

## IMPERIAL VALLEY COLLEGE

Political Science 102

### **POLS 102: American Government & Politics**

CRN 10353 – Fall 2012 – 3.0 Units

Tuesday 6.30pm-9.40pm

Building 400 Room 411

**Instructor: Jose Landeros, MPA**

**BLACKBOARD ENHANCED**

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the origin, development and operation of local, state and national political institutions within the United States, emphasizing the contemporary operations of the American political system. Students will gain an understanding of important American documents, the rights and powers provided therein, and the structure of the American system of government.

The goal of this course is to foster informed, responsible participation in public life. Knowing how to be a good citizen is essential to the life of a citizen in the United States political system.

*"I know of no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the preservation and improvement of the United States democracy. Upon completion of this course, students will understand the major ideas, protections, privileges, and structures that affect society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion."*

~Thomas Jefferson (1820).

## STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME

**Course SLOs:** Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) are written statements that represent faculty and departmental learning goals for students. During this course, students will:

<b>Outcome 1:</b>	Develop an understanding of civic responsibility.
<b>Outcome 2:</b>	Participate in activities that promote the public good (e.g., the voting process, jury duty, community service).
<b>Outcome 3:</b>	Examine the election and voting process.

**Institutional SLOs:** Institutional Student Learning Outcomes (ISLOs) are areas of learning that students, faculty, staff, and administrators work toward and assess on a regular basis. After successful completion of a program or degree at Imperial Valley College, students are expected to have measurable improvement in the following areas: **ISLO1** - Communication Skills, **ISLO2** - Critical Thinking Skills, **ISLO3** - Personal Responsibility, **ISLO4** - Information Literacy, and **ISLO5** - Global Awareness.

POLS 102 American Government & Politics will provide students with learning opportunities to improve in all five of the Institutional Student Learning Outcomes.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of the following course objectives:

**Students will be able to demonstrate an understanding of:**

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.

**Assessment Tasks:** The course objectives will be demonstrated by successful completion of course assignments and exams.

## CLASSROOM NORMS

Students are expected to comply with the following classroom norms:

- Arrive to class on time, with all electronic equipment turned off and put away.
- Remain in the classroom during each class session until excused by the instructor.
- Be respectful of fellow students, the instructor, and any guests.
- Actively listen during class, and participate in class activities and/or discussions.
- Use English for all course-related activities, on and off campus.

## WEB-ENHANCEMENT

This course is presented in a web-enhanced format, available through the Imperial Valley College Distance Education Program. For more information regarding the IVC online Blackboard system go to [www.imperial.edu/du](http://www.imperial.edu/du).

## NETIQUETTE

Netiquette is a combination of the words "network" and "etiquette." Basically, it describes things you should and shouldn't do while communicating with other people online. This is especially important in a classroom environment. Here are some examples:

- Don't capitalize all letters while posting a thought or emailing someone. **THIS IS CONSIDERED SHOUTING, AND IT IMPLIES THAT YOU ARE ANGRY.** Capitalize words only to highlight an important point or to distinguish a title or heading.
- Never use profanity or make hurtful comments toward someone or when referring to someone's work. This is considered flaming.
- Be careful when using humor or sarcasm; you never know how someone else will interpret it.
- Be respectful of diverse opinions.

You can learn more about Netiquette by viewing the Core Rules of Netiquette available at <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>, as excerpted from the book *Netiquette* by Virginia Shea. Also, you can test your knowledge by taking the Netiquette Quiz at <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/netiquiz.html>. (Both links courtesy of Albion.com).

Overall, please be courteous to the instructor and to your fellow classmates. If you see postings that are inappropriate, please bring them to the instructor's attention. If a problem occurs, you should be aware of the IVC Student Conduct and Complaint policy, accessible on pages 22-24 of the [IVC General Catalog](#).

## TEXTBOOKS

The following two textbooks are required for this course:

1. **Harrison:** *A More Perfect Union*, First Edition, McGraw-Hill Publishing, 2010.  
Authors: Harrison and Harris.  
ISBN #978-0-07-352638-6.

This is your main textbook for the course. The questions contained in both the quizzes and the exams will come from this book (and the **Giventer** book), so read and study it carefully. This textbook takes an in-depth look at the American federal system of government.

The **Harrison** textbook companion website has many helpful tools to enhance your learning experience. You should bookmark the following website for easy access:

[http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/007352638x/student\\_view0/](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/007352638x/student_view0/).

2. **Giventer:** Governing California, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition, McGraw-Hill Publishing, 2008.  
 Author: Giventer, Lawrence.  
 ISBN #978-0-07-352633-1.

This is the required textbook for California state and local government. The questions contained in both the quizzes and the exams will come from this book (and the **Harrison** book), so read and study it carefully. This textbook takes an in-depth look at the issues facing California state and local governments.

The **Giventer** textbook companion website has many helpful tools to enhance your learning experience. You should bookmark the following website for easy access:

[http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073526339/student\\_view0/](http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0073526339/student_view0/).

MORE PERFECT UNION & GOVERNING CALIFORNIA, is available for renting in the Fall semester. With this program students will save about 56% on the cost of this textbook. The rental price for students is \$45.56.

**GRADES**

How much you learn in the course, as well as your final grade, depends on the effort you put into the readings, assignments, and class preparation. Grades will be assigned on the basis of the following weights:

POSSIBLE POINTS		FINAL GRADES
Quizzes	120 points	724 – 805 points = A 643 – 724 points = B 562 – 643 points = C 481 – 562 points = D Zero – 481 points = F
Discussions	100 points	
Research Project	160 points	
Exams	225 points	
GOTV	100 points	
Participation	<u>100 points</u>	
<b>Total</b>	<b>805 points</b>	

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**

Students are expected to attend all class sessions and to arrive to class on time, with all electronic devices turned off and put away. Since participation in classroom work and discussion is an important part of this course, students will have **10 points deducted** from their class points for each unexcused absence. Students having three unexcused absences may be dropped from the class. Students who are tardy three times will be considered as having been absent once. Absences attributed to the representation of the college at officially approved conferences and contests and attendance upon field trips will not be counted as absences.

**LEAVING CLASS:** Students are expected to remain in the classroom throughout the entire class session. Students leaving the class early, or just briefly, without prior instructor approval, will have **points deducted** from their class points.

**CELL PHONES and ELECTRONIC DEVICES:** Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and put away during class. Cell phones ringing during class and all electronic devices not put away will be held by the instructor until the end of class.

**POLITICAL RESEARCH PAPER AND PRESENTATION**

Students are required to prepare an INDIVIDUAL political research paper, based on the selected issue assigned to him/her, and to present an oral presentation. Presentation guidelines will be given to the students in class. Students will be assigned presentation dates. A research proposal is due at **CLASS TIME, on WEEK # 2**, and is worth **10 points**. Research papers are due on **WEEK # 10**, are worth **100 points**. Late papers will lose **10 points** per day late. The oral presentation is worth **50 points**. Students must make their oral presentations on the scheduled date. No make-up presentations are allowed unless *prior* approval has been obtained from the instructor. The Paper should be written in APA style and ALL references must be listed. For additional info on how to write your APA style paper visit [www.apastyle.org](http://www.apastyle.org).

The following grading rubric is used when grading course assignments:

<b>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>90-100</b>
<b>B</b>	Generally focused and contains some development of ideas, but the discussion may be simplistic or repetitive. Evidence is provided which supports conclusions. May have occasional grammatical errors. Meets assignment requirements.	<b>80-89</b>
<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>70-79</b>
<b>D</b>	Unfocused, underdeveloped, and/or rambling. Minimal evidence is used to support conclusions. May contain serious grammatical errors that impede overall understanding. Does not respond appropriately to the assignment.	<b>60-69</b>
<b>F</b>	Minimal effort by student. Unfocused, underdeveloped, and/or rambling. May be unduly brief. Evidence is not used to support conclusions. May contain serious grammatical errors that block overall understanding. Does not meet assignment requirements.	<b>0-59</b>

**QUIZZES**

Weekly quizzes are worth **10 points**. No make up work is allowed.

**HOMEWORK/ PARTICIPATION/ DISCUSSION**

Homework will be assigned weekly, it must be turned in either electronically (blackboard) or manually (depending on assignment) no later than the start of class each week. In class discussions will take place in the beginning of class, weekly throughout the semester. These homework assignments/discussions will be worth up to **10 points** combined. Discussions will

center on an issues affecting our community and/or local, state or national news. These issues or topics will primarily ask for your opinion and there will probably not be a "right or wrong" answer.

Discussion also means interacting with your fellow students, so it is important that you pay attention. You are encouraged to respond to comments made by other students. 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 that you need to be respectful to all students. We each have the right to our own opinions, even if others don't agree.

## EXAMS

There are three exams throughout the semester, each worth **75 points**. The exams will cover material discussed in class and presented in the readings. No make-up exams are allowed unless *prior* approval has been obtained from the instructor.

## EXTRA CREDIT

During the semester, various options for extra credit will be made available to students. The maximum number of extra points any one student may earn during the semester is **40 points**.

## PLAGIARISM AND CHEATING

**Plagiarism** is to take and present 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.

**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, or assisting others in using materials, which are prohibited or inappropriate in the context of the academic assignment in question, such as:

- copying or attempting to copy from others during an examination or on an assignment;
- communicating test information with another person during an examination;
- allowing others to do an assignment or portion of an assignment, including the use of a commercial term paper service.

Basically, you cannot copy anything directly from any source, including your textbooks or the Internet, unless you are using a quotation. You must note the book or article or website and page number from the source of your quote. If you paraphrase something, you must also cite the source of your information. *If cheating or plagiarism is discovered, the assignment will be given "0" points. If you do it again, you will be dropped from the course with a grade of "F".*

## DISABLED STUDENT PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

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 Room 2117 of the Health Sciences Building, 760-355-6312.

## STUDENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students have the right to experience a positive learning environment; students who disrupt that environment can be asked to leave the class. Faculty and students also have the right of due process. For further information regarding student rights and responsibilities please refer to the IVC General Catalog available online at [www.imperial.edu](http://www.imperial.edu).

## ACCESSIBILITY

Every effort has been made to ensure that this course is accessible to all students, including students with disabilities. If you encounter a problem accessing any portion of this course, please contact the instructor immediately.

## OFFICE HOURS

The instructor's office hours are as follows:

- Available by appointment

Students are encouraged to contact the instructor at any time during the semester via email at, [jose.landeros@cancer.org](mailto:jose.landeros@cancer.org) or by telephone at 760-791-4679 (cell) or 760-996.7771 work cell.

## WITHDRAWAL FROM THE COURSE

It is the responsibility of the student to officially withdraw from the course through the Office of Admissions and Records.

**Maintain control of your own records.** As soon as you know you will not be attending a class, DROP IT by using WebSTAR. **You will receive grades of F for courses you are no longer attending and have not dropped and those grades will remain on your transcript forever.**

**DO NOT RELY ON ANYONE ELSE; PROTECT YOUR RECORDS.** Instructors MAY drop for nonattendance, but many do not. You are responsible for all classes for which you register. Do not assume you will be dropped for nonattendance. The failing grades you receive will not be changed because you quit attending.

**The following deadlines are for full-term classes.**

**Short-term classes have unique deadlines – contact the Admissions and Records Office.**

Deadline to drop without owing fees and/or be eligible for a refund **Saturday, September 1**

Deadline to drop course without it appearing on your transcript (without W) **Monday, September 3**

Deadline to drop full-term course **Saturday, November 10**

**IMPORTANT:** You must be an active participant in the course. If you do not turn in any assignments for two weeks without contacting the instructor, you may be dropped from the course.

<b>SCHEDULE OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>	
<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Introduction to Course, Orientation</b> Readings: Course Syllabus <b>SLO Survey: Civic Responsibility</b> Video: Freedom to Fascism
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>People, Politics, and Participation</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 1 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 1 Video: State of the Union Address <b>+++Research Proposal Due+++</b>
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>The Constitution</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 2 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 2 Video: Constitutional Foundations: Impeaching the President
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Federalism</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 3
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Civil Liberties</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 4
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>+++EXAM # 1 (Material cover on weeks 1-5)+++</b> <b>Civil Rights</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 5 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 7
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Political Socialization, Public Opinion</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapters 6 Video: Public Opinion and Socialization: Measuring Public Opinion <b>Political Issue Presentation</b>
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Political Socialization, Interest Groups</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapters 7 <b>Political Issue Presentation</b>

<b>SCHEDULE OF COURSE REQUIREMENTS</b>	
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Political Parties</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 8 Video: Political Parties: The National Convention
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>+++EXAM # 2 (material covered on weeks 6-9)+++</b> <b>Elections, Campaigns and Voting</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 9 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 3 <b>+++++Paper DUE+++++</b>
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>The Media</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 10  <b>American Blackout Video and Quiz</b>
<b>► Last Day to withdraw from the course with a “W” is 11-10-12 ◀</b>	
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Congress</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 11 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 4 <b>Political Issue Presentation</b>
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>The Presidency</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 12 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 5 Video: The Presidency: Presidential Style <b>Political Issue Presentations</b>
<b>Week 14</b>	<b>The Bureaucracy</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 13 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 8 <b>Political Issue Presentation</b>
<b>Week 15</b>	<b>The Judiciary</b> Readings: <u>Harrison</u> : Chapter 14 <u>Giventer</u> : Chapter 6 Video: The Judiciary: Appointments to the Bench
<b>Week 16</b>	<b>FINAL (all material covered from week 10 thru)!!</b> <b>SLO Survey: Civic Responsibility</b>

## Supreme Court Case/Political Issue Presentation Guidelines

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Students are to research a Supreme Court Case or political issue and prepare a presentation that will include the following requirements:

1. **Written Analysis:** Students are to research a political issue and prepare a 4-6 page written analysis, including a discussion of *at least* two differing opinions. Your paper must be typed, double-spaced, and include a bibliography with at least four college-level sources (a personal interview with a professional is encouraged). You must use APA style referencing format. Your paper should have the following sections:
  - a. **Introduction:** A discussion of the history of the issue and its current status. What are the controversial aspects of this issue?
  - b. **Comparison of Political Thought:** A discussion of the different political views regarding your issue (political parties, politicians, and special interest groups are a good source of information).
  - c. **Conclusion:** A summary of your research, ending with **your** opinion regarding the issue. What do you think is the best course of action for our government?
2. **Oral Presentation/Debate:** Students are to make an oral presentation of their research to the class. The presentation should be approximately 5-10 minutes in length. Visual aids are encouraged.

# **POLS 102: Supreme Court Case/Political Issue Grade Sheet**

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## I. Written Analysis (100 Points)

### a. Format:

- i. 4-6 pages: \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Typed, double-spaced: \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Bibliography: \_\_\_\_\_

### b. Introduction:

- i. History of Issue: \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Current Status: \_\_\_\_\_

### c. Comparison of Political Thought:

- i. Political Parties: \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Politicians: \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Interest Groups: \_\_\_\_\_
- iv. Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### d. Conclusion:

- i. Summary of Research: \_\_\_\_\_
  - ii. Student's Opinion: \_\_\_\_\_
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## II. Oral Presentation (50 points)

### a. Content:

- i. Introduction \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Political Comparison \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Conclusion \_\_\_\_\_

### b. Presentation Skills:

- i. Eye Contact \_\_\_\_\_
- ii. Use of note cards \_\_\_\_\_
- iii. Length \_\_\_\_\_

## III. Handout (EXTRA CREDIT up to 20 points)

- a. Content: \_\_\_\_\_
- b. Creativity: \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS, Fellow students evaluation:

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**POLS 102: Supreme Court Case/Political Issue Proposal  
Preliminary Research & Brainstorming**

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***Due Week # 2***  
*10 points*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I would do my presentation on: \_\_\_\_\_

Why this topic? What do you hope to learn?

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**Teacher's Comments:**

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**Presentation Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## **Extra Credit topics: Issues in Our Communities**

Casinos in your communities  
Health Care debate  
Dream Act  
School Drop outs vs. Cost to Society... what to do with them  
Censorship vs. Security... Where does it stop?  
Green Companies, Carbon Emissions Credit Laws  
Vehicle emissions, pollution vs. retrofitting  
Clothing options vs. decency laws  
Same Sex Marriage Laws  
First Amendment laws... speech, religion, etc  
Trans Fat Laws  
Cell Phone Laws  
Smoking Laws, no-smoking, advertising  
Nutrition Laws  
Fast Food Label Laws  
HPV Vaccine  
Pro-Choice vs. Pro-Life  
Euthanasia  
End of Life Issues  
Subprime lending  
Affordable housing  
Immigration Issues  
Assimilation English vs. Foreign Language  
Eminent Domain Issues, right of the individual vs. the community  
Economic Development in our communities, redevelopment agencies  
Landfills, e-waste, waste treatment facilities  
Medical marijuana  
Lowering Drinking Age  
Proposition 13 or 127  
Mello Roos, community development district  
Park and Recreation programs, Skate Park, Graffiti Laws  
Adult Book Store or Permits for specialty businesses  
Charter Schools, No Child Left Behind  
Affirmative Action,  
Separate but Equal

Internet Laws... Spam, Predators, 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment  
Big Box Stores vs. Independent Small Business  
Public Facilities vs. Elite members of society  
Salton Sea  
Border Crossing Issues, economic impact vs. security  
Government Assistance Programs  
Child Protection Agencies, Adult Protection Agencies  
Public Health Issues, does the government have the right to demand vaccinations  
Water Rights Issues  
Lining the All American Canal  
Government Assistance to Big Business vs. the private citizen  
Green energy