

**IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE**

**POLITICAL SCIENCE 102  
AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

**Fall 2015  
SYLLABUS**

**Semester:** Fall 2015

**POLS 102 American Government and Politics**

**CRN#:** 10591

**Room:** 413

**Class Dates:** August 17-December 11, 2015

**Class Days:** Friday

**Class Time:** 8:00-11:10 a.m.

**Instructor:** Raul Navarro, MPA

**E-mail:** [raul.navarro@imperial.edu](mailto:raul.navarro@imperial.edu)

**Office:** Room 809

**Office Hours:** N/A

**Office Phone:** Elvia Camillo 760-355-6144

**Office contact if student will be out or**

**emergency:** Elvia Camillo 760-355-6144  
or e-mail instructor

**Course Description**

The origin, development and operation of local, state, and national political institutions in the United States, emphasizing the contemporary operations of the American political system

**Student Learning Outcome (SLO)**

Upon course completion, the successful student will have acquired new skills, knowledge, and or attitudes as demonstrated by being able to:

1. Develop an understanding of civic responsibility. (ILO3, ILO5).
2. Participate in activities that promote the public good (e.g., the voting process, jury duty, community service). (ILO1, ILO3, ILO5).
3. Examine the election and voting process. (ILO2, ILO4, ILO5).

**Course Objective**

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

1. The significance of the Declaration of Independence concerning the American political philosophy.
2. The Articles of Confederation and the principal reasons why they were replaced by the Constitution.
3. The significant features of the Constitution and the major ways that the Constitution changes.
4. The concept of federalism and how it has changed throughout American history.

5. The significance of the Bill of Rights, and the continuing debate over civil liberties.
6. The role of public opinion and the media in the American political system.
7. The importance of the American political parties, lobbying, and interest groups.
8. The American election process, including political campaigning and voter behavior.
9. The formal structure of the Congress and the committee system, the legislative process and congressional powers.
10. The principal powers of the presidency and how they expanded dramatically in the 20th century.
11. The American bureaucracy.
12. The American judicial system and how it is affected by critical issues in American society.
13. The organizational structure, powers, and challenges confronting California's state and local governments.

### Textbooks & Other Resources or Links

1. Harrison, B. C., Harris, J. W., & Deardorff, M. D. (2013). *American Democracy Now Third Edition*. McGraw-Hill Education. ISBN-13: 978-1-259-42837-1
2. Giventer, L. L. (2008). *Governing California Second Edition*. New York: McGraw-Hill Companies Inc. ISBN-13: 978-0-07-352633-1

### Course Requirements and Instructional Method

Out of Class Assignments: The Department of Education policy states that one (1) credit hour is the amount of student work that reasonably approximates not less than one hour of class time and two (2) hours of out-of-class time per week over the span of a semester. WASC has adopted a similar requirement.

### Course Grading Based on Course Objective

Grading is based on your knowledge of the course content. How much effort and dedication you put into the course assignments and readings will be reflected in your grade at the end of the semester. It is encouraged that you stay current with all assignments for the best possible grade.

**Grading:**

**Assignment**

**Points Possible**

Quizzes (2X50)	100
Term Paper	100
Mid-Term	150
Group Activity	100
Community Service	100
Class Participation	50
Final Exam	200
Total Points Possible	800

**Final Grades**  
**720-800 Points= A**  
**640-719 Points= B**  
**560-639 Points= C**  
**480-559 Points= D**  
**000-479 Points= F**

<b>General Grading Rubric for Assignments</b>	
<b>A</b>	Focused and clearly organized. Contains advanced critical thinking and content analysis. Convincing evidence is provided to support conclusions. Language is precise and ideas are clearly communicated. Clearly meets or exceeds assignment requirements.
<b>B</b>	Generally focused and contains some development of ideas, but the writing may be simplistic or repetitive. Evidence is provided to support conclusions. May have occasional grammatical errors. Meets assignment requirements.
<b>C</b>	May be somewhat unfocused, underdeveloped, or rambling, but it does have some coherence. Some evidence is provided which supports conclusions. May have several grammatical errors. Meets minimum assignment requirements.
<b>D</b>	Unfocused, underdeveloped, and/or rambling. Minimal evidence is used to support conclusions. May contain serious grammatical errors that prevent an overall understanding. Does not respond appropriately to the assignment.
<b>F</b>	Minimal effort by student. Unfocused, underdeveloped, and/or rambling. May be too short or brief. Evidence is not used to support conclusions. May contain serious grammatical errors that block overall understanding. Does not meet assignment requirements.

## Attendance

- A student who fails to attend the first meeting of a class or does not complete the first mandatory activity of an online class will be dropped by the instructor as of the first official meeting of that class. Should readmission be desired, the student's status will be the same as that of any other student who desires to add a class. It is the student's responsibility to drop or officially withdraw from the class. See General Catalog for details.
- Regular attendance in all classes is expected of all students. A student whose continuous, unexcused absences exceed the number of hours the class is scheduled to meet per week may be dropped. For online courses, students who fail to complete required activities for two consecutive weeks may be considered to have excessive absences and may be dropped.
- Absences attributed to the representation of the college at officially approved events (conferences, contests, and field trips) will be counted as 'excused' absences.

## Classroom Etiquette

Imperial Valley College is maintained for the purpose of providing students in the community with programs of instruction in higher education. Students shall assume an obligation to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the college's function as an educational institution. Students shall observe the rules and regulations of the College and shall refrain from conduct which interferes with the College's teaching and administration, or which unreasonably interferes with the rights of others. Please refer to the IVC General Catalog available online for further information regarding student conduct. [www.imperial.edu](http://www.imperial.edu)

- Electronic Devices: Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and put away during class, unless otherwise directed by the instructor. **Consider**: specifics for your class/program
- Food and Drink are prohibited in all classrooms. Water bottles with lids/caps are the only exception. Additional restrictions will apply in labs. Please comply as directed.
- Disruptive Students: Students who disrupt or interfere with a class may be sent out of the room and told to meet with the Campus Disciplinary Officer before returning to continue with coursework. Disciplinary procedures will be followed as outlined in the General Catalog.
- Children in the classroom: Due to college rules and state laws, no one who is not enrolled in the class may attend, including children.

## Academic Honesty

- Plagiarism is taking and presenting as one's own the writings or ideas of others, without citing the source. You should understand the concept of plagiarism and keep it in mind when taking exams and preparing written materials. If you do not understand how to 'cite a source' correctly, you must ask for help.
- Cheating is defined as fraud, deceit, or dishonesty in an academic assignment, or using or attempting to use materials, or assisting others in using materials that are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question.

Anyone caught cheating or will receive a zero (0) on the exam or assignment, and the instructor may report the incident to the Campus Disciplinary Officer, who may place related documentation in a file. Repeated acts of cheating may result in an F in the course and/or disciplinary action. Please refer to the General School Catalog for more information on academic dishonesty or other misconduct. Acts of cheating include, but are not limited to, the following: (a) plagiarism; (b) copying or attempting to copy from others during an examination or on an assignment; (c) communicating test information with another person during an examination; (d) allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment; (e) using a commercial term paper service.

## Additional Help

- **Blackboard support center:**  
<http://bbcrm.edusupportcenter.com/ics/support/default.asp?deptID=8543>
- **Learning Labs:** There are several 'labs' on campus to assist you through the use of computers, tutors, or a combination. Please consult your college map for the Math Lab, Reading & Writing Lab, and Study Skills Center (library). Please speak to the instructor about labs unique to your specific program.
- **Library Services:** There is more to our library than just books. You have access to tutors in the Study Skills Center, study rooms for small groups, and online access to a wealth of resources.

## Disabled Student Program and Services (DSPS)

Any student with a documented disability who may need educational accommodations should notify the instructor or the Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSP&S) office as soon as possible. The DSP&S office is located in Building 2100, telephone 760-355-6313, if you feel you need to be evaluated for educational accommodations.

## Student Counseling and Health Services

Students have counseling and health services available, provided by the pre-paid Student Health Fee.

- **Student Health Center.** A Student Health Nurse is available on campus. In addition, Pioneers Memorial Healthcare District and El Centro Regional Center provide basic health services for students, such as first aid and care for minor illnesses. Contact the IVC [Student Health Center](#) at 760-355-6310 in Room 2109 for more information.
- **Mental Health Counseling Services.** Short-term individual, couples, family, and group therapy are provided to currently enrolled students. Contact the IVC [Mental Health Counseling Services](#) at 760-355-6196 in Room 2109 for more information.

## Student Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to experience a positive learning environment and due process. For further information regarding student rights and responsibilities, please refer to the IVC General Catalog available online at [http://www.imperial.edu/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=doc\\_download&gid=4516&Itemid=762](http://www.imperial.edu/index.php?option=com_docman&task=doc_download&gid=4516&Itemid=762)

## Information Literacy

Imperial Valley College is dedicated to helping students skillfully discover, evaluate, and use information from all sources. Students can access tutorials at <http://www.imperial.edu/courses-and-programs/divisions/arts-and-letters/library-department/info-lit-tutorials/>

## Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

The following schedule is subject to change, as the instructor deems necessary, in order to more fully integrate the objectives of the course, and to accommodate the scheduling of lectures, quizzes, and/or student presentations.

### Quizzes:

There will be two quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will be worth **50 points**. Quizzes will be based on your readings and on in-class lectures. Taking notes during lectures is highly encouraged. Quiz dates are listed at the end of the syllabus on the schedule of assignments, readings and exams. **Please bring a scantron form for every quiz.** There are no make-ups on quizzes unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

### Mid-Term

The Mid-term will be on the first portion of the semester readings. The readings include chapters 1-8 from “American Democracy Now”. The Mid-Term is worth **150 points**. **Please bring a scantron form.** The Mid-Term will take place on **October 9, 2015**.

### Term Paper:

There will be a term paper due for this class. Students will be required to attend a **Local Government Meeting**. The guidelines for this term paper will be given to students in class. The **Local Government Meeting** term paper is worth **100 points**. This paper is due on **October 23, 2015**.

### Group Activity:

A group activity and presentation is scheduled to take place on **November 20, 2015**. The instructor will give you further instructions on the requirements for this assignment. The Group Activity/Presentation is worth **100 points**.

### Community Service:

Community service is a requirement for this course and a part of your grade. The community service project will be discussed further in class by the instructor. Community service is worth **100 points**.

### Class Participation:

Students are expected to participate in all class discussions. All students are encouraged to participate and voice their opinion in all Political issues. Do not be afraid to engage in an argument. Political opinions can be very controversial, since we each have our own values,

traditions and beliefs. Just remember to be respectful of all students. Class participation is worth **50 points**.

**Final Examination:**

The final examination will be based on the second half of the semester readings. The readings include Chapters 9-16 from Harrison and Harris, “American Democracy Now”. There will be a Final Exam Review one week before the exam, it will be to your own advantage to attend class on this day and take notes to help with the exam. **Please bring a scantron form.** The Final Exam is worth **200 points**. The exam will take place on **December 11, 2015**.

Schedule Readings, Assignments, and Exams		
Date:	Readings, Assignments	Exams
Week 1 08/21/2015	Introduction <b>People, Politics and Participation</b> Ch. 1 American Democracy Now Ch. 1 Governing California	In class discussion
Week 2 08/28/2015	<b>The Constitution of the United States of America</b> Ch. 2 American Democracy Now Ch. 2 Governing California <b>Federalism</b> Ch.3 American Democracy Now Ch.3 Governing California	In class discussion
Week 3 09/04/2015	<b>Civil Liberties</b> Ch. 4 American Democracy Now Ch. 4 Governing California	In Class Discussion
Week 4 09/11/2015	<b>Quiz #1 Chapters 1-4</b>	<b>Quiz Ch. 1, 2, 3, 4</b>
Week 5 09/18/2015	<b>Civil Rights.</b> Ch.5 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading	In class discussion
Week 6 09/25/2015	<b>Political Socialization and Public Opinion</b> Ch.6 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading <b>Interest Groups</b> Ch. 7 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading	In class discussion
<b>Week 7</b> 10/02/2015	<b>Political Parties</b> Ch. 8 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading <b>Midterm Review</b>	<b>MIDTERM</b> <b>Ch 1-8</b>
Week 8 10/09/2015	<b>MID-TERM</b>	In class discussion
Week 9 10/16/2015	<b>Elections, Campaigns, and Voting</b> Ch. 9 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading	In class discussion
Week 10 10/23/2015	<b>The Media</b> Ch. 10 American Democracy Now Ch. 5 Governing California	In class discussion

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	<b>Congress</b> Ch. 12 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading <b>Local Government Meeting Paper Due</b>	
Week 11 10/30/2015	<b>The Presidency</b> Ch. 13 American Democracy Now Ch. 6 Governing California	In class discussion
Week 12 11/06/2015	<b>Monday: Quiz #2 Chapters 9, 10, 12, 13</b> <b>The Bureaucracy</b> Ch. 14 American Democracy Now Ch. 7 Governing California	<b>Quiz #2 Chapters 9, 10, 12, 13</b>
Week 13 11/13/2015	<b>The Judiciary</b> Ch. 15 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading	In class discussion
Week 14 11/20/2015	<b>GROUP PRESENTATIONS</b>	
Week 15 11/27/2015	***NO CLASS November 27, 2015*** <b>HAPPY THANKSGIVING</b>	
<b>Week 16</b> 12/04/2015	<b>Economic Policy</b> Ch. 16 American Democracy Now Governing California-No Reading <b>Final Review</b>	In class discussion
<b>Week 17</b> 12/11/2015	<b>FINAL EXAM</b>	<b>Final Exam</b> Ch. 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16

## Local Government Meeting

### Paper Guidelines

**Due October 23, 2015**

Assignment:

Write a 2 page, double-spaced report, in MLA format, of your first-hand observations of a local government meeting.

Examples of appropriate governmental bodies include:

- ❖ a city council/commission meeting
- ❖ a meeting of the county commissioners court
- ❖ a zoning or planning commission meeting
- ❖ a school board meeting
- ❖ a meeting of the board of regents of a public university or community college
- ❖ a meeting of the hospital district
- ❖ a meeting of the water district

The following meetings are **not** appropriate:

- ❖ Any meeting that was held prior to August 17, 2015

If you have any questions about a meeting you would like to attend, please ask me before you attend.

**Plan ahead.** Many local government meetings occur only once or twice a month. You can usually find information about local meetings in your local newspaper. You can also call a local government and find out when the meetings are and where they are held.

The ideal report includes a record of all verbal and nonverbal interactions among all persons present, does not have spelling or grammatical errors, and includes among others, the following items:

- the time, date, and place of your fieldwork
- A description of the physical layout of the room or meeting place and the presence of any political symbols such as flags, seals, etc.
- information on all formal decisions and the procedures, if any, that were followed
- A summary of all statements made by the speakers, noting their attitude or ideology and their tone (i.e., formal, hostile, liberal, conservative, etc.)
- information on the speakers' personal behaviors and styles (appearance, age, race, and gender)
- a summary of any actions taken and the procedures, if any, that were followed to reach a decision
- an analysis of the range of decisions made, the kind of language used, references to political groups, the requirements of the law, or to other governmental bodies, and the appearance of consensus or discord
- a comparison of the observation to class material and related resources
- a comparison of the different governmental bodies observed by the group members (this is REAL political science)
- a general critique of the observed activity's overall political or policy implications (for example, did the observed officials represent or act on behalf of the general public or on behalf of a particular group, did they take into account the speaker's presentation or did they ignore it?)

**Group Project Presentation Guidelines**

**Due November 20, 2015**

**Group:** 3-4 people

**Topic:**

Each group will be required to create a campaign. Your campaign's focus is to promote an issue that is important to the development of the Imperial Valley. You are required to create a campaign ad along with a campaign speech to persuade your audience on the issue at hand. Each member of your group will be required to participate, for you will be presenting your campaign to the class. Remember, this is a group presentation; everyone involved will receive the same grade. It is your responsibility to make sure you make adequate arrangements to meet and work on your presentation for the best grade possible.

Along with your campaign presentation, each group will hand in a one page, double spaced outline of their research on the topic as well as a brief reflection of why their topic of choice is important to the Imperial Valley.