Syllabus – POSC 101

Political Science 101 - Introduction to American Political Institutions
M, W: 8-9:20 AM, P-18
Peter Bowman, Instructor
Office Hours: M,W: 11-12:20, 2-3 PM; T, TH 9:30-10:50, 2-3 PM, or by Appointment
Office: P-17 H
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Course lecture notes for each topic can be accessed through my faculty website (NOT the course blackboard site) at http://daphne.palomar.edu/pbowman.

Other reading assignments will be announced and assigned during the course.

Course Description: This is the first half a survey course recommended for those students who intend to transfer to a four year college or university. It is designed to acquaint students with selected concepts, theories and methods behind American government and the political processes. The course will address some of the major political institutions and their themes in a descriptive as well as conceptual and theoretic framework. Emphasis will be geared toward both theory and the real world of American politics and the nature of American democracy. This course, when completed, helps satisfy the college's / CSU American Institutions requirement as well as part of the college social science requirement. Transfer Credit: CSU, UC.

Course Requirements: Students are required to take three exams and write three short analytical papers. Students will also complete interactive online assignments using blackboard.

Exams: There will be three exams given. Each will consist of largely essay questions with some multiple choice. The material will be drawn from the readings and lectures discussed in class. A complete essay answer is one that expands discussion of a topic beyond mere description and shows me analysis and your understanding of the concept at hand. While the final exam is not cumulative, you will find that the material in this class builds. It, therefore, behooves you to retain what will have been covered in previous exams. A study guide consisting of that material which is to be covered in each test shall be available by way of the course blackboard site (www.palomar.edu/pconline).

Make up Exams: Make up exams will be given for those students who are unable to attend the day of the exam. Students must write a 3-4 page summary on an assigned topic, to be turned in on the day of the make up. It is your responsibility to come to me and arrange a make up date for the exam. The exam date will be arranged at a mutually acceptable time for both the student and instructor. Students who take the exam on the original date are not eligible for a make-up. Also, students who need to reschedule the make-up shall have five raw points reduced from their score.

Writing Assignments: Students will complete three writing assignments, integrating conventional news sources with the internet. Students will select any current event of interest related to politics and government. Then the student will select a print
media news source (newspaper, periodical, journal etc.) and an internet specific news source on that same current event. For those topics that are national or international in nature, you are required to select a print publication of a national level circulation, such as the New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Christian Science Monitor, Wall Street Journal or Washington Post. Certainly, you are not limited to these sources. You may use another publication if you wish, so long as it is of a national circulation and it provides detailed and comprehensive hard news/feature analysis of your selected topic. Topics of a state/local nature can be accessed using a local/regional circulation newspaper (San Diego Union-Tribune, North County Times, Riverside Press-Enterprise, Los Angeles Times, etc.). For each source, please choose a hard news or feature article. Please do not use op-ed pieces (editorials, opinion columns, etc.). Also, do not use short news clips from wire reports. Please make sure your source/article is that of a substantive and detailed information provider.

The student will then write a 3 page essay addressing the final criteria: (1) Give a brief background on the topic. What is the relevance to politics? What is the general situation or synopsis? (2) Give your own perspective and opinion on this issue, drawing from support and evidence from your sources. (3) Give an analysis comparing the information offered on the internet with that of the print media source. Which source gives more depth and detail? Is there a particular bias with one source? Which source, overall, would be a more dependable source for one to do research, with regard to selection, bias, coverage, etc.? These are just a few of the questions you can tackle when doing these assignments. Please attach a copy of both the internet source and the print source along with your essays. Each assignment is worth five (5) points each. Late papers will be docked one (1) point for every class session an assignment is not turned in after the due date. The due dates of the writing assignments are as follows: First assignment: February 18, Second assignment: March 18, Third assignment: April 15.

Online Assignments: Every student enrolled in the class shall each have their own Blackboard (Bb) account. Once a week (Starting Every Wednesday through the following Wednesday until 3 PM, Beginning the week of February 2), students shall be required to log on to the Bb site for this class and respond to a different question(s) on the discussion board. Each weekly topic(s) shall be given by the professor and will be related to course material and other relevant topics. Student responses shall address each question in a way that uses relevant course materials, and that gives an analysis of the discussion board topic. There is no required length for each student post. However, students who post responses that consist of such short, simple statements, such as “good point”, “I agree”, or other obviously non-substantive remarks that lack serious thought shall not be accepted for credit. While the professor shall have the discretion to determine whether or not posts meet these requirements, your common-sense should be more than sufficient to distinguish between posts that are of substance and those that are not.

For every acceptable weekly post that a student completes on the discussion board, that student shall receive a check mark for credit. Missing check marks shall result in the student’s Bb discussion board portion of their grade being affected. While students are required to post a minimum of one response per week, there certainly is no maximum limit on posts. If you want to respond to other students’ posts on the weekly topic/question, please feel free to do so! Part of the purpose of this assignment is to interact with your fellow students and to further your familiarity with the course material.

Attendance: Please note that when you miss one class session, you've missed a half week's worth of material. Students are, therefore, strongly encouraged to attend every class session. If you must miss a class, you are encouraged to notify me the session before (if you know ahead of time of your impending absence). You will still be responsible for all material (reading, lecture, and handouts) that you miss. If you accumulate excessive absences you may be subject to being dropped from the course. Students are subject to earning either an "F", "W" or "FW".

Adds and Withdrawals: If for some reason you decide to withdraw (drop) from this class, you must do so officially. This shall be your responsibility. You are reminded that a "W" cannot be recorded for you after the last date to withdraw. If you officially withdraw after this date, an "FW" will automatically be assessed on your transcript. An academic grade will be assigned by me if you do not attempt to
administratively drop but stop physically showing up after the drop deadline. Please observe the appropriate "add" and "drop" deadlines in the course schedule and in this syllabus: Deadline to add the course without a permission number: **January 25**, Deadline to add the course with a permission number: **February 1**, deadline to drop the course without a "W": **February 18**, deadline to drop the course with a "W": **March 14**.

Please note that the professor reserves at all times the right to drop students for reasons such as excessive absences, absence from class on the first day, excessive absences from class after the first day and failure to notify the professor about those absences and other reasons.

Grading: Your course grade will be broken down into the following assignments and percentages:
- First Exam: 20%
- Second Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 30%
- Writing Assignments: 15%
- Online Discussion Boards: 10%
- Attendance: 5%
The following grade scale will be used when determining final letter grades:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90 -100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>89 -80</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>79 -70</td>
<td>C</td>
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<td>69 -60</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>59 and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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A mark of "Incomplete" or F” may be given in the event of any missing work by a student.

Cheating / Plagiarism: Essentially, plagiarism is defined as any of the following:

a. Verbatim copying without proper acknowledgement.
b. Paraphrasing without proper acknowledgement
c. Putting together a “patchwork” paper from diverse sources, without proper acknowledgement of those sources.
d. Unacknowledged appropriation of information or of someone else's ideas.

Cheating on exams is defined as any of the following:

a. Drawing answers from anyone other than yourself.
b. Having access to both a copy of the exam and/or its answers prior to it being administered. (cont.)
c. Having access to exam answers during the exam via a "cheat sheet" or any other document that was created before the exam was administered.

Any student caught engaging in any of these acts will be subject to a grade of "F" for both that assignment and the course as well as being subject to expulsion from the college. A fulfilling academic and learning experience helps to be ensured when students do their own work.

Disabilities: Students with disabilities who may need academic accommodations should discuss options with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) and/or me during the first week of class.

Student Behavior: In order to help ensure a pleasant and enriching learning experience, certain etiquette and decorum must be observed in the classroom. Students will show respect and courtesy at all times toward all opinions and comments expressed in class. Also, students will not engage in any behavior that is distracting to the instructor or other students. This includes, but is not limited to, talking, continuous whispering, texting, use of any electronic device, chronic and excessive tardiness, chronic entering and exiting of the classroom, sleeping. When you exhibit such behavior, you show a lack of respect for me, this institution, the institution of academe, your fellow students and yourself as well. Please note that the professor reserves the right to penalize the attendance portion of the grade of any student who engages in any of the said disruptive behavior, using the instructors’ own subjective judgment.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>Introduction and Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 26</td>
<td>American Political Ideologies</td>
<td>(B) 1, (L) 17, 1</td>
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February 2       (Continued)
February 9       The U.S. Constitution    (B) 2 (L) 4
February 18      (continued)
February 24      Federalism              (B) 3, (L) 16
March 2          Civil Liberties          (B) 4, (L) 6
March 9          (Continued, First Mid-Term Exam – Wed., March 11)
March 16         Civil Rights
March 30         Civil Rights, Cont.      (B) 5, (L) 7
April 6          (cont., Political Economy Days – Wed & Thurs., April 8 & 9)
April 13         Public Opinion            (B) 6 (L) 5, 8, 10
April 20         Interest Group Politics  (B) 7, (L) 11, 9
April 27         (Second Mid-Term Exam – April 28)
April 29         Party Politics & Election Campaigns  (B) 8, 9 (L) 1,2,3
May 4            (continued)
May 11           Elections & Electoral Systems
May 18           Final Exam – Monday, May 18, 8 AM

Note: Exam dates, reading/writing assignment dates & lecture topic dates are subject to change.