This course examines the American political system. Topics include an examination of the history, constitutional framework, institutions, and functions of the American and California political systems and the principles, processes and issues that affect them. Additionally, this course will discuss current issues, examine the decision-making process and how these decisions affect society. This course satisfies the CSU requirement on the Constitution of the United States and local government.
GE AND TRANSFER REQUIREMENTS MET:
IGETC Area 4: Social and Behavioral Sciences
   4H: Political Science, Government & Legal Institutions
CSU GE Area D: Social, Political, and Economic Institutions
   D8 - Political Science, Government, and Legal Institutions

PROGRAM LEVEL LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:

utilize appropriate investigative methods and appropriate technologies to access relevant research.

manage information and prepare and present their work effectively.

demonstrate critical thinking about political issues and evaluate theories’ and arguments’ major assertions, background assumptions, the evidence used to support assertions, and their explanatory value.

demonstrate knowledge of important findings, theories, and changing issues relevant to political science.

COURSE LEVEL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) Supported by this course:

1. Analyze the role of ideology, culture and diversity in promoting and mobilizing social movements and political interest groups.

2. Analyze the distribution of political power between the national government and the California state and local governments.

3. Identify the three branches of the national government and the constitutional powers with which each branch is endowed.

4. Examine the rights and liberties of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions.

5. Demonstrate critical thinking through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the course content relative to contemporary American political issues and present their work effectively.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify and evaluate political institutions and processes at the national, state and local levels.

2. Analyze the role of the American political culture, diversity and ideology in shaping public opinion.

3. Explain the founding and development of the U.S. Constitution.

4. Demonstrate knowledge of contemporary issues and operations in American government and politics.

5. Examine the rights and liberties of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions.

6. Describe California government and politics.

COURSE CONTENT:

LECTURE CONTENT:

A. Constitutional Democracy
   1. History of the American Political System
   2. The making of the US Constitution
   3. The political philosophies of the framers of the Constitution and critics of the Constitution
   4. The process of amending and interpreting the U.S. Constitution and California Constitution

B. American Political Culture and Ideology
   1. Public Opinion and the Media
2. Interest Groups and Political Parties
3. Voting and Elections
C. The rights and liberties of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions
D. Federalism
   1. The theory and practice of federalism
   2. The California State and Local Government
      a. Contemporary operations of California state and local political institutions
      b. Process of amending the California Constitution
      c. Political Culture in California
E. Contemporary operations of the U.S. political institutions and processes
   1. Congress
   2. The Presidency
   3. The Bureaucracy
   4. The Judiciary: Federal and State Court Systems
   5. Non-governmental institutions
F. Domestic Decision Making
G. American Foreign Policy

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

A. Lecture:
B. Online:
C. Hybrid:

INSTRUCTIONAL TECHNIQUES:

Lectures utilizing new technology
Interactive Discussions

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS:

Reading Assignments

Complete reading assignments in the assigned required text(s);
Complete required online reading assignments from a variety of scholarly websites and journals;
Complete reading of lectures (if applicable).

Out-of-class Assignments

Primary research including attendance at scholarly lectures;
Participation in discussions, presentations, debates;
Secondary research within scholarly journals, books, articles and online resources/databases.

Writing Assignments

College-level written essays or other projects (i.e. interactive assignments) in which students will summarize and analyze opposing viewpoints, their assumptions and arguments, ideological foundations, and strengths and weaknesses relevant to various American political issues.

College-level written term paper(s) in which students will utilize course content, appropriate investigative methods and technologies to examine key political issues and analyze potential solutions to political problems.

Written or oral presentation, discussion and/or debate of their findings and their own interpretation of factual information.
METHODS OF STUDENT EVALUATION:
Midterm Exam
Final Exam
Short Quizzes
Written Assignments
Essay Examinations
Objective Examinations
Projects (ind/group)
Oral Presentations

Demonstration of Critical Thinking:
Students will demonstrate critical thinking, reading and writing skills through analysis, synthesis and evaluation of course content.

Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration:
Written essays or other projects (i.e. interactive assignments, term paper) in which students will summarize and analyze opposing viewpoints, their assumptions and arguments, ideological foundations and strengths and weaknesses relevant to various American political issues.

Written or oral presentation, discussion and/or debate of their findings and their own interpretation of factual information.

TEXTS, READINGS, AND RESOURCES:
TextBooks:

Other:
1. Instructor's lectures, if applicable

LIBRARY:
Adequate library resources include: Non-Print Materials
Online Materials
Services
Comments:
Attachments:
  Attached Files