

POLITICAL SCIENCE 1 Government of the United States and California
Fall 2015 Section 1742

Instructor: Ruebensaal

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Office Hours MW 10:30-11 or 12:30-1pm T/Th by appt.

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TEXT: There are two textbooks for this course

American Government and Politics Today: Brief Edition '14/'15 (AG) Schmidt

California - The Politics of Diversity: Lawrence, Cummins 8th edition (CA)

WEEK OF MAJOR CONCEPTS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

August 31 Introduction and Political Concepts (AG) Chapter 1
(CA) Chapter 1

September 7* Concepts of Government cont. (CA) Chapter 2
Ideology and Government

September 14 The Constitution (AG) Chapter 2
(CA) Chapter 3

September 21 Constitution cont. (Federalism) (AG) Chapter 3
(CA) Chapter 4

September 28 Subject continued (CA) Chapter 5

October 5 EXAM #1

CONSTITUTIONAL CENTERS OF POLITICAL POWER

October 12 The Congress (Legislative Branch) (AG) Chapter 9
The California Legislature (CA) Chapter 7

October 19 The Presidency (Executive Branch) (AG) Chapter 10
The California Governor (CA) Chapter 8

October 26 EXAM #2

The Supreme Court (Judicial Branch) (AG) Chapter 12

November 2 Judiciary and Civil Liberties (AG) Chapter 4

November 9* Courts and Civil Liberties continued

November 16 Civil Liberties continued

November 23* EXAM #3

THE NON-CONSTITUTIONAL CENTERS OF POLITICAL POWER

November 30 Campaigns, Elections and the Media (AG) Chapter 6, 8
(CA) Chapter 6

December 7 Political Parties and Interest Groups (AG) Chapter 7

SEMESTER ESSAY DUE 12/9

December 14 EXAM #4
12/14 11:30 am - 1:30 pm (Final Exam Week)

EVALUATION:

4 exams (the lowest exam grade will be dropped)

1 semester essay (equivalent to an exam - - not dropped)

Bi-weekly vocabulary quiz (averaged into a full grade) (about 6/semester)

EXAMS:

The exams for this course will be two parts: Part 1 is Multiple Choice, and Part 2 is Written i.e. identification, fill-in, and essay. The exams are not cumulative. If you miss an exam you may take a make-up BEFORE the next scheduled exam. The make-up exam is green book ESSAY format. There is NO individual extra credit in this course. The instructor may decide to give the whole class the option of doing an extra assignment in order to enhance their knowledge in a particular aspect of American Government. The exams will be graded on a 5 pt. scale including +and - grades. I do not grade on the curve.

ATTENDANCE:

(1% + or - borderline cases) students note: Your grade will be negatively affected by not attending class. To me attendance signifies attitude. AND I am big on having the right attitude. However, just showing up to class is not a guarantee in itself to passing the class. You have to read the materials, pass the exams, and do the required work. The maximum number of missed, excused or unexcused, classes that will begin to affect your grade is _____ (this is equivalent to two weeks missed). All absences, if known in advance, should be noted to the instructor. Unscheduled absences should be called in/or a voice message left/or an e-mail sent before the next class.

DROPPING THIS CLASS:

It is not the instructor's responsibility to drop a student from the class. If you plan on dropping this course than do it on your own and within the scheduled time frame, note the date in the schedule of classes for a grade of W (November 20). If you fail to drop the class and decide to stop going to class thinking that the instructor has dropped you... you will fail this class.

RECORDING OF LECTURES -PROVISIONS AND CLASSROOM CONDUCT

You may tape all of the instructor's lectures. You do not need my permission. Turn off all cell phones while in class especially during exams. When in class assume that you are here to learn and to follow the lectures. If this is NOT your intention then do not bother to come to class. Arrive to class on time...consistent lateness could lower your grade. If you come to class late, after roll is taken, then see the instructor at the end of class to note your attendance. My policy on cheating and plagiarism follows the policy set out in the college catalogue.

DSPS - Learning Assistance and Accommodations

If you are a registered student through DSPS then testing accommodation could be arranged through their office. Please inform the instructor if this applies to you and supply the necessary documentation regarding your case.

Classroom Conduct and Behavior

Since this is a class regarding political discussion, proper language and respect for another's ideas and beliefs is to be tolerated. If you are not mature enough the handle free speech then I would suggest that you enroll in another class. The very essence of free speech in a democratic society is to allow for controversy. I might not agree to what you say, but I will defend your right to say it. i.e. if you can SUPPORT what you say and what you believe. Beliefs and or Opinions are founded on fact!!!, so do your homework. We do not FEEL in this class. Emotions and Feeling are not facts.

Wishing you a productive semester ahead!! Professor JR

What are the STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES for Political Science 1 (SLOs)...i.e.
What would you hope to learn from this course by the end of this semester?

- 1- The first outcome of this course is to learn about YOUR Government.
The information that you study is based on facts (from the text book and lectures)
AND, from fact we learn to draw ANALYSIS which can lead us to.....Critical Thinking

- 2- CRITICAL THINKING is one of the SLOs to be gained in this course. By this I mean to be able to analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinion, using evidence, and using facts to specify multiple solutions (hypothesis) [$A + B = C$] and their consequences. CT develops in you a sense of critical reading, writing and ultimately, your participation. What better service can you give your government than your mind followed by your involvement.
- 3- A third SLO for this course is to to promote a future interest in government, or put another way to develop in you a sense of CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY- - by understanding how political responsibilities relate to work, family, community and the global planet.
Maybe after this course you will realize
the importance of how government affects your life, your community, and our globe.
AND..... how you might relate to and become better involved in the political process.
- 4- Last but not least, and this is WHY you are taking this course... it is a requirement for Transfer and or a requirement for an AA degree in the state of California.

What are we going to Study??? - - - Political Activity or POLITICS

In this course, we are going to study two major human activities: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR and POLITICAL THINKING. Both of these activities are rooted in the notion of choice. We choose how we act and we choose what we think. Oftentimes, what we thinking motivates how we act.

- 1-The Study of Political Behavior as related to POLITICAL EFFICACY (Acting)
The WHY and the HOW people act politically (or not). What influences our political behavior. WHY we act? or not. AND what are the various types of political activity. i.e. register to vote, vote, attend a court of law (as an observer), serve on a jury, work on a particular election, support a political candidate, become active around a particular political issue. (see Purpose #3)
- 2-The Study of Political Opinion is related to POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION (Thinking)
Why do we choose one way of thinking over another??? What factors influence our thinking? Our bias?? Can we change our ideas, our attitudes, and even our values?

Question: Does the study of Politics differ from the study of Government???

THE FORMULA:

In understanding Politics or the Political System we must understand a basic FORMULA
This formula is based on the notion that CONTROVERSY, is the very Nature or Essence of politics.
However, out of controversy should emerges DISCUSSION, and it is through discussion that we arrive
at

CONSENSUS. In politics, and in life, there is no such thing as a ZERO SUM GAME-I always will
win and the other person will always lose--. In most cases we can not get all that there is to get !!

There are few all win/all lose solutions to a problem. AND since we are dealing with human beings
rarely are there final, absolute solutions to problems. In every case you got to win/ lose to win. OR
you got to give up something in order to get something. This is the art of negotiation/arriving at
CONSENSUS.....something Washington has not been too successful at lately.....

Government is an institution/when this institution operates it is politics. One popular definition of
government is the [Allocation of Scarce Resources among Competing Interests.] These various
interests often break down into organized “groups.” These “interest groups” then compete against each
other for what resources are available and what there is to get. As the resources get smaller (finite) the
competition becomes more intense. Competing interests for scarce resources results in bargaining and
compromise this is what is known as PLURALISM- - Pluralistic Democracy.

Another role for a particular AGENT of government- - - btw, What are the three main AGENTS of
government? _____ This is
how ALL governments are set up – structurally. All government have three basic AGENTS. Where
they differ is in their structure...how they are set up/usually defined in their Constitutions.

..... is to Balance INDIVIDUAL interests against the COLLECTIVE interests of society.

individual interests
ARE?

vs

society's interests
ARE?

This role is often assigned to the referees of society (Courts). The courts are One of those Three
agents of government. Courts will often apply the rule in decision making as to Who gets What?,
How Much? and When?. This often applies to civil liberties and civil rights issues. (14th amendment
issues)

With the above two definitions of government in mind we can, therefore, make the hypothesis that
All governments perform the same three functions. Which are? _____
YET, not all governments perform these three functions in the same way.

FOUR basic forms of Government:

Presidential Form, Parliamentary Form, Totalitarian Form, Authoritarian Form,
(now go look them up!)