**Political Science 002: An Introduction to American Government**

Instructor: **Nick K. Gera,***JD, MBA, MPPM*

Semester: Spring 2020

Section Numbers: 59130 /59132

Classroom: TBD

Office: N/A

Office Hours: Before and after class or by phone.

Contact Number: (559) 900-1987

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**Instructor Educational Background:**

* **The University of Pittsburgh***, School of Law*

Doctor of Law (JD)

* **The University of Florida**, *Warrington College of Business*

Master of Business Administration (MBA)

* **Carnegie Mellon University**, *John Heinz III College*

Master of Science in Public Policy and Management (MPPM)

* **The University of Washington**

Bachelor of Arts, Global Affairs (BA)

**Course Description:**

POLSC2  is an introductory study of American government at the national, state and local level. Included are the institutions, processes and policies of the United States and of California. This course satisfies, in part, the American history and institutions requirements for CSU. (AA, CSU, UC)

**Course Objectives:**

When students complete this course they will be able to:

* analyze the foundational philosophy of United States government and the constitution.
* differentiate federal and state structures of government and explain the role of each
* explain the political process of government integrate current controversial issues with classroom material explain the rights and liberties of individuals as articulated in the U.S. constitution and federal court decisions analyze the role of culture, diversity and ideology in shaping public opinion and public policy

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

POLSCI-002-CSLO-01: The student will identify the three components of the iron triangle and how they interact.

POLSCI-002-CSLO-02: The student will research and write an essay on the diverse opinions regarding the first amendment.

POLSCI-002-CSLO-03: The student will debate gun issues with regard to the second amendment.

**Course Content:**

- Political philosophies of the framers and critics of the constitution

- Process of amending the U.S. and California constitution’s

- Federalism as a theory and in practice

- Contemporary operation of governmental institutions

- Civil liberties and civil rights given by the constitution and court decisions

- Contemporary issues of California state and local institutions with relation to the federal system

- Individual and group political behavior of Americans and Californians as established by their respective

- Factors that shape politics and policymaking

- Principles of American Democracy

**Course Requirements:**

- Obtain required textbooks

- Read the textbooks

- Go to the online section of the course

- Participate in class discussions

- Take the required examinations

- Research and write papers

**Evaluation and Grading:**

4 Examinations: 3 Quizzes for 100 points each. 1 Final for 100 points.

3 Term Papers: 300 points (100 Points Each)

Discussion Board/Participation Points: 300 points

There will be one extra credit assignment

Total: 1000 points possible

**Grading Scale:**

* 900-1000 – A
* 800-900 – B
* 700-800 – C
* 600-700 – D
* 500-600 – F

**Required Texts:**

We will be using an Open Educational Resources (OER) for the class.  You can access the OER with the link below or in the announcements section.

American Government; Timothy Olenz, Mireya Holman; University of Florida Grove

**https://florida.theorangegrove.org/og/file/2e74506d-6095-0531-a2fb-b04504b885bd/1/9781616101633\_lenzholman.pdf (Links to an external site.) Links to an external site.**

**Class Schedule:**

(Including Due Dates)

**Week 1 - Starting Jan 13**

* Introductions and brief introductions of constitution

**Week 2 - Starting Jan 20:**

* Read Chapter 1
* Class Discussion

**Week 3 - Starting Jan 27:**

* Read Chapter 2
* Class Discussion

**Week 4 - Starting Feb 3:**

* Read Chapter 3
* Class Discussion

**Week 5- Starting Feb 10:**

* Read Chapter 4
* Class Discussion
* In-Class Quiz 1

**Week 6 - Starting Feb 17:**

* Read Chapter 5
* Class Discussion

**Week 7 - Starting Feb 24:**

* Read Chapter 6
* Class Discussion

**Week 8  - Starting Mar 2:**

* Read Chapter 7
* Class Discussion
* Term Paper 1 Announced

**Week 9 - Starting Mar 9:**

* Read Chapter 8
* Class Discussion

**Week 10 - Starting Mar 16:**

* Read Chapter 9
* Class Discussion
* Term Paper 1 due March 20th before midnight.

**Week 11 - Starting Mar 23:**

* Read Chapter 10
* Class Discussion
* In - class Quiz 2
* Term Paper 2 announced.

**Week 12 - Starting Mar 30:**

* Read Chapter 11
* Class Discussion

**Week 13 - Starting Apr 6:**

* Legal Cases
* Class Discussion
* Term Paper 2 due April 10 before midnight.
* Extra Credit Assignment announcement by Professor, due by May 21.

**Week 14 - Starting Apr 13:**

* Legal Cases
* Class Discussion
* In class Quiz 3
* Term Paper 3 Announced

**Week 15 - Starting Apr 20:**

* Legal Cases
* Class Discussion

**Week 16 - Starting Apr 27:**

* Political Cases
* Class Discussion

**Weeks 17 - Starting May 4:**

* Political Cases
* Term Paper 3 due by May  8th by midnight.

**Weeks 18 - Starting May 11:**

* **Finals preparation week**

**Weeks 19 - Starting May 19:**

* **Final Exam**
* **Extra Credit Assignment due by May 21**

**Disability Statement:**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact the instructor during office hours to discuss their "disability related needs. Use of Disability Resource Center services, including testing accommodations, requires prior authorization by the DSPS and compliance with approved procedures.

**Instructors Course Policy:**

Online attendance is required. I will take role weekly by participation in discussion postings.

You are expected to take the midterms and final exams on time. Only under extreme circumstances will you be able to make-up an examination (i.e. medical emergencies with documentation).

Plagiarism and cheating will not be tolerated. If you are found to have plagiarized or cheated you will receive an F in the course and can face academic dismissal.. This is a zero tolerance policy

This class will have open discussion on current political events. I want and I truly encourage students to participate. This class will go by much faster if you participate.

Do not ridicule a person for their beliefs and reasoning. If there is a student who is disrupting or disturbing the class flow will be reported to the administration and could receive a zero for their overall participation.

No late assignments will be accepted UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCE.

Academic Honesty Policy – Please refer to the URL http://www.westhillscollege.com/mywesthills/academic\_honesty.asp (Links to an external site.)Links to an external site.

I am not a mind reader and if you have a problem in the class you need to talk to me so we can fix the problem. Do not assume that I know you are upset or struggling in the class. Please come see me if you have any problems in the class.

If you are easily offended please let me know and I will excuse you from the class.

The class total is subject to change.

If you have grade checks that need to be filled out you must come to my office hours to do that grade check. I will not fill them out before during or after class. Grade checks will only be done during my office hours.

If you have 3 unexcused absences in the discussion forum of no weekly discussion posts for the class you will be dropped from the class

It is the students’ responsibility to drop the class before the drop date.

If a student does not turn in three weeks straight of assignments may be dropped from the class.

Give me 24 hours to answer back your emails.

The score in the grade book for the course could be wrong. If you want to know your grade please email me for the correct grade.

Emailed assignments will not be accepted. Use the dropbox. If you do not know how to use the dropbox please contact the instructor or the helpdesk.

If there is an examination, you have the allotted time to complete the test. If you wait until the last minute to take your test and run into problems you have decided to take a chance on missing the test. You are only allowed one reset of a test. After that you will receive a 0 for that test.

Same goes for your work. If you wait until the last minute to turn it in you are risking not getting it turned in at all. You must use the dropbox. No emailed assignment will be accepted under any circumstances.

**Term Paper:**

Students will research and write three term papers on the Constitution.  You will need to back-up your arguments with research and facts. This is a 700-1000 word paper double spaced. Please use APA or MLA  style formatting for this paper. You will need a minimum of  3 sources for this paper.

Here is a video to help you get started with your paper.

https://www.stratfor.com/video/conversation-apple-fbi-and-privacy-vs-security (Links to an external site.) Links to an external site.

https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/ (Links to an external site.) Links to an external site.

**Tests:**

There are 4 tests (3 quizzes and a final).  Test 1 will cover chapters 1-3.  Test 2 will cover chapters 4-7. Test 3 will cover chapters 8-11 and the final will cover all chapters. There will be approx 20 multiple choice questions.  The tests are not open book, open note nor open internet test.

**Discussion Boards:**

Please read the chapters, review the power points for each discussion board and post your thoughts on to the proposed questions by the professor and students. I will be lecturing in some PowerPoints so it is important to pay attention to key details I present. Then have a discussion with other students.  Share your opinion and post with other students and comment on their posts.  If you do that you should score well on your discussion board. You are required to respond to two students postings.