

LOS ANGELES MISSION COLLEGE

Political Science 1: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Fall 2011

Instructor: Dr. Durukan

Days: Monday 2:00-5:10 pm

Section: 0416

Location: Room 1001

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Office Hours: M-12-2pm; T-12-1:30pm; W-12-1pm; Th-12-1pm Room: INST 25

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Add Deadline: Sept. 9

Drop Deadlines: Sept. 7 (w/o penalty); Nov.16 (w/W)

Course Description and Objectives:

The primary objective of this class is to introduce students to the basic concepts and ideas of the American political system, showing the extent to which politics and the government is a part of our daily lives. In order to realize this goal, we will explore how American government was established, the ideology behind this establishment, and the meaning of the American constitution. Analysis of American government branches (the executive, legislative, and the judiciary), in addition to political participation, interest groups, and the media will also take place. Finally, an exploration of the American political system as compared to other countries will help us define what the proper worldview of the American political system ought to be.

Course Materials:

There is only one required book for the course which can be purchased at the Mission College Bookstore:

American Government and Politics Today –The Essentials 20011-2012, by Bardes, Shelley, Schmidt

Students are also expected to follow current events. Ways to do so include following a daily newspaper, for instance the Los Angeles Times, a weekly news magazine, like Time or Newsweek; watching a TV news program covering domestic political news such as "News Hour

with Jim Lehrer" at 6 p.m. and BBC news at 5 p.m. and 11 p.m. on Channel 28; and finally, listening to public radio on 89.3 or 89.9FM. You can also have access to most of these papers, magazines, and news programs on the internet.

Expectations:

Students are expected to attend the class regularly and also participate in discussions. I reserve the right to drop you from the course in the case of excessive absence, and tardiness.

Plagiarism is punished by grade F. Plagiarism can be defined as presenting someone else's work as one's own work, in general terms. The submission of work that is not a product of the student's own effort is dishonest and subject to severe disciplinary action up to and including expulsion from the college. Students are responsible for finding class notes of the day they are not able to attend.

Course Requirements:

Readings and Exams

Students should come to class prepared, which means all the assigned readings must be completed before the class.

There will be three tests and a final exam. Each test will be worth of 200 points and final is worth of 300 points. Only the best two test scores will be counted towards your class grade. You will be responsible for both your book and the lecture notes. You can make up for the tests you have missed. However, you will have to wait until November, the date when all the make-up tests will be given. Also, bear in mind that make-ups will be given only if you have missed a test for a legitimate reason. So I strongly advise that students e-mail prior to the exam. Just not showing up at the exam day is not acceptable.

Team Solution Paper and Presentation

A ten-page team solution paper is to be written and presented by groups of 3. A solution paper is one in which the writer urges its readers to argue for a proposed solution to one particular problem. The objective is for the writer to convince his/her audience that his/her way of defining and solving a problem makes the most sense. Groups are required to submit the

topic of their choice by Oct. 17 for approval. Finding partners, getting together and brainstorming is strongly recommended to come up with good ideas for your group project.

All the papers are due on Dec. 3. Presentations of these papers will be also start the same day. Before the presentation, each team should provide a one-page paper with the names of the group members, the topic, and an outline of the presentation.

Extra Credit: Optional Internship

Students may select to do internship with a political official or a candidate of their choice. LAMC does not favor, promote, nor endorse one political office/official/candidate over another. If you decide opt for this assignment, you are required to write a three-page reflection paper explaining your internship and how this experience has helped you understand the political process better.

Performance Evaluation:

Grades are based on the following:

Tests	: 200 points each (400 total)
Final Exam	: 300
Group Paper	: 250 points
Participation & Attendance:	50 points
<u>Total</u>	: <u>1000 points</u>

A : 1000-900 points (Outstanding work)

B : 899- 800 points (Above average)

C : 799- 700 points (Average work, meets basic requirements)

D : 699-600 points (Below average, but passing)

F : 599-0 points (Unsatisfactory, fails to meet basic requirements)

Miscellaneous:

Grades will not be affected by the political views or comments of the students. To show respect for your fellow students' beliefs, views, and ideas is the number one priority!

Lecture Schedule

Aug. 27	Introduction
Sept. 10	What is Politics? What is Government? How Does Government Affect Us On a Daily Basis? Different Types of Government (Ch. 1)
Sept. 17	The Constitution (Ch. 2) Federalism (Ch. 3)
Sept. 24	Civil Liberties (Ch. 4) Civil Rights (Ch. &5)
Oct. 1	Test # 1
Oct. 8	The Congress (Ch. 10) Paper Workshop
Oct. 15	The President (Ch. 12)
Oct. 22	The Courts (Ch. 13)
Oct. 29	Test # 2 Interest Groups (Ch. 7)

Nov. 5	Political Parties (Ch. 8) Campaigns and Elections (Ch. 9)
Nov. 19	The Media (Ch. 9) Test # 3
Nov. 26	Foreign Policy (Ch. 15) California Politics
Dec. 3	Student Presentations
Dec. , 3-5pm	FINAL

At the end of the semester you will

1. Describe the powers, roles, functions, and limitations of the duties of Federal, state, and local governments and the impact on individuals.
2. Analyze current American domestic and foreign policies and be able to put them into a historical perspective
3. Differentiate initiatives, referendums and recalls in California Constitution and laws.