

Hartnell College
American Political Institutions
Political Science 1
Fall 2015, 3 Units TTH 3:30-4:45pm E319

Instructor: Kerri Ryer
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Course twitter tag: #PlatHC

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to the U.S. Constitution, American political institutions, and California state government. Topics include basic concepts from political philosophy, constitutional law, institutions of the federal government, political parties and elections, federalism, public opinion, the media, interest groups, and civil liberties and civil rights. Contemporary issues in political science will be presented from a variety of viewpoints. Using a Madisonian framework, this course will examine the challenges of democratic theory in practice. With an emphasis on pluralism, students will engage with questions about power and justice and place themselves within current political debates. Emphasis will be placed on protests movements, such as the civil rights and women's movements.

Partially satisfies: (Refer to current transfer guide.)

IGTEC Area 4: Social & Behavioral Sciences requirement.

CSU Graduation Requirement: US History, Constitution & American Ideals

See www.Assist.org for the most accurate and up-to-date transfer information

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate written proficiency in correlating the foundation of government and politics to the central principles of the U.S. Constitution, e.g., separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, the supremacy clause, self-government, and individual liberties.
2. Defend and criticize the actions of the Constitutional Convention and the substance of the Ratification Debate.
3. Demonstrate increased comprehension of political ideology and the stated ideologies of the political parties in California through classroom discussion and written analysis.
4. Diagram the organization of Congress and, in essay form, apply its organization to the lawmaking process.
5. Recognize the constitutional powers and informal roles of the American president; demonstrate an ability to compose a detailed expose of the Electoral College, and diagram the organization of the president's cabinet and executive office of the president.
6. Diagram the three-tiered structure of both the U.S. and California judiciaries.
7. Outline the facts, issues, decision, and reasoning of the Supreme Court in regards to specific cases of constitutional law involving individual liberties and civil rights.

8. Evaluate the formulation of public policies at the National, State, and local levels.
9. Evaluate the political behavior of Americans and Californians within the framework established by the United States and California Constitutions.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

1. Patterson, Thomas E. *We the People*. 9th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2010, *print*, 0073379069
2. The instructor will also provide other assigned readings and media online.

REQUIRED TECHNOLOGY & SKILL:

Students taking this course must have basic computer skills for operating Microsoft Word and email, including sending attachments and files. Students also need access to the Internet and must have adequate hardware and software capabilities. Access to computers is also available at the Hartnell College Library/LRC. Students are required to complete weekly reading quizzes and submit paper assignments on the etudes course page. In addition, grades will be updated on a weekly basis on the etudes grade book for your frequent review. To login go here: <https://myetudes.org/portal> for etudes help go here: <http://www.hartnell.edu/etudes-help-students>

TEACHING & LEARNING COMMUNITY:

This course will incorporate a variety of learning activities and engagement opportunities. Participants will interact with lectures, read the text and additional materials, record academic notes, and participate in a series of discussions on hot button issues. Students are required to keep up with the course schedule and complete all assignments by their assigned due dates. Students will be required to actively engage in the teaching and learning process through group and peer teaching exercises. In our learning community, everyone's contributions are valued and respected. We are all in this together and I look forward to learning with you throughout the semester. The members of a course represent a rich variety of backgrounds and perspective. I am committed to working with you to provide an atmosphere for learning that respects diversity. We will work together to build this learning community by asking all class members to:

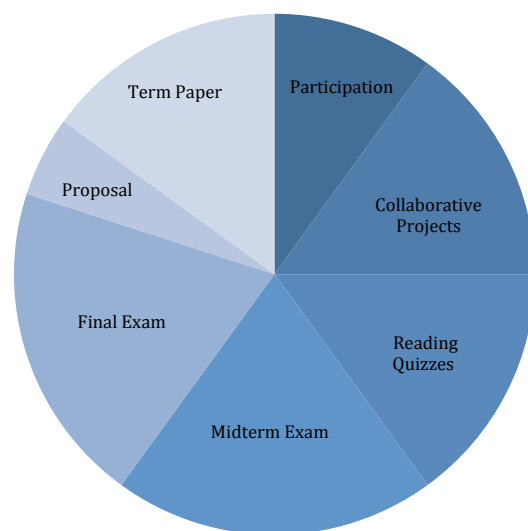
- Share their unique experiences, values and beliefs.
- Be open to the views of others.
- Honor the uniqueness of their colleagues.
- Appreciate the opportunity that we have to learn from each other in this community.
- Value each other's opinions and communicate in a respectful manner
- Keep confidential discussions that occur within class that are of a personal nature.
- Consider other ways that we may create an inclusive learning environment within this course and the Hartnell College community.

EVALUATION:

Your performance will be evaluated by your participation in class discussion and collaborative projects, a midterm exam, reading quizzes, a term paper proposal and term paper, and a final exam. Students are required to complete all assignments as outlined in the weekly schedule, no late work will be accepted. Only documented medical exceptions will be excused, though reasonable accommodations will be made in extenuating circumstances. Instructor reserves the right to drop anyone who fails to fulfill the weekly requirements for one or more weeks, but is not responsible for dropping disengaged students.

Your final grade will be based upon the following rubric:

Class Participation	10%
Collaborative Projects	15%
Reading Quizzes	15%
Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	20%
Term Paper Proposal	5%
Term Paper	15%
<hr/> Total	<hr/> 100%



Final grades will be assigned using the following evaluative grades and symbols:

A—Excellent	90%+
B—Good	80%+
C—Satisfactory	70%+
D—passing, Less than adequate	60%+
F—Failing	59%-

CODE OF CONDUCT:

All students are required to adhere to the college code of conduct at all times. They can be found here:

http://www.hartnell.edu/sites/default/files/Library_Documents/students/student_rights_responsibilities_handbook.pdf

All written work will be received through turnitin.com anti-plagiarism technology. Please avoid plagiarism at all costs, it will not be accepted. If you need help identifying what is and is not plagiarism come to office hours or email me or refer to this handout:

http://www.hartnell.edu/sites/default/files/u64/infolit4_rev.pdf

DISABILITY:

Students who require alternative formats for course materials or adaptive equipment because of a disability can request them through the Department of Supportive Programs and Services (<http://www.hartnell.edu/departmentsupportive-programs-services-dsps>) Located in the B- Student Services room 101. Their phone number is 831-755-6760, and email hgentry@hartnell.edu for more information/intakes. Please email me right away if you have a DRC need.

ADDITIONAL STUDENT SERVICES:

Counseling and Guidance: <http://www.hartnell.edu/counseling-and-guidance>

Crisis counseling: <http://www.hartnell.edu/crisis-counseling-services>

Veterans' services: <http://www.hartnell.edu/veterans-service-center>

EOP/CARE: <http://www.hartnell.edu/eopscare>

TRiO: <http://www.hartnell.edu/trio-student-support-services>

CAMPUS SAFETY:

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION: *In the event of a life threatening emergency call 911.*

- *To report a non-life threatening incident, safety hazard, or a **suspicious activity** please contact campus security at 755-6888*
- *To obtain campus status information, call the campus safety and facilities emergency status bulletin telephone number: 831-796-6222. From a campus line, simply dial 6222*
- *AlertU subscribers can be alerted in real-time about important security information.*

COMMUNICATION POLICY:

I will always be available during office hours. I am also available for communication by phone, skype, and ichtat by appointment. I prefer email communication, and will respond within 24 hours. If I do not respond within 24 hours expect that I did not receive your message and send the email again.

WITHDRAWAL POLICY:

I will drop anyone who does not participate in the first week of classes. After that, it is the student's responsibility to drop the course if they wish to withdraw. Do not expect that I will initiate the withdrawal procedures for you after the first week of classes, I will not.

IMPORTANT DATES:

August 18	First day of instruction
August 29	Last day to add
September 4	Last day to withdraw with "No Grade of Record"
September 10	Last day to petition for Fall 15 Graduation w/\$20 fee
November 20	Last day to withdraw with "W"
November 26-28	Fall recess
December 11	Last day of classes
Tuesday December 15	FINAL EXAM at 3-6pm

SCHEDULE: *Schedule is tentative and subject to change.

What is this thing called politics?

Week 1: August 18 & 20

Introduction to politics and political science: In this unit you will engage in discussion with fellow classmates on the question: *What is politics?* Your engagement in this activity will facilitate your ability to think critically about the conflictual nature of politics. Students will discuss several paradigms in the social sciences and acquire numerous lenses to utilize when examining politics throughout the semester.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Construct a working definition of the concept of the political.
2. Critically analyze the nature of conflict and compromise in recent policy decisions.
3. Recognize the presence of politics in your everyday lives and the origin of political conflict in your own values and expectations.

Readings: See handout provided first day of class

Introduction to Government

Week 2: August 25 & 27

Political culture and Citizenship: In this unit you will acquire fundamental skills for navigating and understanding the political world in your every day life.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Identify the main characteristics of American political culture.
2. Identify the American citizen and evaluate the relationship between the individual and the state.
3. Describe the gap between the American democratic ideal and practice.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 1

Week 3 September 1 & 3 * September 3rd, no in-person class. Check etudes for instructions.

Constitutional Convention & Ratification Debate: In this unit you will acquire fundamental skills for understanding the foundation of the American political system and the debates that have remained fluid throughout our history.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Compare the founding fathers with modern radicals.
2. Identify the structural differences between the Articles of Confederation and the Constitution.
3. Explain the founding and development of the U.S. Constitution.
3. Write a critical essay in which you analyze Madison's system of check and balances and separation of powers. Has the system functioned as Madison intended?

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 2

Week 4: September 8 & 10

Federalism: In this unit you will delve deeper into the study of federalism and separation of powers. Students will develop key analytic skills to assess the theoretical underpinnings of the federal structure and its present day function.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Create a dialogue between the federalists and antifederalists in which you compare and assess the importance of different political structures on future public policy from each theoretical viewpoint.
2. Compare four theories of federalism, and explain the current U.S. federal system.
3. Discuss whether the Constitution fosters or limits citizen's participation in government.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 3

Political Thought and Political Interests

Week 5: September 15 & 17

Public Opinion and Political Socialization: In this unit you will acquire skills for conducting public opinion research. This will assist you in critically analyzing public opinion research and the role it plays in policy formation.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze the role of public opinion in public policy formation.
2. Evaluate the political socialization process.
3. Create a public opinion poll in which you research feelings on a current political debate, while recognizing the limitations of public opinion polling.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 6

Week 6: September 22 & 24

Political Participation: In this unit you will acquire analytic tools necessary to analyze the U.S. election system. Who votes? Why/why not? We will discuss the theoretical foundation of the U.S. election system and analyze elections in practice.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Analyze the reasons why American's vote – or do not vote.
2. Identify demographics based upon voter turn out, and four factors that influence vote choice.
3. Construct a process by which to become an informed voter and make tough political decisions.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 7

Week 7: September 29 & October 1

Political Parties: In this unit you will chart the history of political parties in the United States. Different party systems and the impact of party polarization upon public policy will be analyzed.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Explain the role parties play in policy creation.
2. Describe the structure and function of the American party system.
3. Compare and analyze the American two party system with alternative party systems.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 8

Week 8: October 6 & 8

Interest Groups: In this unit we will discuss interest groups and campaign finance. We will distinguish the role of interest groups to that of political parties. Students will acquire analytic tools to evaluate the power of interest groups and individuals.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Differentiate interest groups from political parties.
2. Describe interest group tactics to utilized influence public policy.
3. Identify four types of interest groups and analyze one that you have a personal interest in.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 9

Week 9: October 13 & 15

News Media: In this unit you will acquire necessary skills to evaluate the political implications of the mass media and its influence upon public opinion and political culture in the U.S.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze the role mass media plays in shaping public opinion.
2. Evaluate the media affects of recent news articles for filtering, framing, slant, and priming.
3. Discuss the creation of safe/open spaces in media production and the shortening of the media cycle.
4. Describe the link between media and politics

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 10

MIDTERM EXAM 15* Bring a blue book

Legislative Branch

Week 10: October 20 & 22

Congress of the United States: In this unit students will develop skills necessary to analyze the system of checks and balances. Students will engage in the legislative process and develop an understanding of the difficulty in passing legislation.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Explain the system of checks and balances.
2. Evaluate the legislative process and current policy debates.
3. Discuss the structure and role of political parties in Congress.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 11

Term Paper Proposal DUE Oct 20

Executive Branch

Week 11: October 27 & 29

President of the United States: In this unit students will explore the executive branch and construct an outlook on presidential power.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Compare the president's roles as head of state and head of government.
2. Explain the origin of executive powers and what role the founders had imagined.
3. Evaluate five recent presidents' leadership styles and the implications for policy and public approval.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 12

The Courts

Week 12: November 3 & 5

Three-Tiered Judicial Structure: In this unit students will acquire skills to evaluate the power of the judicial branch and analyze recent Supreme Court decisions. We will look closely at the power of politics in the theoretically apolitical branch.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Explain the rule of law and the role the legal system plays in democratic society.
2. Evaluate Hamilton's claim that the judiciary was the "least dangerous branch of government" in light of the power it wields.
3. Discuss the role politics and ideology play in judicial appointments and decisions.
4. Evaluate the application of judicial review to recent Supreme Court decisions.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 14

Individual Rights

Week 13: November 10 & 12

Civil Liberties: In this unit you will acquire skills to critically evaluate civil liberties as outlined in the U.S. Constitution.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze the Bill of Rights, as applied to your everyday life.
2. Evaluate the positive and negative rights doctrines.
3. Create a draft Constitutional Amendment in which you make the argument for or against the expansion of a civil liberty.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 4

Term Paper Workshop Nov 12

Week 14: November 17 & 19

Fundamental Rights: In this unit you will acquire skills to critically analyze the U.S. Supreme Courts' civil rights doctrines.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Identify current civil rights groups in the U.S. and critically analyze the application of the 14th Amendment's due process clause to their cause.
2. Critically evaluate recent Supreme Court decisions that expand or restrict civil rights.
3. Construct a political outlook on equal rights that recognizes the value of diversity and historical struggles of minority groups.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 5

Public Policy

Week 15: November 24 & 26 (*26th Holiday No Class)

Economic & Education Policy: In this unit students will critically analyze federal education policy. Students will acquire the skills necessary to analyze and explain economic policy as it relates to federalism.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Critically analyze federal education policy.
2. Discuss how the federal government uses economic policy to exert power over the states.
3. Construct an outlook on fiscal and monetary policies that balances efficiency and equity.

Readings: *We the People*, Chapter 15 p.503-510 & 517-532 & Chapter 16 p.558-561

California State Government

Week 16: December 1 & 3

California Constitution & Governing Structure: In this unit you will diagram the governing structure of California government and discuss the distribution of power. We will then compare and contrast the California constitution with the US Constitution.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Identify the main institutions of California government.
2. Compare and contrast the California constitution to the US Constitution.
3. Construct a political outlook on CA politics that acknowledges the diversity of the state.

Readings: See posted reading CA1 on etudes

Week 17: December 8 & 10

Direct Democratic Processes & Key Issues: In this unit we will discuss the initiative, referendum and recall and the frequency and consequences of their use. We will delve deeper into education policy at the state level and then look at one of California's biggest historical issues, water policy.

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Identify direct democratic processes in CA and their consequences.
2. Critically analyze major contemporary policy issues in California.
3. Participate in CA elections with an educated perspective.

Readings: See posted reading CA 2 on etudes

TERM PAPER DUE Dec 10

Week 18: FINAL EXAM DECEMBER 15 at 3-6pm