

Sacramento City College
Department of political science
Political Science 301
Introduction to American Government
Spring 2011
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Tel: 558-2285 RS 274 OH Mon-Thurs. 10:30-11:30

COURSE OBJECTIVE

The course you have chose to take, i.e., Political Science 301 is all about you, your community, and to a large extent, your nation. Other nations may have similar form and content as well. Believe me, you may think that you have absolutely nothing to do politics, that you hate politics, it is not your major, or that you don't care about politics. The reality is, **YOU** are bound by it, and it is all about you!! Politics is here to stay—that's the way it is and you better know something about it—period.

In general terms, political science concerns with the aspect of today's world that affects everyone in almost every way: the definition of human values, interests, security, thoughts, expression, morals, perspectives, hope, and the regulation of our political or non political aspiration. Part of the objective of this course is also to connect the political dynamics that revolves around a range of discussion on issues such as taxes, education, immigration, abortion, guns, the environment, media, health care, race/ethnicity, gender issues, capital punishment, crime, war, international relations and affairs, and etc...Now, if you say none of these or other issues are none of your concerns, then you are privileged to live in your own perfect world. We may not have the best possible answers for everything, but, at the end of the day we must have an idea about the mechanics of how the system we live in works. If we do not know our own, how can we speak or criticize other nation's systems?

Upon completion of this course, you should have the fundamental concept in the form and content and structures of the national, state, and local governments. As well:

- Understand the theory, concept and practice of the U.S. political system;
- Develop, process, and establish political positions that affect your interests as a citizen;
- Be able to assess how politicians and the policies they make affect us individually and the society in general;
- Be able to question and challenge (reward or punish) politicians and policies they support;
- Ask yourself—does my vote or voice matter?

REQUIRED TEXT

O’connor and Sabato

American Government: Roots and Reform 2011 Edition

Library reserved

Other reading material to be provided throughout the semester.

The text is required! All lectures, tests, exams, and assignments are derived from the text. So it is imperative that you get the text as soon as possible. If you are a serious student, you know what to do- unfortunately, I have known students who really believe in wasting their valuable time—don’t have text or do not even bother to read the material! Yet, these same students want to pass with a respectable grade of “C”. According to most recent classroom surveys, students honestly admit that they should have done the required reading for their classes. Enough said.

Exam/Test/Quiz

There will be:

Three equal weighed exams:	23 points =	70%
Quiz	20 points =	20%
Topical Assignments	10 points =	10%

A total of 100% points

Extra Points 10%

Please make sure to have a **Scantron form 882** with you at all times for all tests, quiz, and exams (Bookstore carries it). Make sure it’s not wrinkled; it’s clean, and definitely soiled!!

Exams, tests, and quiz are all of objective types (TFMC). However, there may be essay as well.

The exam, test, and...deals with details, details, details, details! Just merely reading the material once is not going to do it—you get my point.

90-99 A 80-89 B 70-79 C 60-69 D -59 F

Curve may or may not be used.

There will be no make-ups or rescheduling of tests or exams. Should there be a take-home assignment, test or exam, no late-turn in of any sort. So, please do not ask me for a special favor ☺! All written assignments **must to be typed or processed**. If you do not have access to computers at home, the LRC has labs with computers.

You have the absolute control over your abilities, potentials, or commitments to your work—and only you can make the choice to do well or remain at the mediocre level. I am here to help you realize your expectation from this class.

CLASS PARTICIPATION: YOU ARE IN COLLEGE!

Those who participate and add credible contribution to the discussion, extra effort in written work, activities relevant to the topic will have additional advantage in the overall final grade. Remember this is your class—as such it is essential that you make the best of your time well spent.

Caution:

You are in the college/university system—and as such you have the absolute choice, responsibility right to make a coherent decision in your life. As for this class, I am going to do my very best to present the subject matter as clearly as possible. However, you have the heavier load, and you are going to have to do the lifting if you want to complete the course to your satisfaction--the least we want to do in our lives is blame others for our own frailties.

Decorum:

**You are all adults--Course Syllabus is to be read by you. So, please Read this--
Latecomers are NOT welcome!! Cell phones/pagers, MPs, (TURN them OFF) or Lose it! ‘Power- naps’, chatters, texting, note passing, irritate my colleagues and me.**

Tardy equals to absence, and remember, this is a compressed semester and attendance is crucial. Should there be more than 2 absences I will drop w/o notice. So...there you have it! Initial here to indicate you have read and agreed: _____ Take care!

I will let you know or you should make it a habit to check **D2I** regularly.

“Think of the possibilities—Not the obstacles” John Gardner, Educator