution:

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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>500-450</td>
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<td>B</td>
<td>449-399</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>398-348</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>347-297</td>
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<td>F</td>
<td>296 and below</td>
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Student Services
General Student Services Information is available at the Saddleback College Website. General, academic, and service information can be obtained by accessing the Counseling Division and Financial Aid Websites. Individual and small group counseling information such as academic planning and review of transcripts is available by appointment. All other student services are available on campus during normal business hours.

Exceptions
While the syllabus outlines what will be covered in class, modifications may be necessary. It is more important to have a well-rounded knowledge of the concepts than to cover all of the material too quickly. Therefore, I reserve the right to modify the assignments as needed. You are responsible to stay informed of said possible changes.

Expectations
Etiquette
We will depend on each other in this class, so it is especially important that we treat each other with consideration and respect. Respect each others’ right to state an opinion; remember that we all come to this material with different cultural backgrounds.

NOTE: Anyone who posts obscene materials will receive a failing grade on the assignment. If it occurs a second time, the student will fail the course and be referred to the appropriate administrators for disciplinary action.

Attendance
Attendance will be taken each time you log on. Your weekly attendance is critical for success in this class since discussions and simulations are designed to aid you with the assignments.

Accommodation for Differing Ability
This course meets the requirements set fourth in the accessibility checklist and universal design grip provided by Special Services. The Web pages, video presentations, textbooks and class materials used in this course are accessible to students with disabilities. If you have questions on how to make accommodations please contact Special Services.

Academic Honesty
Do your own work! If you quote, paraphrase, or summarize the work of others, cite that work appropriately. If you plagiarize work of another or are caught cheating, you will fail this course and you will be referred to the proper authorities for disciplinary action. Please refer to the catalog for additional information on plagiarism and cheating.

Technology Failure Policies
On occasion there may be technology problems that arise for various reasons. In order to insure that your assignments are turn in on time, you should give yourself and extra day and submit them early. When taking quizzes and exams, you should try to use a desktop with a line connection versus a wireless connection. I will give a 48-72 hour window for quizzes and exams to be completed. Again, you should not wait until the last minute to take the quizzes and exams. If there is a technological problem with blackboard, I will extend the deadline. If there is a problem with your computer, I will only reset your quiz/exam within the allotted window. When I reset the quizzes and exams, all information is cleared and you will have to take it again. NOTE: It is your responsibility to have sold network connections and insure that your computer is in working order, free of spy ware and viruses.

Withdrawal Policy
Please note that it is your responsibility to withdraw from the course. I will not drop you if you do not complete the course. Please refer to the class schedule for the policies regarding this procedure.
Important Dates

First Week of Instruction Begins: Monday, 8/21/2006
First Class Meeting: Monday, 8/21/2006
Add without Instructor Permission by: Sunday, 8/20/2006
Drop with Refund by: Friday, 9/1/2006
Elect CR/NC by: Friday, 9/22/2006
Drop without 'W' Grade by: Friday, 9/22/2006
Drop with 'W' Grade by: Thursday, 11/2/2006
Last Week of Class Ends: Sunday, 12/17/2006

Proposed Schedule and Required Reading

The course is divided into four parts. Because I would like the flexibility to accommodate class discussions and more time on issues of particular interest, this outline does not specify exactly when we will be addressing these topics. You will be told via the announcements page where you should be in the reading on any given week.

Part I:
1: The Study of American Government and Politics -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch 1. Democracy and American Politics, EDEP: Ch 1. Introduction: Bias and Politics in American Democracy, & Simulation–Democracy and the Internet (Required); Discussion Board 1

2: Ideology and Government -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch 4. The Structural Foundations of American Government and Politics, & SIMULATION–What Are American Civic Values? (Required); Discussion Board 2

3: The United States Constitution -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch 2. The Constitution, EDEP: Ch 2. The Constitution as Seen from Below, & SIMULATION–The History of Constitutional Amendments (Optional); Quiz 1

4: American Federalism -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch 3. Federalism: States and Nation, EDEP: Ch 3. Federalism: Bias Between State and Nation, & SIMULATION–You Are a Federal Judge (Required); Group 1

Part II:
5: Public Opinion -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch 5. Public Opinion and Political Socialization, EDEP: Ch 4. Public Opinion and Participation in American Politics: What we Think and What we Do, & SIMULATION–Are You A Liberal or A Conservative? (Required); Discussion Board 3

6: Media -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 6. The Mass Media, EDEP: Ch. 5. The Media: Fuzzy Window on a Complex World, & SIMULATION–Are the Media Biased? (Required); Discussion Board 4

7: Political Parties -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch 9. Political Parties, EDEP: Ch. 6 – Political Parties (pgs 149-164), & SIMULATION - Deciding on a Political Party (Optional); Quiz 2

8: Participation, Voting and Elections -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 10. Participation, Voting and Elections, EDEP: Ch. 7. Elections: The Heart of Democracy, & SIMULATION- Prepared Voter Kit (Required); Discussion Board 5
9: The Politics of Interest Groups and Corporations -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch 7. Interest Groups and Corporations, EDEP: Ch 6. Interest Groups As Channels of Influence (pgs 165-170), & SIMULATION–You Are an Environmental Activist (Required)

Midterm: True/False and Multiple choice – 50 questions @ 2 points each (100 total points).

Part III:
10: Social Movements -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 8. Social Movements, EDEP: Ch. 6. Institution Building for Lower-Strata Political Influence (pgs 170-174), & SIMULATION–You are the Leader of Concerned Citizens of the World (Required)

11: Civil Liberties -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 15. Freedom: The Struggle for Civil Liberties, EDEP: Ch. 12. Civil Liberties and Equal Justice Under the Law, & SIMULATION–Balancing Liberty and Security at a Time of War (Required); Group 2

12: Civil Rights -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 16. Civil Rights: The Struggle for Political Equality, SIMULATION–Civil Rights and Gay Adoption (Required); Discussion Board 6

Part IV:
13: The Judiciary -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 14. The Courts, EDEP: Ch. 11. Federal Courts and Lower Strata People, & SIMULATION–You Are Appointing a Supreme Court Justice (Required); Quiz 3

14: The United States Congress -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 11. Congress, EDEP: Ch. 8. Congress and the Public Interest, & SIMULATION–You Are an Informed Voter (Required)

15: The President -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 12. The President, EDEP: Ch. 9. Bias in the American Presidency, & SIMULATION–Presidential Leadership (Optional); Quiz 4

16: The Bureaucracy -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 13. The Federal Bureaucracy, EDEP: Ch. 10. Bias in the Executive Branch, & SIMULATION-Who Wants To Be a Bureaucrat? (Optional) Quiz 5

17: Domestic Policy -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 17. Domestic Policy: The Economy and Social Welfare, SIMULATION–Making a Difference: Welfare Reform (Required)

18: Foreign Policy -
Required Readings for this Section: SD: Ch. 18. Foreign Policy and National Defense, & SIMULATION-You Are President John F. Kennedy (Optional)

Final Exam: Please check the class schedule for the date and time

Last Revised: July 30, 2006