Political Science 1  
Governments of the United States and California

Class Information:
Political Science 1 - Section 2716
Room: SOCS 201
MW 9:30-10:55am
Office: SOCS 109

Prof. Joshua Casper
Office: SOCS 109
Email: jcasper@elcamino.edu
Office Hours: M/W 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. And by appointment

Supplemental Instruction:
Coach: Ahliyah Sanford
asanford01.si@gmail.com
Days of sessions: M
Time: 11:00-12:40pm
Location: SOCS 202
Professor Antoine's SI sessions with Ahliyah
Days of sessions: TTh
Time: 12:45-1:40pm
Location: SOCS 122

MindTap information sheet here
Course Key: MTPN-46RP-G2VR

Course Policies:

“It started with a bang. Ordinary citizens would govern themselves across a continent and over the centuries, under rules that the populace would ratify and could revise. By uniting previously independent states into a vast and indivisible nation, New World republicans would keep Old World monarchs at a distance and thus make democracy work on a scale never before dreamed possible.”

-Dr. Akhil Reed Amar, Professor of Law, Yale Law School.

Course Description:

Welcome to Political Science 1 – Governments of the United States and California! This course is designed to help you, the students, become more informed and active citizens by exploring the basics of the American and Californian political systems. This exploration includes an analysis of the formal institutions of the American government: the Constitution, Congress, the Presidency, and the Judiciary. Additionally, we will examine the underpinning theories, concepts, and functions of American politics such as federalism, civil liberties, civil rights, elections, political parties, interest groups, political socialization, and the role of the media in the political process. Additionally, as you are taking this course in the great state of California we will also compare and contrast the make up of the national government with the state government of California to allow you to see how each level of government functions.

Classroom Demeanor:

As James Madison, the Father of the U.S. Constitution, wrote in Federalist No. 51, “If all men were angels...” I would not need to write this, but we are imperfect and I need to write it. You may think that whispering to your neighbor, texting, playing on your computer, arriving late, packing up and leaving early, etc. will not be noticed by your classmates or the instructor, but you would be wrong. To make sure we have an enjoyable and successful class I ask the following:

- Arrive to class on time. If you arrive late, it is your responsibility to see me after class to let me know you arrived late. If you do not do this, you run
the risk of being marked as absent.

- Do not leave class until Prof. Casper has finished the lecture. (If you know that you will need to leave class early, please inform me before class and do your best to sit in the back of the room near the door so you do not distract your classmates.)
- Do not talk to your neighbor unless I say otherwise. Just a few people whispering can be very distracting to those around you.
- Laptops and tablets are not required for the course, but they are permitted. However, if you bring a laptop or tablet, I ask that you sit in the first two rows of the room and that you use it ONLY for taking notes. Going online or playing games is distracting for those who sit behind and around you.

Additionally, this is an American government class and we will discuss issues and topics that many of you may feel passionate about. I ask that you respect the views and opinions of your fellow classmates. Inasmuch as you are entitled to your opinions, they are entitled to their opinions.

**Course Objectives:**

Upon completing this course, you will be able to discuss the theories and functions of the American political system and have a greater understanding of the political processes and institutions within the government. Through our analyses of the Constitution and the three branches of government, you will be able to describe how each branch of government interacts with the other two when operating under a system of checks and balances. Moreover, you will have a greater understanding of federalism, civil liberties, civil rights, elections, political parties, interest groups, political socialization, and the role of the media in the political process. Ultimately, it is my goal to help each of you become more aware of your civic duties and rights as citizens living in the U.S., and instill in you a greater sense of political efficacy. Additionally, you will be able to:

1. Identify the theoretical foundations and the applications of the American political system.
2. Analyze major political institutions: the presidency, bureaucracy, Congress, Judiciary, elections, political parties, and interest groups.
3. Examine and assess the implementation of democracy, including the different perspectives of elitism, pluralism, and majoritarianism.
4. Evaluate the role of the mass media in the political process.
5. Identify and discuss political culture and the function of political socialization.
6. Compare and contrast the relationship of federal and state governmental systems and processes with emphasis on California.
7. Evaluate and analyze the interdependence of economics and politics.
8. Distinguish between civil rights and civil liberties and their evolution in American society.
9. Assess the federal and state judicial systems and their impact on public
policy.
10. Examine and discuss the process of public policy making in relation to international and domestic policy issues.
11. Assess the concept and implementation of citizenship.
12. Analyze issues of race, ethnicity, class, age, and gender as they relate to the distribution of power in the political process.

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. In a multiple-choice exam, students will demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of the United States Constitution including the Articles and Amendments, as well as those for the government of California.
2. In a multiple-choice or written essay test, students will demonstrate an understanding of how political parties and interest groups serve as channels for popular participation, and compare/contrast the techniques they use to do so.
3. In a written essay or multiple-choice exam, students will demonstrate an understanding of the various roles played by the President and California Governor, the political resources available to them to meet the expectations associated with those roles, and how those resources are limited.

Dropping the Course:
While I hope you all do well enough to remain in the class through the Final Exam, I understand that life happens and you may be faced with the decision of whether or not to drop the class. If you face this decision at some point in the semester, I ask two things:
1. You talk with me before you drop the class, as I will know how you are doing and can help you with that decision.
2. If you decide to drop the course, you have to drop it yourself, as I will not drop you from the class. If you stop attending class, but do not drop the class in MyECC, you will receive a final grade of “F.” The last day to drop the class is Friday, April 15, 2016.

Disabilities:
El Camino College is committed to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities upon the timely request by the student to the instructor. A student with a disability, who would like to request an academic accommodation, is responsible for identifying herself/himself to the instructor and to the Special Resources Center. To make arrangements for academic accommodations, contact the Special Resources Center. If you have a disability (learning, hearing, seeing, or otherwise) please let me know so I can provide you with the appropriate accommodations. The index card assignment I discuss earlier in the syllabus is a great place to do this.
Campus Safety:

The ECC Campus Police do their best to keep El Camino College a safe environment for all of us to learn. If, at anytime you are on campus and need their help, you can contact them by using the Police Blue Poles located throughout campus or by calling them at 310.660.3100. I urge you to save their number in your cell phone. Also, you should sign up to receive text messages from the ECCPD by texting “ECC” to 888777. This is ECCPD’s first method of informing you of any issues on campus.

Syllabus:

In addition to keeping up with your textbook reading, I strongly urge you to keep up with current political events. The following are some excellent online sources for you to check out.

- National Public Radio: [www.npr.org](http://www.npr.org)
- BBC: [www.bbc.com](http://www.bbc.com)

- The Los Angeles Times: [www.latimes.com](http://www.latimes.com)
- CNN: [www.cnn.com](http://www.cnn.com)
- Politico: [www.politico.com](http://www.politico.com)

- Al Jazeera America: [www.america.aljazeera.com](http://www.america.aljazeera.com)
- The Economist: [www.economist.com](http://www.economist.com)
- Slate: [www.slate.com](http://www.slate.com)

- Fox News: [www.foxnews.com](http://www.foxnews.com)
- The Huffington Post: [www.huffingtonpost.com](http://www.huffingtonpost.com)
- MSNBC: [www.msnbc.com](http://www.msnbc.com)

Class Participation:

You are expected to attend ALL class sessions and to demonstrate an understanding of the course material by participating in lectures, classroom activities, homework assignments, quizzes, and exams. Classroom participation and activities make up 5% of your final grade, which you cannot earn without attending the class. In addition to attending all of the class sessions, you are expected to show up to class ON TIME and to leave when I dismiss class. If you need to leave class early for whatever reason, please let me know before the start of class that day.

Exams and Quizzes:
This course has three multiple-choice exams. The first exam is on the Constitution and everything covered in chapters 1 and 2 of the textbook. The Midterm will cover all of the material after chapter 2 up through civil liberties and civil rights. Your final exam is not cumulative (you’re welcome) and will simply cover the post-midterm material through the end of the semester. You are responsible for bringing a Scantron 882-E form to each exam; I will not provide you with one. Scantrons can be purchased in the campus bookstore or in the supplies vending machine on the first floor of the library near the East Reading Room. Make up exams may be scheduled at the instructor’s discretion.

In addition to your three exams, there will be a weekly quiz to help you assess your knowledge of the material each week. These quizzes will also help me assess areas of difficulty for the class, so I know if I need to readdress a particular topic.

Homework:

At the beginning of each chapter you will be given a Chapter Reading Guide to help guide and focus your reading. I will explain how to properly do the Chapter Reading Guides when I assign the first one. You will want to make sure you do these assignments completely and correctly, as I will probably derive questions for the exams from these assignments.

You also have an assignment today. I am giving each of you a 3”x5” index card. On one side of the card I would like for you to paste an appropriate picture of yourself (a head shot will suffice). On the other side, I would like you to answer the following questions:

- Name
- Major
- Favorite Book/Favorite Movie
- A Fun Fact About You
- Anything else you need/want me to know.

Late work: You are allowed to submit your work up to one week after each assignment’s respective deadline; however, your score for the late assignment will be reduced by 10%.

Paper:

In addition to your homework assignments above, you will also have a final paper to write this semester. I will give you the prompt for the paper later in the semester.
Extra Credit:

You will have a number of extra credit opportunities throughout the semester. Now that we are in the midst of the 2016 Presidential Primaries, there are both Republican and Democratic debates that you can watch this semester. In order to get extra credit for a debate, you must watch the debate and write a one page, single-spaced summary of what happened. The summary should include questions asked and how the different candidates answered them; what you learned; and your thoughts on who “won” the debate and why you think that candidate “won.” These papers are due one week after the debate occurs. I will not accept them after that point.

You can also attend different museums in the Los Angeles area. We are so lucky to live where we do because we have so many museums to choose from! I will provide a list of museums that you can attend for extra credit. I encourage you to visit either, or both, the Nixon Presidential Library and Museum and the Reagan Presidential Library and Museum. In attending a museum, you must write a one page, single-spaced summary of what you saw and learned at the museum. Please attach either a picture of yourself at the museum or your ticket of admissions from that day to the paper.

Finally, you have an opportunity to receive extra credit on the Constitution and Midterm exams. I am a strong believer in helping you succeed while ensuring that you do so by learning the material. Therefore, after the first two exams, you are welcome to do Exam Rewrites for up to half of the credit lost per question (i.e., you may get up to 1 point for a 2 point question, 1.5 points for a 3 point question, etc.). In order to get credit, you must:

- Correctly identify the correct answer to each question you got wrong.
- Explain BOTH why your original answer is incorrect and why the correct answer is correct. Often you can explain both with the same explanation.
- NOT explain why you picked the wrong answer – you should only explain why that answer is incorrect, as discussed above.
- Type all answers and submit to me one week after the exams are handed back. I will not accept it after a week has passed.
- Turn in the original Scantron and exam back to me with your Exam Rewrites, but do NOT write on the Scantron or the exam itself, please.

Please note: Aside from the Exam Rewrites, you may only receive a maximum of 10 extra credit points for the entire semester. I will keep track of your extra credit assignments; so do not attempt to submit more than 10 points worth of extra credit, as it will not count.
Assignments:

**Grading Scale:**

- 90-100%        A (student demonstrates outstanding proficiency of course material)
- 80-89%          B (student demonstrates advanced proficiency of course material)
- 70-79%          C (student demonstrates proficiency of course material)
- 60-69%          D (student demonstrates partial proficiency of course material)
- < 60%             F (student demonstrates little to no proficiency of course material)

**Final Grade Breakdown:**

Constitution Exam                             20%
Midterm Exam                                   20%
Final Exam                                         20%
Quizzes                                               15%
Homework                                         10%
Paper                                                  10%
Class Participation/Assignments     5%

__________________________________________________
Total                                                   100%

**Engrade:**

At the end of each semester, you will receive a final grade through *MyECC*; however, if you would like to have access to your grade throughout the semester, I STRONGLY urge you to sign-up for Engrade at [www.engrade.com](http://www.engrade.com). This is a free and secure website where I will keep my grade book for this class. Through this website, you will be able to access: your up-to-date grade, the scores you have received on every assignments/exams as the semester progresses, prompts for different assignments, etc.

**Academic Dishonesty:**
There is a **zero-tolerance policy** toward cheating of any kind in this class. El Camino College’s policy on Academic Dishonesty, Board Policy 5500, states the following regarding cheating:

**I. DISHONESTY**

a. Cheating, plagiarism (including plagiarism in a student publication), or engaging in other academic dishonesty including but not limited to:

   i. Representing the words, ideas, or work of another as one’s own in any academic exercise including the use of commercial term paper companies or online sources for essays, term papers, or research papers, whether free or paid.

   ii. Copying from another student or former student or allowing another student to copy from one’s work.

   iii. Allowing another individual to assume one’s identity or assuming the identity of another individual.

   iv. Changing answers on a previously scored test, assignment, or experiment with the intent to defraud.

   v. Inventing data for the purpose of completing an assignment, a laboratory experiment, or case study analysis with the intent to defraud.

   vi. Obtaining or copying exams or test questions when prohibited by the instructor.

   vii. Giving or receiving information during an examination or test by any means such as sign language, hand signals or secret codes, or through the use of any electronic device.

   viii. Using aids such as notes, calculators, or electronic devices unless specifically authorized by the instructor.

   ix. Handing in the same paper or other assignment in more than one class when prohibited by the instructor.

   x. Any other action which is not an honest reflection of a student’s own academic work.

b. Other forms of dishonesty, including but not limited to forgery or attempted forgery of any academic record; alteration or misuse of college documents, records or identification; or knowingly furnishing false information to the District.

c. Unauthorized preparation, giving, selling, transfer, distribution, or publication for any commercial purpose, of any contemporaneous recording or an academic presentation in a classroom or equivalent site of instruction, including but not limited to handwritten or typewritten class notes, except
as permitted by any District policy or administrative procedure.

(Source: http://www.elcamino.edu/studentservices/activities/codeofconduct.asp)

Additionally, El Camino College’s Procedures for dealing with Academic Dishonesty, Administrative Procedures 5520, states:

**DISCIPLINARY ACTION**

Disciplinary action appropriate to the misconduct as defined in BP 5500 may be taken by an instructor (see items C-1 and 5 below), the Director of Student Development or his or her designee (see items C-1, 2, 3, 4, 6, and 7 below), and the Board of Trustees (see item C8 below).

**A. Consequences for Academic Dishonesty**

When an instructor has determined that there is evidence of dishonesty in any academic work, the student may receive a failing grade for that piece of work and disciplinary action may be pursued. Any or all of the following actions may be imposed:

1. The instructor may assign a failing grade (no credit) to an examination or assignment in which academic dishonesty occurred.
2. The instructor may remove the student from the class or activity for the day of the incident and one additional class day as stipulated in C.5 of this procedure.
3. The instructor may complete the appropriate reporting forms (Disciplinary Form C – Academic Dishonesty Report Form and/or Disciplinary Form B – Notice of Suspension from Class/Lab/Library) and submit them along with a copy of the evidence to the Director of Student Development or his or her designee. This information will be placed in the student file.
4. If there is evidence of serious or repeated violations of academic honesty, the college may pursue additional disciplinary action in accordance with the disciplinary measures outlined in this procedure.

(Source: http://www.elcamino.edu/studentservices/activities/codeofconduct.asp)

*Please do not cheat or plagiarize in any of your assignments. It is better for everyone if we remain honest in our work.*
Course Material:

**Textbook & Supplemental Readings:**


Online Resources: (list related websites as links)

- Los Angeles County Museum of Art
- The Getty Center