
Political Science 2—American Government
Schedule # 52050 (MWF 1:00) and 52054 (TuTh 12:30)
Term: Fall 2012
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Instructor: Mr. Turini
Office: Forum 7
Office Hours:
W 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
Th 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.
and by appointment

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).

As specified in Reedley College's course outline of record for this class, in the process of successfully completing this course, students will:

- Recognize the Constitutional processes and principles as they occur in modern U.S. and California politics,
- Identify the key elements in the formation of public policy, and relate how events can dictate governmental priorities, and
- Identify the impact of the media and public opinion in regard to elections, voting, and the development of public policy in the United States in California.

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.

Texts / Readings:

Required:

- Barbour and Wright, Keeping The Republic, 5th ed.
- Van Vechtin, California Politics: A Primer, 2nd ed.

Recommended:

- Collegiate dictionary
- a reputable newspaper or news magazine
- Writer's style manual (includes APA format)
- recommendations may be announced

Basis for Evaluation:

Final grades will be based on the following table:

<u>Point Range</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Final Grade</u>
950 – 855	100 – 90%	A
854 – 760	89 – 80%	B
759 – 665	79 – 70%	C
664 – 570	69 – 60%	D
569 and below	59% and below	F

Points will be earned through the following assessments, all of which are valued as indicated:

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Points Per Assignment</u>	<u>Total Points</u>
4 California Quizzes	30	120 (12%)
1 U.S. Constitution Quiz	50	50 (5%)
4 Examinations	100	400 (40%)
Final Examination	150	150 (15%)
Critical Inquiry Paper	90	90 (9%)
Critical Analysis Paper	90	90 (9%)
Participation / Conduct	100	100 (10%)
TOTAL POINTS POSSIBLE		1000 (100%)

Assessment Tools:

California Quizzes

Students will take four quizzes on California politics throughout the term. All students will need a Scantron form 815 for all quizzes. Quizzes will consist of 10-15 multiple-choice questions taken from either lecture material or from your California textbook.

U.S. Constitution Quiz

Students will be required to take a quiz covering the content of the Constitution of the United States of America. A worksheet/study guide will be provided to help in preparing for this quiz. All students will need a Scantron form 882 for this quiz. Versions of this quiz can be taken up to three (3) times.

Examinations

There will be four 100-point examinations and a 150-point final examination. 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. If approved, a make-up examination **must be completed within one week** of the original date of administration.

Paper Assignments

There will be two papers due in this class worth 90 points each. Students **MUST** submit the first to be eligible for credit on the second as these are linked assignments.

For the first paper (Critical Inquiry), students are to visit the California Secretary of State's web site, choose one initiative that has qualified for an upcoming ballot or is currently in circulation, write a summary of that initiative, and submit at least THREE questions regarding the proposal.

For the second paper (Critical Analysis), students are to build upon their first papers by (a) refining their summaries, and (b) answering the questions posed in the earlier paper.

All submissions **MUST** include a "works cited" page noting the materials used to craft the paper. 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: PAPERS MUST BE SUBMITTED AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE DESIGNATED DUE DATE (5 minutes after class begins will be considered late), AND LATE MATERIALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

Participation / Conduct

Participation: An important part of the course is student participation. Everyone is strongly encouraged to ask questions and offer input regarding the subject matter at hand and current events related to that subject matter. At a minimum, a good way to ensure your ability to participate effectively in class discussions would be to take five to ten minutes prior to the class beginning and review your notes from the previous class. In addition, I reserve the right to call on students to respond to questions posed in class, so you should always be ready to answer. Attendance is obviously one measure of participation, and you will not do well in the course if you regularly miss class. Perfect attendance is best, and more than six hours of absences is too many. **Be advised that I will drop any student who misses more than two weeks of instruction (cumulative but not necessarily consecutive) in a full term class, pursuant to the California Code of Regulations** (5 CCR § 58004).

Conduct: 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, text messaging, etc., during class, or failure to treat everyone in the classroom with respect will affect your grade negatively.** Those who practice such inappropriate behavior will likely be asked to leave the classroom, pursuant to California state law and the State Center Community College District's Student Code of Conduct standards (California Education Code § 76030-76033, SCCC Board Policy 5500, and SCCC Administrative Regulations 5500 and 5520, respectively). **Cell phones, pagers, MP3 players, and all other miscellaneous electronic devices are to be turned OFF during class.** Not only is a ringing cell phone distracting, disruptive, and annoying, it is rude and disrespectful. If it is imperative that your phone remain "on," please inform me prior to the start of class. If I agree that your situation requires that your phone remain "on," I will likely ask that you set your phone to "vibrate." **On the days of exams, no technological devices will be allowed to be on.** Failure to follow these instructions may lead to suspension from my class.

Cheating or instances of plagiarism are the most severe of conduct violations.

- **Cheating** is defined as "the willful and intentional practice of fraudulent and deceptive acts for the purposes of improving a grade or obtaining course credit." Cheating is NOT limited to examinations only. It includes any act in which you engage for the purposes of obtaining unearned academic credit. For further discussion of this concept, please refer to the Reedley College Catalog.
- **Plagiarism** is defined as "fraudulently representing someone else's writing or other scholarly material as your own." In other words, plagiarism is when you try to receive credit for someone else's work, including, but not limited to, any source you use for a paper or submitting a fellow student's homework while representing it as your own work. For further discussion of this concept, please refer to the Reedley College Catalog.

As these are the most severe of conduct violations, they will be met with the most extreme of consequences. Any student caught in one of these activities will (a) receive a 0 on the assignment/examination in question, (b) sacrifice all participation/conduct points available in this class, and (c) will not be eligible to earn any extra credit in the class. **In short, such actions will be met with a penalty potentially in excess of 300 points—over three full letter grades—in the course.**

Reading Assignments:

All reading assignments should be COMPLETED by the assigned date. This will facilitate your learning of 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.

Supplemental Instruction/Group Tutoring:

Beyond The Classroom (BTC) will be available to all students enrolled in this course who want to improve their understanding of class material. BTC is an academic support program offering free, regularly scheduled study sessions to students enrolled in historically difficult to pass courses.

Sessions will be led by a student who has already done well in this course and has been trained to facilitate group sessions where students can meet to compare class notes, review and discuss important concepts, develop study strategies and prepare for exams.

Attendance is free and voluntary. Students may attend as many times as they choose. Sessions will start the 2nd week of the semester, the days/times will be provided in advance.

Extra Credit Assignment:

STUDENTS ARE ELIGIBLE TO EARN EXTRA CREDIT POINTS ONLY AFTER (1) DOWNLOADING A COPY OF THE SYLLABUS, AND (2) PASSING THE U.S. CONSTITUTION QUIZ.

For your first extra credit opportunity, you may submit your completed U.S. Constitution workbook/study guide on the date indicated below for a possible 10 extra credit points.

In addition, there will be a running extra credit assignment in this class for those students interested. Students will have the opportunity to earn 1 point of extra credit for each chapter outline they submit based on the assigned readings from the chapters that relate to the national government. While that may not seem significant on the surface, consider the following: we will cover 14 “chapters” of material this semester, which means you will have the opportunity to earn 13 points of extra credit (only 12 points because I will distribute sample materials based on the first chapter as an example; however, this still equates to over two full grades on any one examination). All extra credit materials are ***DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON THE SPECIFIED DEADLINE.*** There will be no exceptions, and ***NO LATE EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS WILL 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:

Aug. 13	(M)	Start of Fall semester
Aug. 24	(F)	<i>Last day to drop a full-term class for a full refund</i>
Aug. 31	(F)	Last day to register for a full-term fall class
Aug. 31	(F)	Last day to drop a fall full-term class to avoid a “W”
Sept. 03	(M)	<i>Last day to drop a fall full-term class to avoid a “W”</i>
Sept. 03	(M)	Labor Day holiday (no classes held, campus closed)
Sept. 14	(F)	Last day to change a Fall 2012 class to/from a Pass/No-Pass grading basis
Oct. 12	(F)	<i>Last day to drop a full-term class (letter grades assigned after this date)</i>
Nov. 12	(M)	Veterans Day observed (no classes held, campus is open)
Nov. 22-23	(Th-F)	Thanksgiving holiday (no classes held, campus closed)
Dec. 10-14	(M-F)	Final exams week

TENTATIVE COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK	DATE	READING	ASSIGNMENT / EXAMINATION / QUIZ
1	Aug. 13 - 17	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 1 ("Politics: Who Gets What, and How?")	
2	Aug. 20 - 24	Barbour & Wright, Chapter 3 ("Politics of the American Founding")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 3 extra credit outline due Monday, August 20
		The Declaration of Independence	Constitution worksheet due Friday, August 24
		The Constitution of the United States	CONSTITUTION QUIZ (1st admin.) - Friday, August 24
		Federalist 51	
3	Aug. 27 - 31	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 4 ("Federalism and the U.S. Constitution")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 4 extra credit outline due Monday, August 27
4	Sept. 03 - 07	VanVechten, Ch. 1 ("Introduction")	EXAMINATION 1 - Wednesday, September 05
		VanVechten, Ch. 2 ("Critical Junctures: California's Political History in Brief")	
		VanVechten, Ch. 3 ("Direct Democracy")	
5	Sept. 10 - 14	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 7 ("Congress"), pgs. 239-251, 261-285	QUIZ 1 - Wednesday, September 12
		Barbour & Wright, Ch. 17 ("Social and Environmental Policy"), pgs. 633-640, 644-645, 661-663	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 7 extra credit outline due Wednesday, September 12
		Barbour & Wright, Ch. 18 ("Economic Policy"), pgs. 677-684	Barbour & Wright, Chs. 17 & 18 (pgs. 633-640, 644-645, 661-663, 677-684) extra credit outline due Friday, September 14
6	Sept. 17 - 21	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 8 ("The Presidency"), pgs. 287-315	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 8 extra credit outline due Wednesday, September 19
			CONSTITUTION QUIZ (2nd admin.) - Wednesday, September 19, 3:30 pm
7	Sept. 24 - 28	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 9 ("The Bureaucracy"), pgs. 331-345	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 9 (pgs. 331-345) extra credit outline due Wednesday, September 26
		Barbour & Wright, Ch. 19 ("Foreign Policy"), pgs. 718-724	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 19 (pgs. 718-724) extra credit outline due Friday, September 28
8	Oct. 01 - 05	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 10 ("The American Legal System and the Courts")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 10 extra credit outline due Wednesday, October 03
9	Oct. 08 - 12	VanVechten, Ch. 4 ("The State Legislature")	EXAMINATION 2 - Monday, October 08
		VanVechten, Ch. 5 ("The Executive Branch")	CRITICAL INQUIRY PAPER DUE FRIDAY, OCTOBER 12
		VanVechten, Ch. 6 ("The Court System")	

10	Oct. 15 - 19		QUIZ 2 - Monday, October 15
		Barbour & Wright, Ch. 11 ("Public Opinion")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 11 extra credit outline due Monday, October 15
11	Oct. 22 - 26	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 14 ("Voting, Campaigns, and Elections")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 14 extra credit outline due Monday, October 22
		Barbour & Wright, Ch. 7 ("Congress"), pgs. 251 - 255	CONSTITUTION QUIZ (3rd admin.) - Wednesday, October 24, 3:30 pm
12	Oct. 29 - Nov. 02	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 15 ("The Media")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 15 extra credit outline due Monday, October 29
			EXAMINATION 3 - Friday, November 02
13	Nov. 05 - 09	**VanVechten, Ch. 9, pgs. 121 - 130 ("Political Parties, Elections, and Campaigns")	
		**Supplemental readings on California media (TBA)	
		Barbour & Wright, Ch. 12 ("Political Parties")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 12 extra credit outline due Monday, November 05
		Federalist 10	QUIZ 3 - Friday, November 09
14	Nov. 12 - 16	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 13 ("Interest Groups")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 13 extra credit outline due Wednesday, November 14
			CRITICAL ANALYSIS PAPER DUE FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 16
15	Nov. 19 - 23	**VanVechten, Ch. 9, pgs. 113 - 121 ("Political Parties, Elections, and Campaigns")	EXAMINATION 4 - Wednesday, November 21
		**Supplemental readings on California interest groups (TBA)	
16	Nov. 26 - 30		QUIZ 4 - Monday, November 26
		Barbour & Wright, Ch. 5 ("Fundamental American Liberties")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 5 extra credit outline due Monday, November 26
17	Dec. 03 - 07	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 6 ("The Struggle for Civil Rights")	Barbour & Wright, Ch. 6 extra credit outline due Monday, December 03
18	Dec. 10 - 14		FINAL EXAMINATION - Wednesday, December 12 @ 1:00 p.m.

**** items will not be discussed in class--quizzes will be based solely on the assigned reading material**