**REEDLEY COLLEGE**

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 110**

**Introduction to American Government**

**Semester: Spring 2018 Section: 53140**

**Instructor: Darlene Haines Class Meets: Tuesday 6pm – 9:05pm**

**Email: darlene.haines@scccd.edu Room: Social Science Room 36**

**Office Hours: By Appointment Only Phone/Text: 559-797-1321**

**Remind: Text @plsi110 to 81010**

**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:** “This course explores national, state, and local governments, the political processes, issues, and policies of those governments, and the rights and responsibilities of citizens living under these governments by outlining the structure, processes, function of each area of government.

(Meets the Reedley College government and constitution requirement for the associate degree, **does not** satisfy the U.S. Constitution, national, state, or local government requirements for transfer students seeking a bachelors degree).”

**REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

**Textbook:**

Steffen W. Schmidt, Mack C. Shelley, II, and Bardes, Barbara A. (2019, 2017). *American Government and Politics Today: Brief Edition.* 2018-2019 Edition. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.

ISBN: 978-1-337-55970-6

**PREREQUISITES:**  It is advised that students are eligible for English 125 and 126.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify the basic constitutional principles and characteristics of democracy in the United States.

2. Outline the structure, roles, and powers of the national, state, and local levels of government in the United States.

3. Describe the various influences that impact policymaking in the United States.

4. Identify the processes involved in the formation of domestic and foreign policy.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

1. scrutinize the structure and organization of the Constitution of the United States.

2. review the roles and responsibilities of the national government and those of the various state governments.

3. survey the various civil liberties and civil rights enjoyed by Americans.

4. explore the influence of public opinion on public policy.

5. investigate the differences between the major political parties and major third parties in the United States.

6. examine the relationship between mass communication (media)?both news-based and entertainment-based and public policy.

7. discuss the influence of interest groups in American politics.

8. examine the various powers/roles of Congress.

9. appraise the powers and limitations of the office of the President of the United States.

10. study the role of the national courts in shaping policy.

11. study the structure, major functions, and significant powers of both the State of California and local

governmental entities.

**LEARNING METHODS:**

Lectures, active learning, required readings from the textbook, newspaper and/or journal articles, internet articles, assignments, videos, and class discussions.

**OUTCOME ASSESSMENT:**

Students will have achieved course objective if they complete all coursework and/or assignments with a cumulative average grade of C or better.

**CLASSROOM GUIDELINES:**

1. Talking should be kept to class-related discussions.

2. The use of cell phones should be done outside of class.

3. Reading newspapers or other material or work for other classes should be done outside of class.

4. Sleeping is done better at home than in the classroom.

5. If you must leave early you must receive prior permission unless in case of emergency (my definition, not yours).

6. Arrive to class on-time. Late is more than 5 minutes (and this is pushing it). If you are habitually late to

class, this will be considered behavior that is disruptive to the class.

7. Respectful treatment of fellow students and their opinions concerning class-related topics. This means NOT

making or directing any comments of a personal nature to any one of your fellow class members. It also means

paying attention and remaining silent when someone else is talking.

\*\*Essentially, any behavior that disrupts the class will not be tolerated.

**CELL PHONES/TABLETS/LAPTOPS:**

**I will ask any student to leave the class if I notice or am told of any cell phone or electronic device being used during class in which disrupts or distracts the learning environment. Notebook computers, if used, must be battery powered. Excessive noise, as defined by those around you, will result in removal from class.**

While these guidelines are not all encompassing, they do provide a basic idea of acceptable classroom behavior for you to follow. Failure to follow these guidelines could result in the following: (1) Meeting with the instructor; (2) Loss of points earned in class; (3) Other disciplinary action and/or removal from class.

**QUICK WRITES:**

Throughout the course we will have 7 quick writes. These will consist of receiving information in class and then writing your thoughts and opinions on the subject presented. It is expected that you will write about one to two pages and that it is legible. Each quick write will be worth 20 points. Quick writes will not be announced and cannot be made up. You will need to use lined notebook paper and a pen or pencil. If you are late, leave early, or otherwise miss the few minutes of your class when a quick write occurs, you will get a zero. **Two of the lowest scores will be dropped.**

**EXAMINATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS:**

In this course you will have 4 exams, 10 quizzes, and 1 writing assignment. Exams may consist of multiple choice, True False, matching, and essay questions. See tentative course outline for due dates.

**Exams:**

Exam 1 will cover chapters 1-5; Exam 2 will cover chapters 6-8; Exam 3 will cover chapters 9-12; and Exam 4 will cover chapter 13-14 and California. All exams must be taken on Canvas (unless you have been approved for accommodations). You must log on to Canvas on the scheduled exam day to take the exam. The exam will be available from 12:00AM to 11:59PM on the scheduled exam day. **We will not meet in class on scheduled exam days.** You must use a computer with a good internet connection. You must let the instructor know of any technical difficulties as soon as possible. If available, examination review guidelines may be accessed on Canvas.

**Writing Assignments:**

The writing assignment will adhere to the Modern Language Association (MLA) style. Writing assignments must be submitted on Canvas.

**Reflection Paper:** this writing assignment will be a reflection paper on your political thoughts and attitudes of American government and politics. You must submit this paper on Canvas. Late papers and hard copies will **NOT** be accepted. Specific guidelines will be provided at the appropriate time in the class. Paper length: 3 to 5 pages, plus references.

**LATE ASSIGNMENTS AND MISSED EXAMS:**

Students who miss an exam may have an opportunity to take a Make-up exam. Make-up exams will **only** be given to students who make prior arrangements ***BEFORE*** the scheduled exam or can show valid proof (Doctors appointment, family emergency, etc.) that missing the scheduled exam could not be avoided. The Make-up exam may be different than the version taken on the scheduled exam date and **will consist of all essay and short answer questions.** You will **NOT** be allowed to take a Make-up exam because you forgot to take it on the scheduled exam day or you do not like the score on your first attempt.

Writing assignments are due on the scheduled due date. **Late papers will NOT be accepted.** Exceptions can be made for extenuating circumstances with communication with the instructor.

**PARTICIPATION AND ATTENDANCE:**

“Students are expected to attend all sessions of classes for which they are enrolled. Excessive absence will jeopardize a student’s satisfactory progress in a class. Students may be dropped from class if they fail to attend the first class session of the semester. There are no institutionally approved excused absences for any reason. Only the instructor may excuse an absence. Absences caused by personal engagements, transportation delays and business affairs will not be excused, nor will absences from class to complete registration or add/drop activities.” Participation includes active listening, participating in activities, answering and asking questions, responding with nods or other gestures, and engaging in conversation. Simply showing up for class will not earn participation points.

**GRADING: GRADING SCALE:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Writing assignment | 20% (200 points) |
| Exams (4) 100 points each | 40% (400 points) |
| Quick Writes (5) 20 points each | 10% (100 points) |
| Quizzes (10) 10 points each | 10% (100 points) |
| **TOTAL** | **100% (800 points)** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A | 800 points to 720 points |
| B | 719 points to 640 points |
| C | 639 points to 560 points |
| D | 559 points to 480 points |
| F | 479 points and below |

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:**

Upon identifying themselves to the instructor, students with disabilities will receive reasonable accommodation for learning and evaluation. For more information, contact Programs and Services located in the Disabled Students Programs and Services Building. For more information, contact Disabled Students Programs and Services at (559) 638-0332. The TTY phone number is (559) 638-0356.

"If you have a verified need for an academic accommodation or materials in alternate media (ie: Braille, large print, electronic text, etc.) per the American With Disabilities Act or Section 504 of the Rehabilitation act please contact your instructor as soon as possible."

**TUTORING/INTERNET/EMAIL/CANVAS/WEBADVISOR:**

**TUTORING: There may be a tutor available in the Tutorial Center for this class. If you are struggling with learning or understanding the material in this course it is recommended to utilize the tutor regularly.**

**CANVAS** will be utilized for test scores and announcements. Make sure you check Canvas often.

**WEBADVISOR:** Students can use Webadvisor to make changes or verify information about college records. Use Webadvisor to register/add/drop classes, view academic planning and financial profile. You can also make payments on Webadvisor. There is a new section called Info Students Must Check. It is important that you review each of the links listed in this section at least once each semester to ensure that information on your student record remains current. The website is http://webadvisor.scccd.edu/. The help desk for Webadvisor is available Monday – Friday from 8am to 5pm. You can contact the help desk by email helpdesk@scccd.edu or phone 442-8240.

**EMAIL:** State Center Community College District will use your free email account as the primary means to communicate with you. Communication with all students will be via district provided email unless you choose to receive notices about your student account by U.S. Mail. Email accounts can be accessed from any of the lab computers on campus or from an off-campus computer with Internet access.

**HELP IS AVAILABLE:**

There are many services available to students to help them succeed and I would be happy to recommend these services to you.

**CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM:**

“Cheating is the act or attempted act of taking an examination or performing an assigned, evaluated task in a fraudulent or deceptive manner, such as having improper access to answers, in an attempt to gain an unearned academic advantage. Cheating may include, but is not limited to, copying from another’s work, supplying one’s work to another, giving or receiving copies of examinations without an instructor’s permission, using or displaying notes or devices inappropriate to the conditions of the examination, allowing someone other than the officially enrolled student to represent the student, or failing to disclose research results completely.”

“Plagiarism is a specific form of cheating: the use of another’s words or ideas without identifying them as such or giving credit to the source. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to, failing to provide complete citations and references for all work that draws on the ideas, words, or work of others, failing to identify the contributors to work done in collaboration, submitting duplicate work to be evaluated in different courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors involved, or failing to observe computer security systems and software copyrights. Incidents of cheating and plagiarism may result in any of a variety of sanctions and penalties, which may range from a failing grade on the particular examination, paper, project, or assignment in question to a failing grade in the course, at the discretion of the instructor and depending on the severity and frequency of the incidents.”

**EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES:**

You may choose to attend in person any of the listed locations below and write a paper on your experience. You must describe your experience in detail and relate it to any relevant area covered in your textbook and/or class discussions. Your paper must comply with MLA guidelines including 1” margins, double spaced, and Times New Roman 12pt font. Sources must be cited appropriately and include a Works Cited page. The paper length should be 3-5 pages (not including Works Cited). Each assignment is worth up to 25 points. You may submit a maximum of two extra credit assignments. Completed extra credit assignments are due on Finals day. Late assignments will **not** be accepted. There will be no exceptions.

Reedley City Council (Meeting). See website for schedule and agenda.

<http://reedley.com/government_meetings/?p=city_council>

State Center Community College District

Board of Trustees Meeting. See website for schedule.

<http://www.scccd.edu/events/index.html>

Fresno County Board of Supervisors (Board Meeting). See website for schedule.

<http://www.co.fresno.ca.us/departments/board-of-supervisors>

Fresno City Council (Meeting). See website for schedule.

<https://www.fresno.gov/citycouncil/>

Fresno Local Agency Formation Commission (Hearing). See website for more information.

<http://www.fresnolafco.org/>

Fresno County Historical Museum

<https://www.fresnofair.com/fresno-county-historical-museum>

**TENETATIVE COURSE OUTLINE:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Week 1-8 | The Democratic Republic  The Constitution  Federalism  Civil Liberties  Civil Rights  **Exam 1 on Chapters 1-5** | Chapter 1  Chapter 2  Chapter 3  Chapter 4  Chapter 5  **Feb 27, 2018** |
| Week 9-11 | Public Opinion and the Media  Interest Groups & Political Parties  Campaigns & Elections  **Exam 2 on Chapters 6-8** | Chapter 6  Chapter 7  Chapter 8  **March 20, 2018** |
| Week 12-16 | The Congress  The President  The Executive Branch  The Courts  **Exam 3 on Chapters 9-12** | Chapter 9  Chapter 10  Chapter 11  Chapter 12  **April 24, 2018** |
| Week 17-18 | Domestic and Economic Policy  Foreign Policy  California Politics and Govt.  **Exam 4 on Chapters 13-14 & CA**  **Reflection Paper DUE**  **Extra Credit DUE** | Chapter 13  Chapter 14  California TBD  **May 8, 2018**  **May 15, 2018**  **May 15, 2018** |

\*The instructor retains the right to change or modify this syllabus as necessary.