

POL 102: Introduction to American Government

CRN: 02501

Location: SB 112

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Mondays & Wednesdays, 11:10AM-12:35PM

CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This comprehensive survey course provides an in-depth study of the American political system. National and California systems of government are studied from the perspective of constitutional frameworks and political institutions, processes, issues, and policies. Other topics include political participation; political parties and interest groups; social movements and minorities; civil liberties; and the role of political ideology, culture, and the mass media in shaping public opinion and policymaking. This course is intended for transfer students, political science majors, or students interested in the American political system.

Class website: allenbolar.wordpress.com, when you get to the website find the course page on the "teaching" menu.

Class Textbook: *Introduction to American Government*, by Turner et al. (required)

REQUISITES:

Advisory:

ENGL 101 with a grade of "C" or better, or equivalent or Assessment Skill Level R6/W6

Some statements on adding and dropping:

- i. It is the student's responsibility to drop all classes in which he/she is no longer attending [for on-campus classes].
- ii. It is the instructor's discretion to withdraw a student after the add/drop deadline due to excessive absences.
- iii. Students who remain enrolled in a class beyond the published withdrawal deadline, as stated in the class schedule, will receive an evaluative letter grade in the class.

STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Upon successful completion of the course the student will be able to:

1. Apply the basic concepts, principles, and terms common to meaningful political inquiry to the study of American government
2. Describe the political philosophies of the framers of the Constitution and the nature and the operation of United States political institutions (national, state, local) and processes under that Constitution as amended and interpreted
3. Explain the basis for American federalism

4. Locate the Constitution of the State of California within the framework of evolution of Federal-State relations and appraise the nature and processes of State and local government under the Constitution
5. Weigh the obligations and responsibilities of American citizenship, including the duty of participating

Students who complete POLI 102 will be able to:

[Critical Thinking](#)

Think critically in reading, writing, and/or speaking about U.S. national and California political systems, thereby identifying problems, theses, arguments, evidence and conclusions;

[Communication](#)

Write or speak about U.S. national and California political systems, thereby addressing problems, formulating theses, making arguments, analyzing and weighing evidence, and deriving conclusions;

[Personal Actions and Civic Responsibilities](#)

Demonstrate an ability to understand one's role in society, take responsibility for one's own actions, and make ethical decisions in complex situations;

[Global Awareness](#)

Articulate similarities and contrasts among cultures, times, and environments, demonstrating an understanding of cultural pluralism.

Course Outline:

Week 1: M/W, August 22/24

Agenda: The Constitution of the United States

Read: Chapter 1, "Declaration of Independence," and "Amendments 1-10, 13-15, 19 of the US Constitution"

Week 2: Thursday, August 31, 2016

Agenda: Federalism – "States' rights"

Read: Chapter 2

Week 3: M/W, September 5/7

Agenda: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights – Dale v. Boy Scouts, Hate Speech

Read: Chapter 3

Week 4: M/W, September 12/14

Agenda: Political Ideologies

Read: Chapter 4

Week 5: M/W, September 19/21

Agenda: Public Opinion and Political Participation

Read: Chapter 5

Week 6: M/W, September 26/28

Agenda: Politics and the Media

- Read: Chapter 6
- Week 7: M/W, October 3/5
Agenda: Interest Groups and Political Parties
Read: Chapter 7
- Week 8: M/W, October 10/12
Agenda: Campaigns and Elections
Read: Chapter 8
- Week 9: M/W, October 17/19
Agenda: Congress
Read: Chapter 9
- Week 10: M/W, October 24/26
Agenda: The Presidency
Read: Chapter 10
- Week 11: M/W, October 31/November 2
Agenda: Bureaucracies
Read: Chapter 11
- Week 12: M/W, November 7/9
Agenda: The Judicial System
Read: Chapter 12
- Week 13: M/W, November 14/16
Agenda: Government and Public Policy
Read: Chapter 13
- Week 14: M/W, November 21/23
Agenda: Public Policy and Economics, the Government and the Great Recession
Read: Chapter 14
- Week 15: M/W, November 28/30
Agenda: Domestic Policy, Social Security and the Federal Budget
Read: Chapter 15
- Week 16: M, December 5
Agenda: Foreign Policy
Read: Chapter 16

Final Exam will be in-class on December 7th