Political Science 21 – Online

Introduction to American Government

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Office Hours (in person or by phone) Wednesdays 1-3
TA Office Hours will be posted to class web site

Course Description
This survey course examines the dynamics of the American political system. Our primary concerns will be the formal design of the U.S. constitutional system, the institutions such as Congress and the Presidency that organize U.S. politics, and the roles played by individuals and organized groups in shaping political and policy outcomes.

Instruction will be delivered on-line and will take a variety of forms. First, I will post lectures for each of the major themes of the course. I will also post other video resources that will amplify these key points. These presentations will be organized around the topics of the chapters in the text. Second, I will ask you to participate in discussion forums that will give you the opportunity to discuss and analyze key themes with your fellow students, the teaching assistant, and me. Third, I will ask that you do the class readings. Finally, you will complete three analytical essays (discussed below) that will give you the opportunity to synthesize class readings, lectures and other visual presentations, and forum discussions.

You do NOT need to come to campus for this class. Course materials will be accessed from the course website and in the text.

You will need to ensure that you have a stable Internet connection, particularly when you are taking the quizzes. Whenever possible, use a wired connection instead of a wireless connection. Connectivity issues that arise during a quiz may prevent you from completing the quiz or cause scoring errors.

Required Reading
The text for the class is Benjamin Ginsberg; Theodore Lowi; Margaret Weir; Caroline Tolbert; and Robert Spitzer. We The People: An Introduction to American Politics. Ninth Essentials Edition. WW Norton. 2013. The text is available at the UCI bookstore and can also be purchased online on Amazon (http://tinyurl.com/mxt98r3) or the publisher’s website (http://tinyurl.com/lxgj8nb).

Please be sure that you buy the “Ninth Essentials Edition.” It is shorter than other editions and, consequently, less expensive.

IMPORTANT NOTE: You will need to complete the reading assignment before you review the lectures and other video presentations for which they are assigned and before you participate in the forum for that chapter. In order to encourage you to complete the reading early in the period for each chapter, the required quiz for each week’s readings...
will be conducted on the Wednesday of each week. The lectures will make more sense if you have done and thought about the readings first. Given the fast pace of a summer class, doing things in the suggested order will save you time and likely improve your grade.

**Grading**

Your final grade will be based on your grades for three analytical essays, your participation in the class forums, and online quizzes on the assigned readings. The analytical essays will be worth 75% of your grade (25% each), the quizzes 10%, and the forum participation 15%. There will also be the opportunity to earn up to 3% of your grade through extra credit assignments.

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Three essays</td>
<td>75%</td>
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<td>Forum participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Quizzes</td>
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<td>Extra credit (optional)</td>
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1) **Analytical Essays**: You will complete three analytical essays. These essays should be 4 to 6 pages in length and will respond to questions that I will pose at the beginning of the class.

The assignments will be due in week two (Thursday, July 3), week 4 (Thursday, July 17), and on Wednesday, July 30. All essays should be submitted online and are due by 1 pm on the due date.

Each of these 3 analytical essay assignments is worth 25% of your final grade. These essays are designed with twin purposes in mind. First, I want you to apply material presented in lectures and readings in order to describe and analyze this material in response to a specific question. You will be able to answer the questions based on class materials; you are not expected to conduct outside research. My second purpose is to encourage you to focus your writing on making an argument based on evidence from the class readings, lectures, and forum discussions. I will offer some tips about writing your analytical essays, but I would strongly encourage you to clearly state a thesis early in your essay and use the evidence you present to defend that thesis.

**Style and Citation Rules**: Your grade will be based on the quality of your answer and the quality and strength of the writing. I strongly recommend that you use a style manual that provides you with tips on good writing and the proper format for endnotes and citations.

Plagiarism in any form is a serious offense and will be punished to the full degree permitted by University regulations. I will present a brief lecture on citation rules, but if you have any questions, please consult either me or the teaching assistant before the essay is due.

You will need to submit your essay to Turnitin.com before submitting the essay to the course web site. You should complete your essay early enough to allow time to revise your essay if Turnitin.com identifies material that may appear in other sources (and to resubmit the essay to Turnitin.com for an additional review). I will distribute more specific instructions about using Turnitin.com before the due date of the first essay.
2) **Quizzes.** You will take an online quiz each week on the readings for that week. These quizzes will have twenty questions each. The quizzes will not only cover the material in the chapters, but also the materials in the appendix when assigned. These quizzes are NOT open book. You are not permitted to consult any references or consult other people when answering quiz questions. You are not permitted to share quiz questions with other students.

To ensure that you have reviewed the material in the chapter as you begin to participate in the forums, the quizzes will be given each Wednesday (see detailed schedule below). You will have half an hour to complete the quiz.

I will require you to complete four of the five quizzes. If you complete all five, I will count the highest four grades.

There will be no make-up quizzes for any reason, so please ensure that you complete at least four of the quizzes.

Each quiz will be worth 2.5% of your final grade. The sum of your quiz grades will be worth 10% of your final grade.

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**Quiz tips:** Ensure that you have a stable Internet connection when you are taking the quizzes. Whenever possible, use a wired connection instead of a wireless connection. Connectivity issues that arise during a quiz may prevent you from completing the quiz or cause scoring errors.

You only have one opportunity to take each quiz. When taking the quiz, do it in one sitting and do not open other browser windows.

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3) **Forum Participation.** I will ask that you participate in each week’s forum that contains a question about the material covered in the textbook. You need to make at least three posts that include your own ideas as well as responses to other students’ posts. The teaching assistants and I will also participate in your forums and you are encouraged to respond to those posts too.

I will offer some guidelines on forum participation at the beginning of class. When each forum has closed, I will offer some concluding observations and summarize some key points that have been made.

You should review the forum posts as part of your preparation for writing the analytical essays.

Forum participation will account for 15% of your final grade (3% for each forum). Your initial post can earn up to two points and your response posts can earn up to one point for a total of three points per forum.

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4) **Extra Credit (optional).** The publisher of your text offers an excellent daily news feed of newspaper articles on current events at the text’s website. To earn extra credit, you will need to review these articles and find examples of themes raised in my lectures, class readings, or forum discussions. When you have found such an example, you will need to describe how the article agrees with or contradicts the phenomenon raised in the class discussions. These descriptions can be brief – about 150 words each.

You may earn up to 3 points of extra credit, up to 1 point for each submission. Three points is significant as that share of your grade will often raise your grade to the next level (e.g. from B to B+ or A- to A).

Please submit your extra credit exercises at the end of the class in one submission (meaning that if you submit three, they should be submitted as a single file).
Citation of Sources: The University of California seeks to foster a spirit of honesty and integrity. Any work submitted by a student must represent original work produced by that student. Any source used by a student must be documented through normal scholarly references and citations, and the extent to which any sources have been used must be apparent to the reader. The University further considers resubmission of a work produced for one course in a subsequent course or the submission of work done partially or entirely by another to be academic dishonesty. It is the student's responsibility to seek clarification from the course instructor about how much help may be received in completing an assignment or exam or project and what sources may be used. Students found guilty of academic dishonesty or plagiarism shall be subject to disciplinary action up to and including dismissal from the University.

If you are unsure what constitutes plagiarism, visit the following web site: http://www.plagiarism.org/plagiarism-101/what-is-plagiarism. Papers submitted to Turnitin are checked against published works, content on the Internet, and every other paper submitted to Turnitin.

Disability Services. If you need support or assistance because of a disability, you may be eligible for accommodations or services through the Disability Service Center at UC Irvine. Please contact the DSC directly at (949) 824-7494 or TDD (949) 824-6272. You can also visit the DSC’s website: http://www.disability.uci.edu/. The DSC will work with your instructor to make any necessary accommodations. Please note that it is your responsibility to initiate this process with the DSC.
Course Schedule and Assignments

Please note that this is a five-week class in which we cover material that would normally occur in a ten-week quarter. As a result, you will need to move quickly through the assignments and dedicate at least twice as much time on a daily basis to this course as you would during the school year.

Each week follows a similar pattern. As you plan your participation in the course, you would do well to follow this schedule:

Monday-Tuesday:
- Read the textbook and take notes on key theories, events, laws, court cases, people, etc. that can be used as evidence in your essays and/or could appear in the quizzes
- Then, watch the lectures
- Then, watch the supplemental videos

Wednesday:
- Review the textbook and your notes again
- Take the quiz
- Contribute your initial forum post for the week.

Thursday-Friday:
- Review other students’ forum posts and post your thoughtful reactions to their posts.

Analytical essays are due Thursday July 3, Thursday July 17, and Wednesday July 30.

Part One
The Structure of Government and the Foundations of American Government

Week One (June 25-27) – Citizens and Government & The Founding and the U.S. Constitution
Readings: Ginsberg, et al., chapter 1 & 2 (pp. 2-59), the Declaration of Independence (pp. A1-A4), the Articles of Confederation (pp. A5-A10), the Constitution of the United States (pp. A11-A21), and Federalist 10 (pp. A31-A39).
Quiz: Wednesday, June 25, 6 am - 11 pm
Week One Forum: June 25-27

Week Two (June 30-July 4) – Federalism, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights
Reading: Ginsberg, et al., chapters 3 &4 (pp. 60-137) and Amendments to the Constitution (pp. A22-A30).
Quiz: Wednesday, July 2 6 am – 11 pm
Week Two Forum: July 2-5 (because of the July 4 holiday, forum posts may be made through July 5)

First Analytical Essay Due – Thursday, July 3, 1 pm
Part Two
Politics and Popular Demand Making

Week Three (July 7-11) – Media, Public Opinion, Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Elections
Reading: Ginsberg, et al., chapters 5-8 (pp. 138-267).
Quiz: Wednesday, July 9 – 6 am – 11 pm.
Week Three Forum: July 9-11

Part Three
Institutions of Government and Policymaking

Week Four (July 14-18) – Congress, The Presidency, and the Executive Branch
Reading: Ginsberg, et al., chapters 9-11 (pp. 268-363).
Quiz: Wednesday, July 16 – 6 am – 11 pm
Week Four Forum: July 16-18

Second Analytical Essay Due – Thursday, July 17, 1 pm

Week Five (July 21-25) – The Federal Courts and Policymaking
Reading: Ginsberg, et al., chapters 12-14 (pp. 364-451)
Quiz: Wednesday, July 23 – 6 am - 11 pm
Week Five Forum: July 23-25

Third Analytical Essay Due – Wednesday, July 30, 1 pm

No Final Exam