

### Basic Course Information

Semester:	<b>FALL</b>	Instructor Name:	<b>Steven Cauchon</b>
Course Title & #:	<b>POLS 102, American Government &amp; Politics</b>	Email:	<b>Steven.cauchon@imperial.edu</b>
CRN #:		Webpage (optional):	
Classroom:	<b>NA</b>	Office #:	<b>1713</b>
Class Dates:	<b>FALL</b>	Office Hours:	<b>MW, 1230-130PM</b>
Class Days:	<b>NA</b>	Office Phone #:	<b>760-355-6288</b>
Class Times:	<b>NA</b>	Emergency Contact:	
Units:	<b>3</b>		

### 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.(CSU, UC)*

### Course Prerequisite(s) and/or Corequisite(s)

N/A

### Student Learning Outcomes

- Develop an understanding of civic responsibility*
- Participate in activities that promote the public good (e.g. the voting process, jury duty, community service)*
- Examine the election and voting process*

### Course Objectives

- 1. The concept of federalism and how it has changed throughout American history.*
- 2. The significance of the Bill of Rights, and the continuing debate over civil liberties.*
- 3. The role of public opinion and the media in the American political system.*
- 4. The importance of the American political parties, lobbying, and interest groups.*
- 5. The American election process, including political campaigning and voter behavior.*

6. *The formal structure of the Congress and the committee system, the legislative process and congressional powers.*
7. *The principal powers of the presidency and how they expanded dramatically in the 20th century.*
8. *The American bureaucracy.*
9. *The American judicial system and how it is affected by critical issues in American society.*
10. *The organizational structure, powers, and challenges confronting California's state and local governments.*

### **Textbooks & Other Resources or Links**

*Glen Kurtz, American Government 2e: ISBN: 1-947172-66-2.*

### **Course Requirements and Instructional Methods**

**MIDTERM & FINAL (60%):** *Each exam may consist of multiple choice, fill in the blank, short answer, which that ask you to do more than simply memorize content. Exams take place within Canvas and each will be unique to you (i.e. students will not have the same exam). You will have 60 minutes to complete each exam, giving you about 60 seconds per question. However, since the exam is open book/note, your level of preparation is key. As these exams cover everything (readings, lectures, and discussion forums) up until that exam week (see our course syllabus for details), I suggest using the reading quizzes, lecture notes, and the review/critical thinking questions at the end of each chapter to prepare. The final exam will not be cumulative and will cover everything we have gone over since the midterm exam.*

**READING QUIZES (5%):** *Weekly reading quizzes will directly relate to the week's readings, lectures, and supplemental videos. All reading quizzes will open on the Monday before they are due and must be completed by the following Saturday at 11pm. Quizzes cannot be reopened once closed, so do not wait until the deadline! You will have the opportunity to make one missed quiz up at the end of the course, which will otherwise serve as extra credit.*

**DISCUSSION POSTS (15%):** *As members of a democratic society, it is important that we engage in deliberative exchanges. To help facilitate said exchanges, I will ask you to participate in weekly discussion via Canvas. Discussion forums will open the Monday of each new module—initial topic replies are due the following Wednesday at 11pm and peer replies are due the following Saturday at 11pm. I will ensure that our discussions are respectful, interactive, and enjoyable. Strict plagiarism standards will be used for these posts, so please be aware that you will need to show originality of thought. Discussion posts cannot be made up, so don't wait until the deadlines!*

**POLITICS & NEWS (P&N) (20%):** *A key component of genuine learning is applying course content to what is going on outside of our digital classroom. With this in mind, every other week (starting week #2), you will be responsible for writing a one-page reflection on how one of the previous week's key concept, topic, or idea relates to a news article published during the same two weeks (see below schedule or Canvas for due dates). You will have the opportunity to make one P&N up at the end of*

***the course, which will otherwise serve as extra credit. Please not you must submit this document as Word doc or PDF (Pages, Google Docs, and links cannot be accepted).***

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.

<b>Course Grading Based on Course Objectives</b>	
<b>Course Exams</b>	(60%)
<b>Discussion Posts</b>	(15%)
<b>Politics in the News</b>	(20%)
<b>Reading Quizzes</b>	(5%)

### **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**

- **Electronic Devices:** Cell phones and electronic devices must be turned off and put away during class, unless otherwise directed by the instructor.
- **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 by the instructor.
- **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, only students enrolled in the class may attend; children are not allowed.

### **Online Netiquette**

- What is netiquette? Netiquette is internet manners, online etiquette, and digital etiquette all rolled into one word. Basically, netiquette is a set of rules for behaving properly online.
- Students are to comply with the following rules of netiquette: (1) identify yourself, (2) include a subject line, (3) avoid sarcasm, (4) respect others' opinions and privacy, (5) acknowledge and return messages promptly, (6) copy with caution, (7) do not spam or junk mail, (8) be concise, (9) use appropriate language, (10) use appropriate emoticons (emotional icons) to help convey meaning, and (11) use appropriate intensifiers to help convey meaning [do not use ALL CAPS or multiple exclamation marks (!!!!)].

## Academic Honesty

Academic honesty in the advancement of knowledge requires that all students and instructors respect the integrity of one another's work and recognize the important of acknowledging and safeguarding intellectual property.

There are many different forms of academic dishonesty. The following kinds of honesty violations and their definitions are not meant to be exhaustive. Rather, they are intended to serve as examples of unacceptable academic conduct.

- 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 plagiarizing 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 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 Student Services

Imperial Valley College offers various services in support of student success. The following are some of the services available for students. Please speak to your instructor about additional services which may be available.

- **CANVAS LMS.** Canvas is Imperial Valley College's main Learning Management System. To log onto Canvas, use this link: [Canvas Student Login](#). The [Canvas Student Guides Site](#) provides a variety of support available to students 24 hours per day. Additionally, a 24/7 Canvas Support Hotline is available for students to use: 877-893-9853.
- **Learning Services.** There are several learning labs on campus to assist students through the use of computers and tutors. Please consult your [Campus Map](#) for the [Math Lab](#); [Reading, Writing & Language Labs](#); and the [Study Skills Center](#).

- **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 Programs 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. Please contact them 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 provide basic health services for students, such as first aid and care for minor illnesses. Contact the IVC [Student Health Center](#) at 760-355-6128 in Room 1536 for more information.
- **Mental Health Counseling Services.** Short-term individual, couples, family and group counseling services are available for currently enrolled students. Services are provided in a confidential, supportive, and culturally sensitive environment. Please contact the IVC Mental Health Counseling Services at 760-355-6310 or in the building 1536 for appointments or more information..

### **Veteran's Center**

The mission of the [IVC Military and Veteran Success Center](#) is to provide a holistic approach to serving military/veteran students on three key areas: 1) Academics, 2) Health and Wellness, and 3) Camaraderie; to serve as a central hub that connects military/veteran students, as well as their families, to campus and community resources. Their goal is to ensure a seamless transition from military to civilian life. The Center is located in Building 600 (Office 624), telephone 760-355-6141.

### **Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS)**

The Extended Opportunity Program and Services (EOPS) offers services such as priority registration, personal/academic counseling, tutoring, book vouchers, and community referrals to qualifying low-income students. EOPS is composed of a group of professionals ready to assist you with the resolution of both academic and personal issues. Our staff is set up to understand the problems of our culturally diverse population and strives to meet student needs that are as diverse as our student population.

Also under the umbrella of EOPS our CARE (Cooperative Agency Resources for Education) Program for single parents is specifically designed to provide support services and assist with the resolution of issues that are particular to this population. Students that are single parents receiving TANF/Cash Aid assistance may qualify for our CARE program, for additional information on CARE please contact Lourdes Mercado, 760-355- 6448, [lourdes.mercado@imperial.edu](mailto:lourdes.mercado@imperial.edu).

EOPS provides additional support and services that may identify with one of the following experiences:

- Current and former foster youth students that were in the foster care system at any point in their lives
- Students experiencing homelessness
- Formerly incarcerated students

To apply for EOPS and for additional information on EOPS services, please contact Alexis Ayala, 760-355-5713, [alexis.ayala@imperial.edu](mailto:alexis.ayala@imperial.edu).

### **Student Equity Program**

- The Student Equity Program strives to improve Imperial Valley College's success outcomes, particularly for students who have been historically underrepresented and underserved. The college identifies strategies to monitor and address equity issues, making efforts to mitigate any disproportionate impact on student success and achievement. Our institutional data provides insight surrounding student populations who historically, are not fully represented. Student Equity addresses disparities and/or disproportionate impact in student success across disaggregated student equity groups including gender, ethnicity, disability status, financial need, Veterans, foster youth, homelessness, and formerly incarcerated students. The Student Equity Program provides direct supportive services to empower students experiencing insecurities related to food, housing, transportation, textbooks, and shower access. We recognize that students who struggle meeting their basic needs are also at an academic and economic disadvantage, creating barriers to academic success and wellness. We strive to remove barriers that affect IVC students' access to education, degree and certificate completion, successful completion of developmental math and English courses, and the ability to transfer to a university. Contact: 760.355.5736 or 760.355.5733 Building 100.
- The Student Equity Program also houses IVC's Homeless Liaison, who provides direct services, campus, and community referrals to students experiencing homelessness as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act. Contact: 760.355.5736 Building 100.

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities**

Students have the right to experience a positive learning environment and to due process of law. For more information regarding student rights and responsibilities, please refer to the IVC [General Catalog](#).

## Information Literacy

Imperial Valley College is dedicated to helping students skillfully discover, evaluate, and use information from all sources. The IVC [Library Department](#) provides numerous [Information Literacy Tutorials](#) to assist students in this endeavor.

## Anticipated Class Schedule/Calendar

WEEK #	TOPIC & LEARNING OBJECTIVES	READING	ASSIGNMENT
<b>Week #1</b> 8/17	<b>What is Politics &amp; Why Does it Matter?</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain what government is and what it does/ought do</li> <li>2. Discuss source and solutions to collective action problems &amp; conflict</li> <li>3. Describe American political culture &amp; the power of ideas, narratives, and authority</li> <li>4. Discuss the is/ought distinction &amp; apply it to American inequality</li> </ol>	Syllabus  <i>American Government</i> , pp. 1-34	<b>Submit initial post to Discussion post # 1 by 11 pm Weds. to avoid being dropped</b>  <b>Get 10/10 on syllabus quiz to open next module</b>
<b>Week #2</b> 8/24	<b>The Constitution &amp; Its Origins: How Should We Think about the Framers &amp; the Constitution?</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain what the Articles of Confederation did and failed to do.</li> <li>2. Identify the goals, divisions, and compromises that shaped the Constitution.</li> <li>3. Draw inferences from Dahl's account &amp; apply them to how we should think about the Constitution</li> <li>4. Identify the Constitution's democratic shortcomings.</li> </ol>	<i>American Government</i> , pp. 35-68  Dahl, <i>How Democratic is the American Constitution</i> , Ch. 1 & 2	<b>Discussion #2 Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b>  <b>Reading Quiz #2 Sat by 11 pm</b>  <b>P&amp;N #1 Due Sat by 11 pm</b>
<b>Week #3</b> 8/31	<b>American Federalism &amp; Immigration</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify the foundations of American federalism &amp; the ways in which it divides power between national and state governments.</li> </ol>	<i>American Government</i> , pp. 69-106 Ramakrishnan & Gulasekaram, "Understanding	<b>Discussion #3 Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b>  <b>Reading Quiz #3 Sat by 11 pm</b>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Describe the historical expansion of federalism &amp; the ways in which the national government can influence the states.</li> <li>3. Explain historical trends in immigration at the state &amp; federal level.</li> <li>4. Analyze the restrictive &amp; integrative approaches used by states &amp; local governments.</li> </ol>	Immigration Federalism”	
<p><b>Week #4</b> 9/7</p>	<p><b>Fundamental Liberties</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain how the Bill of Rights relates to the federal government and to the states.</li> <li>2. Describe how the First Amendment protects both church and state, as well as individuals’ religious freedom.</li> <li>3. Show how the protections of freedom of speech and of the press have been tested.</li> <li>4. Discuss the extent of an individual’s right to privacy and compare the idea civil obligations.</li> <li>5. Explore how the “secret history of guns” in the US might complicate our understanding of Second Amendment rights.</li> <li>6. Discuss the Second Amendment &amp; the controversy surrounding its interpretation.</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 107-152</p> <p>Winkler, “The Secret History of Guns”</p>	<p><b>Discussion #4</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #4 Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>P&amp;N #2 Due Sat by 11 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Week #5</b> 9/14</p>	<p><b>Public Opinion</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze how well American citizens measure up to notions of an “ideal democratic citizen”</li> <li>2. Describe the principle-agent problem in American politics</li> <li>3. Discuss how Americans become politically socialized</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 199-240</p>	<p><b>Discussion #5</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #5 Sat by 11 pm</b></p>

	<p>4. Describe &amp; evaluate different techniques used to gauge public opinion.</p>		
<p><b>Week #6</b> 9/21</p>	<p><b>The Struggle for Equal Rights</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Summarize key events and outcomes in the struggle for equality of African Americans.</li> <li>2. Outline the criteria used by the courts to determine if and when the law can treat people differently.</li> <li>3. Identify tools used by citizens to expand the promise of civil rights.</li> <li>4. Explain the different paths to equality taken by other gender, racial, &amp; marginalized groups</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 153-198</p>	<p><b>Discussion #6</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #6</b> Sat by 11 pm</p> <p><b>P&amp;N #3</b> Due Sat by 11 pm</p>
<p><b>Week #7</b> 9/28</p>	<p><b>Congress</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the tensions between local representation and national lawmaking.</li> <li>2. Explain how checks and balances work between the Congress and the executive and judicial branches.</li> <li>3. Discuss the relationship between the people and Congress.</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 403-444</p>	<p><b>Discussion #7</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #7</b> Sat by 11 pm</p>
<p><b>Week #8</b> 10/5</p>	<p><b>***MIDTERM***</b></p>		<p><b>Sunday by 11 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Week #9</b> 10/12</p>	<p><b>The Executive &amp; the Bureaucracy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Compare the modern presidency with the founders’ expectations for a limited executive.</li> <li>2. Identify strategies and tools presidents employ to overcome the constitutional limitations of the office.</li> <li>3. Describe the organization and functions of the executive office.</li> <li>4. Explain the characteristics of what the federal bureaucracy is and does</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 445-484 &amp; pp. 557-588</p>	<p><b>Discussion #8</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #8</b> Sat by 11 pm</p> <p><b>P&amp;N #4</b> Due Sat by 11 pm</p>

	<p>5. Compare the spoils &amp; civil service system &amp; discuss the attempts to privatize or eliminate parts of the bureaucracy</p>		
<p><b>Week #10</b> 10/19</p>	<p><b>The Courts</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Evaluate Hamilton’s claim that the judiciary was the “least dangerous branch of government” in light of the power it wields.</li> <li>2. Outline the institutional rules and political influences that shape the Supreme Court</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 485-520</p>	<p><b>Discussion #9</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #9</b> <b>Sat by 11 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Week #11</b> 10/26</p>	<p><b>Media &amp; Power</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explain the roles and responsibilities of journalists.</li> <li>2. Describe the link between media and politics.</li> <li>3. Discuss the relationship between citizens and the media.</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 287- 326</p>	<p><b>Discussion #10</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #10</b> <b>Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>P&amp;N #5</b> <b>Due Sat by 11 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Week #12</b> 11/2</p>	<p><b>Voting and Elections</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Analyze the reasons why Americans vote—or don’t vote.</li> <li>2. Summarize the importance of elections for citizens.</li> <li>3. Discuss dark money, PACS &amp; assess their potential influence in democratic politics.</li> <li>4. Explain the Electoral College, how it came to be, and its critics</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 241-284</p> <p>Gerken, “The Real Problem With Citizens United”</p>	<p><b>Discussion #11</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #11</b> <b>Sat by 11 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Week #13</b> 11/9</p>	<p><b>Political Parties &amp; Interest Groups</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe political parties and what they do</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 327- 402</p>	<p><b>Discussion #12</b> <b>Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline the evolution of the party system in the United States.</li> <li>Describe how interest groups use lobbying activities to get the public policy they want.</li> <li>Compare public and private interest groups</li> </ol>		<p><b>Reading Quiz #12 Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>P&amp;N #6 Due Sat by 11 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Week #14</b> 11/16</p>	<p><b>Domestic &amp; Foreign Policy</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explain what policy is, who makes it, and how it is made.</li> <li>Identify government policy programs that attempt to improve citizens' lives.</li> <li>Identify the basic goals and types of foreign policy.</li> <li>Describe ways in which policy making reflects public opinion.</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 589-658</p>	<p><b>Discussion #13 Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #13 Sat by 11 pm</b></p>
<p><b>Week #15</b> 11/23</p>	<p><b>***BREAK***</b></p>		
<p><b>Week #16</b> 11/30</p>	<p><b>California State &amp; Local Govt.</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Outline the unique features of California's state &amp; local government</li> <li>Discuss how one can have an impact on state &amp; local politics</li> <li>Review the unique history of California through the lens of Governor Pat Brown</li> <li>Examine the impact that water, infrastructure, and social movements had had on California politics</li> </ol>	<p><i>American Government</i>, pp. 521-556</p> <p>Watch Entire Video Via Canvas</p>	<p><b>Discussion #14 Wed/Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>Reading Quiz #14 Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>P&amp;N #7 Due Sat by 11 pm</b></p> <p><b>California State of Mind Extra Credit quiz Sat by 11</b></p>
<p><b>Week #17</b> 12/7</p>	<p><b>***Final Exam***</b></p>		<p><b>Sun by 11pm</b></p> <p><b>Extra Credit P&amp;N Due Sat by 11 pm</b></p>

--	--	--	--

**\*\*\*Tentative, subject to change without prior notice\*\*\***