
Political Science 2—American Government**Schedule #** 50031—TuTh 11:00 a.m., FRM 1**Term:** Fall 2004**Voice mail:** (559) 638-3641, ext. 3798**Instructor:** Mr. Turini**Office:** Forum 7**Office Hours:**

M, Tu, W — 9:00 a.m.-10:30 a.m.

Th. — 1:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

and by appointment

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Course Description:

This course is designed as an introduction to this nation's governmental institutions and political processes. It will have four major foci. First, we will be examining the theoretical and constitutional basis of the American political system. Second, we will examine the institutional structure of our national government--Congress, the Executive, and the Supreme Court. Third (to be divided into two sections), we will be focusing on how Americans seek to translate their political aspirations and beliefs into governmental policy--the meaning of elections, the significance of political parties and interest groups, and the role of public opinion in our political system as "policy inputs," and what these factors mean to the character of foreign and domestic policy. Finally, we will review significant controversies that have contributed to our fundamental legal character (civil liberties and civil rights).

My goal in teaching this course is to help you develop some of the tools you can use, if you so choose, to play an active role in the politics of your day. What I expect from you (and what you will need to benefit from this course) is not necessarily a wealth of prior knowledge or experience in politics, but an open mind willing to look at familiar things in new ways, to question the assumptions that everyone else seems to blindly accept, and to be determined and persistent enough to think your way through your own conclusions.

Basis for Evaluation:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points Per Assignment</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
4 Quizzes	17.5	70 (10%)
4 Examinations	75	300 (43%)
1 Final Examination	125	125 (18%)
Research Project		135 (19%)
Participation / Conduct / Attendance		70 (10%)
<u>TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE</u>		<u>700</u>

<u>Point Range</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>
700 – 630	A
629 – 560	B
559 – 490	C
489 – 420	D
419 and below	F

Texts / Readings:**Required:**Barbour / Wright, Keeping The Republic (bound with Korey, California Government)**Recommended:**

Collegiate dictionary

Any writer's style manual that includes examples of APA format

Subscription or regular access to any reputable newspaper or news magazine

Recommendations may be announced / distributed on occasion

Quizzes:

Students will take four quizzes on California politics throughout the term. Quizzes will consist of 10-15 multiple-choice questions taken from either lecture material or Korey's California Government (the last 75 pages of your textbook).

Each quiz will cover the following material:

- QUIZ 1: The California Constitution, and California Intergovernmental Relations
- QUIZ 2: California Governmental Institutions (the Legislature, the Plural Executive, and the Judiciary)
- QUIZ 3: Policy "Inputs"—The Electorate as Players (Public Opinion and Voting in California)
- QUIZ 4: Policy "Inputs"—Non-Institutional Players (Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media)

Examinations:

There will be four 75-point examinations and one 125-point final examination. Students will be allowed one 3"x5" index card as a note card on all examinations. All students will need either a **Scantron form 886-E OR a "Blue Book"** for all examinations. In all cases, you will be given a choice in terms of the format of the examination. You may take examinations in any of the following formats:

- 1) all multiple choice (approximately 50 questions),
- 2) multiple choice and essay questions (approximately 30 multiple choice questions and 1 essay), or
- 3) all writing (approximately 6 term identifications, 3 short answer questions, and 1 essay).

Further instructions will be given as the first examination draws nearer.

MAKE-UP EXAMINATIONS WILL ONLY BE GIVEN UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES. Some official verification of the need to miss the exam will be required before a make-up exam is approved.

Each examination will cover the following material:

- EXAM 1: Introductory material, The Constitution, and Federalism
- EXAM 2: American Institutions (Congress, The Executive and the Bureaucracy, and the Judiciary)
- EXAM 3: Policy "Inputs"—The Electorate as Players (Public Opinion, Participation, Voting, and Elections)
- EXAM 4: Policy "Inputs"—Non-Institutional Players (Political Parties, Interest Groups, and Mass Media)
- FINAL EXAMINATION: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Research Project:

A list of research questions will be provided in the coming weeks. These questions will cover the breadth and scope of the materials to be covered in this course. Some of the topics may be addressed in lecture, some may be addressed in your textbook, some will not be discussed in any of the required materials for this class. In any event, you should expect to spend time in a library and/or on-line researching and responding to these questions.

All submitted projects MUST include a list of citations noting the materials used to derive the responses. All citations must be formatted according to American Psychological Association (APA) specifications. When submitted, these materials should be typed in 10 or 12-point font, double spaced, and have 1" margins. Students must use complete sentences and paragraphs in response to all questions. These materials will be graded *primarily* on content and completeness; however, a portion of your grade will be based on grammar, spelling, and presentation. **PLEASE NOTE:** Late projects will be accepted, but **there will be an automatic 10 point deduction per class meeting for papers that are submitted late.**

Participation, Conduct, and Attendance:

An important part of the course is student participation, and a guaranteed way to lower your grade is to conduct yourself in an inappropriate manner in the classroom. Inappropriate behavior such as reading, talking, sleeping, writing letters, etc., during class, or failure to treat everyone in the classroom with respect will affect your grade negatively, as will cheating on exams or instances of plagiarism in out-of-class writing assignments. Those who wish to practice such inappropriate behavior will likely be asked to leave the classroom, pursuant to Reedley College's Student Code of Conduct Policy (Board Policy 5410 and EC 760332). No one will be forced to participate in class discussions, but everyone is strongly encouraged to ask questions and offer input regarding the subject matter at hand and current events related to that subject matter.

Attendance is one measure of participation, and you will not do well in the course if you regularly fail to come to class. Perfect attendance is best, and more than six hours of absences is definitely too many. It is the policy of this college that the instructor may drop a student who has missed more than six hours of class: it is my procedure that after six hours of absences, I will request an appointment with you to try to determine nature of the difficulty.

Reading Assignments:

All reading assignments should be COMPLETED by the assigned date. This will facilitate your learning the course material as well as your ability to participate in class discussions. Keep in mind, the readings and the lectures are intended to complement, not replace, one another. Some material covered in the lectures will not be covered in the text: conversely, information in the text may not be addressed directly in class. In a testing situation, you will be responsible for all assigned materials. If you have questions on any of the material, ASK!!! I want to help you learn about American politics and government, but your questions may not be answered unless you ask them. Also, always expect to answer questions in class based upon the assigned readings for that day.

Extra Credit Assignment:

For this assignment, you are to go <http://www.georgewbush.com>, <http://www.johnkerry.com>, AND/OR <http://www.livingroomcandidate.com> and view selected campaign commercials for the purpose of providing a written analysis. In the course of your analysis, you should answer AT LEAST the following questions:

- Who is the candidate's target audience? What leads you to this conclusion?
- Is the message "negative" or "positive"?
- Is there anything about the music/graphics/scenery intended to influence voters? If so, what?
- Would a "reasonable" person be persuaded? Why or why not?
- Were you persuaded? (What is your opinion?)

There is no requirement in terms of page numbers for this assignment; however, papers must be double spaced, typed in 10 or 12-point font, and have 1" margins. **PLEASE NOTE:** Late papers will NOT be accepted.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:

If you have special needs as addressed by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), please notify me immediately. All reasonable requests for assistance will be considered, and efforts will be made to accommodate your needs.

Important Dates:**Administrative:**

Last day to drop and receive a refund—Friday, August 20

Last day to drop and avoid a “W”—Friday, September 03

Last day to add— Friday, September 03

Last day to change a class to or from a CR / NC grading basis—Friday, September 17

Last day to drop—Friday, October 15

Holidays:

Labor Day—Monday, September 06

Veterans’ Day—Thursday, November 11

Thanksgiving holiday—Thursday, November 25 & Friday, November 26