

POLITICAL SCIENCE 1 : AMERICAN GOVERNMENT



Fall/14 (9/2-12-21)

Section 1733 Room: GC 420 T-Th. 8 a.m.-9:25 a.m.

Instructor: Olga Shewfelt

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Office Hours: Tuesdays: 11:45 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. at my office. If this time is not convenient for you, please talk to me after class, or email me to see when we may schedule another time.

Course Materials

Required Texts:

1. Bardes, Barbara A.; Shelly II, Mack C.; & Schmidt, Steffen W. (refer to as Bardes or “B” in the weekly assignments) *American Government & Politics Today, The Essentials 2013-2014* edition. Wadsworth.
ISBN- 13 :978-1-133-60437-2
2. Korey, John L., *California Government*. Fourth or most recent edition.
(refer as “K” in weekly assignments)

Other materials & Resources:

Provided in class and/ or available in the internet on selected course topics:

- U.S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence, and Bill of Rights.
<http://www.archives.gov/national>
- Federalist Papers. <http://www.thomas.loc.gov/home/histdox/fedpapers>
- Library of Congress : <http://www.loc.gov>

- U.S. Budget : <http://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/budget/overview>
- California Budget: <http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/2013-14/BudgetSummary/BSS/BSS.html>
- Newspapers & Magazines: Los Angeles Times & New York Times, Washington Post, and selected magazines.
- Selected Videos/DVD's/ web links
- Handouts (study questions & articles)

POLITICAL CONCEPTS AND FEDERALISM

Week of

9/02	Political Concepts/ Government & American society. Political Ideologies & Political Parties, Bardes, chapter 1
9/09	The Constitution. “B” Chapter 2 California History & Constitution, “K” chapters 1&2
9/12	<i>Last Day to drop classes with a refund/no fee owed and without a “W”.</i>
9/16	Federalism “B” chapter 3 CA Budget “K” chapter 10
9/23	Federalism continues
9/30	EXAM I

THE CONSTITUTIONAL CENTERS OF POWER

The Legislative Branch

10/02	Congress: The People’s Branch. “B” chapter 9 The California Legislature, “K” chapter 6
10/07	Congress continues.
10/14	Campaigns and Elections. “B” chapter 8. California Elections “K” chapter 5

The Executive Branch

- 10/21 The Presidency. “B” chapter 10
 The Plural California Executive. “K” chapter 7
- 10/28 The Presidency. Foreign Policy. Bardes, chapter 14
- 11/01 Veterans Day Observed. College closed.
- 11/04 *EXAM II*

The Judicial Branch

- 11/11 The U.S. Judiciary. The Rule of Law/ U.S. Supreme Court
 “B” chapter. 12. California Judiciary. “K” chapter. 8
- 11/18 Civil Liberties: Rights of the Accused. “B” chapter 4
- 11/21 *Last Day to drop classes with a “W”*
- 11/25 Civil Liberties continues.
- 11/27-28 *Thanksgiving*
- 11/29-30 *Non Instructional Day*
- 12/02 Exam III
- 12/9 Civil Rights. Political Participation: Voting and Interests Groups
 “B” chapters 5&7.
- 12/16 *Final Paper & Presentations due: 8am-10 am at GC 140*

Course Student Learning Objectives:

1. Critical Thinking Skills

The student will be able to know, demonstrate and asses the principles of federalism and representation; two of the five major components of American Constitutional Government. This American Government course is designed to provide the student with critical thinking skills through the examination of first and secondary historical sources regarding the establishment of the U.S.

government and the most important issues that affect our government today. At the end of this course, the student would be able to describe, analyze what are the elements of the representative democratic government we adopted in this United states, what are its main differences with other forms of government, when and how was the U.S. Constitution, adopted, what are the differences between the two main U.S. political parties and what is the structure and practices of the three branches of the U.S. Government and its constitutional relation with the states, particularly with the state of California.

This knowledge and critical thinking abilities are tested in 3 exams and are worth 60% of the course grade.

2. Communication Skills

This course improves the students' written and verbal communication skills by enhancing the student's analytical framework to understand U.S. politics and economics through the study of U.S. history, economic policies, political culture, and policies. These studies, as well as the written essay in each of the three course examinations, short homework assignments, class discussions, final written paper and oral presentation in class, enhances the student's lexicon and his/her abilities to communicate verbally and in writing about matters concerning U.S. government and politics. This student course outcome is evaluated through the 3 course exams and the final research paper.

3. Civic participation

This course provides the student with a practical opportunity to participate in issues of his/her concern/interest through the research and presentation of a 10-15 -page position paper on a topic of his/her choice . This final paper enables the student to connect his/her interests of any section of the course's material, to a topic or an organization public or private that deals with programs and issues at the local, state and/or national level. The successful completion of this paper , gives the student the opportunity to participate in the political arena. This student outcome is evaluated in the final course paper which is worth 30% of the course grade.

Grade System: 3 exams: Total of 60%. Each is worth 20% of your final grade.

Final Paper: 30% .of your grade.

Class Participation 10%.

Exams:

Each exam is worth 20% of your final course grade. Each exam has 3 sections: Multiple Choice (25 questions(2pts each=50 points). Be sure to bring a scantron form 882E(100 questions) to your test. Fill-in-section, 5 questions=(2 pts each=10 points) and an Essay Section(2 essays (each worth 20 pts= 40 pts). For a total of 100 pts. The 3 sections add to a total of 100 points, or an "A" letter grade for each exam.

Grade Breakdown:

100%	A+	88-89%	B+
94-99%.....	A	84-87%.....	B
90-93%.....	A-	80-83%.....	B-
78-79%.....	C+	68-69%.....	D+
74-77%.....	C	64-67%.....	D
70-73%.....	C-	60-63%.....	D-
		59% and below	F

Note: Final course grades will be solid letter grades. No minus or pluses are accepted at the office of admissions and records. Therefore, your total course average from the 3 exams and the Final Paper will be calculated as 90% of your grade, and up to 10% will be added for class participation. The result of this computing operation will be your final course grade.

Make Up Exams:

If you don't take an exam on the scheduled date, *you may* take a make-up exam provided that you present a valid excuse before or immediately after the scheduled exam. **YOU MUST schedule a new exam immediately after the missed exam, to be taken no later than one week from the date of the regular exam. If you do not take the make up exam in this timeframe, your missed exam will be graded with a letter "F".**

Class participation: 10% of your total course grade! It includes but is not limited to your class preparation and participation in class discussions, (questions & comments) and timely submission of up to 3 short written homework assignments.

Class Attendance: Good attendance is an essential part of your learning. Students who attend class regularly throughout the semester are more likely to succeed in the course. I expect you to arrive punctually or a few minutes before 8 a.m. so I can start the class right at 8 a.m. I keep strict records of attendance. **If you fail to attend 3 classes, you will be dropped from this class. Three (3) late arrivals or early departures will be considered as one absence.** However, for all academic purposes, it is ultimately your obligation to drop officially from the class. You may do so by 9/12/14 without a "W" and by 11/21/14 with a "W". Failure to drop officially from the course may result in you being listed as active in the class at the end of the course and for this reason having an "F" as a final course grade.

Final Paper: 30% of your grade!

This is a very important part of your learning experience and performance in this course. It gives you an opportunity to choose a topic and organization that inspires you to become more active in the political process of your community, the state

and/or the nation. Your topic choice and work in this project, would give you an opportunity to take a position on a political topic of your choice and evaluated and apply many of the concepts and facts learned in this course. Your final research position paper is 10-15 pages long and is worth 30% of your final course grade.

I will give you written detailed instructions about this project and additional in-class explanation about potential topics/organizations for the project by 10/7/14. You need to let me know your topic /organization choice in writing by 10/14/14 . If you want my feedback on your draft, you must turn your draft by 11/ 25/14 Final Papers are due on Tuesday, December 16 at 8 a.m. at GC 140. No extensions whatsoever! If you do not turn your final paper on this day, you will obtain an “F” on this assignment. There will be class presentations of the projects from 8 am. to 10 a.m. I will deduct 20% of this final project grade to anyone missing the class presentations.

Course Material:

It consists of the assigned chapters, plus study questions, handouts, videos and lectures. The student is responsible for keeping track of all course materials and studying them for every exam.

Student Conduct:

You are expected to abide by the norms of the Board of Trustees and the California Education Code. (See West Catalog and Schedule of Classes.) Student use of electronic devices during class, or voice taping and/or video taping of my lectures are not permitted unless there is a written request for accommodation of DSP students, or the use of these devices is directed by the instructor as part of a learning exercise.

Academic Honor Code:

Each student understands and honors the value of academic integrity in all his/her academic endeavors including tests, quizzes, written assignments and final paper. Cheating and plagiarism in a particular test or written assignment will result in an “F” grade for that particular assignment and any other appropriate disciplinary actions related to student conduct.

Communication with Instructor: Feel free to contact me after class, or during my office hours. You may also leave a phone message at my office, or send me an e-mail. If the assigned office hours are not convenient for you please contact me via email or in person to set a different meeting time. *In case of an emergency (ONLY) contact me at my cell phone at (213) 392-0489.*

