American Government 2305- 91412   Dr. Raymond Sandoval

Fall  Semester 2015

Richland College

3 credit hours   Office: Wichita 280

LEAD Division   Telephone: 9722386265

Crockett 243   please use email as it is easiest to reach me

Email: rsandoval@dccc.edu

Course Description:

This course provides an overview of American government including American political culture, institutions, economy, thought and structure. We approach American Politics through examining the many faces of cultures and the reflection of those cultures in our basic political values and `understandings as seen today and in the past as well as in current and past issues. We also discuss the institutions, structure and processes that are part of the American governmental process. This course is designed to be an introduction course that provides a connection to and basic understanding of all of the varied aspects of American Politics. as experienced or known by you.

We start with some basic ideas of your daily life and a few current issues and questions and then explore their foundation in cultures and past events, social processes, political structures, institutions and ideas.

Topics of the course include the immigration to the U.S., immigrant cultures and the development of the dominant political culture, origin and development of constitutional democracy (United States , federalism and intergovernmental relations, civil rights and civil liberties, the nature of our
institutions such as the supreme court, the president, congress and legislative functions, governmental relations, political parties, politics, and political behavior. We also cover current events and topics relevant to the course. (To ensure transferability, students should plan to take both Government 2305 and 2306 within the DCCCD.).

The course relies on a multi media approach and depending on the venue and availability, may include web sites and links, reference to short video clips, film clips, and when possible full length movies, music, outlines, power points and readings. Some elements are dictated by the length and nature of the class.

**Reading the textbook and other assigned readings is extremely important** and you cannot be successful in this course by not reading the material or procrastinating and “cramming” the night before an exam. You must read in a **TIMELY** manner (as the course goes along not at the last minute)

That means that you need to start to read the textbook immediately and you need to participate in all online activities.

I will attempt to respond to emails within a few hours or even sooner although there may be times when this is not possible. It may take a day or two sometimes.

I want you to be successful and will try to work with you and assist you. If you need help, please contact me.

**Course Objectives:**

To provide a foundation for understanding American politics and government at all levels including where relevant state and local politics. To connect an understanding of American politics to the students personal experience. To provide critical thinking and problem solving skills.
Compliance with Core Curriculum Guidelines:

This Government 2305 or 2306 Course develops the following Core Curriculum Intellectual Competencies:

1 - **READING:** the ability to analyze and interpret a variety of printed materials - books, documents, and articles - above 12th grade level.

2 - **WRITING:** the ability to produce clear, correct and coherent prose adapted to purpose, occasion and audience - above 12th grade level.

3 - **CRITICAL THINKING:** think and analyze at a critical level.

4 - **COMPUTER LITERACY:** understand our technological society, use computer based technology in communication, solving problems, acquiring information.

This course also addresses the following Core Curriculum Educational Objectives:

1 – **To comprehend** the origins and evolution of the U.S. political system, with a focus on the growth of political institutions including the constitutions of the U.S., federalism, civil liberties, and civil and human rights.

2 – **To understand** the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the world.

3 – **To recognize** and assume one’s responsibility as a citizen in a democratic society by learning to think for oneself, by engaging in public discourse, and by obtaining information through the news media and other appropriate information sources about politics and public policy.

4 – **To analyze**, critically assess, and develop creative solutions to public policy problems.

5 – **To identify** and understand differences and commonalities within diverse cultures.
6 – To understand and analyze the effects of historical, social, political, economic, cultural, and global forces on the areas of politics under study.

7 – To develop and communicate alternative explanations or solutions for contemporary social issues.

**Developing Learning Power**

This class uses ideas from Developing Learning Power paradigms modified for you and part of Richland College’s Learning to Learn: Developing Learning Power Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) in which your professor uses specific Thinking Routines to help you develop your learning power, become an even more engaged, successful learner, and master course content. Participating in Thinking Routines provides you a greater understanding of how you best learn and offers you techniques to boost your capacity to change and learn through effort and the intentional practice of thinking. Developing Learning Power shapes an exceptional learning experience, helps you advance in your academic career, and fosters traits in you of an effective lifelong learner. At the end of the course, you MAY be asked to reflect on your experience through an assignment about how you have changed as a learner.
Texts:


by Karen O'Connor and Larry J. Sabato, and Alixandra B. Yanus, High Point University


We will probably NOT use the REVEL software included with the book.

Extra Credit: Amistad –movie- must be prior approved by instructor

Emergencies

In case of emergencies or ecampus outages or ecampus is not accessible, please email me at the back up email address raymondsandoval@msn.com. But use this only in the case of emergencies. Your being bumped off a test or missing a test is not such an emergency unless ecampus is down or campus email is down,

Assessments

1. Tests: We will have four (4) tests during the course of this course. All tests are multiple-choice, completion have short answer components and there may be essays. The test points (value) may vary with each test. The final exam is usually worth considerably more than other tests. Tests are delivered online.
Tests are open for only the days posted (SEE assignments tab at ecampus) and must be taken on the days and by the times posted. Days open will vary by the test, but the tests must be taken and responses recorded by 9:00 p.m. (except the final which has an earlier time). There are usually no make-up tests. The tests are timed tests with the time varying with the test. The time allotted is designed in part to provide more than sufficient time to complete the tests and yet prevent to a degree use of external sources. Use of external sources (books, web sites) is forbidden. You cannot exceed the time provided. You must never Print, Copy or Save a test. You must move quickly through a test and never hit a back button but move forward. You will get locked out of a test if you have inactivity or click back buttons, etc. I will then have to reset the test and you may lose time. You click your way through a test but you cannot leave a test or have inactivity as ecampus assumes you are finished and logs you off. If you are logged off, then you must notify me immediately and stay logged on to ecampus and wait until I re set the test and start taking again. You must not log off and wait until another day or hours later to re take. You are expected to re take it as soon as possible. You should take the test early and not wait until the last minute or time to take the test as I am not always available if something should occur. I will try to get back to you very soon but it MAY take 1-2 hours. When the test time period expires you can no longer re take or take the test. This is true no matter what occurs. That is why it is advisable for you to take the test early and not last minute.

All test dates and times will be posted online under assignments tab. CHECK THE ECAMPUS ANNOUNCEMENTS PAGE and ASSIGNMENTS SCHEDULE TABS FOR CHANGES!!

2. Discussion Forums; You also must respond at least 2 times to each of the discussion forums. You MUST respond visibly and not by uploading a document – you copy and paste that document but do not upload for others to download. That (the upload of a document) will not be accepted as a post. The purpose of the boards is to generate discussions with your fellow students and to develop critical thinking skills.
about subjects related to our course material and not have a dialog with me. The board narratives are intentionally developed to generate discussions and points of view. But you must conduct research from quality, scholarly sources and then form a thesis to present. You must respond 2 times to each of the discussion forums and those responses to each board must be spaced out at least by a day (24 hours) between responses.

The first post is an original post and the 2nd post (at least a day later) is a reply to a fellow student. This is a minimum. Obviously more QUALITY posts is usually better.

That means you cannot post 2 times in one day to any one board to fulfil your posting requirements but you must come back to the same board at least a second day (24 hours later) You can always respond or post more than 2 times to each board but the minimum I expect for each board topic is 2 responses and 2 of these responses must be a day apart.

I suggest you do much more as the minimum is exactly that -a minimum and will usually receive minimum points. You are expected to post an idea (original thought) with references and research (research is valuable as I want more than just opinions but logic and sources to back up your opinions) and then reply to another student’s post (thus 2 posts) . Opinions are not enough-you must cite evidence and have logical arguments to bolster your opinions. You may use personal or family examples but I want you to reach beyond your personal experiences. After your original post you then respond to other student’s ideas.

You must respond to any discussion forums that are required as soon as they are assigned and before the start day of the next test (but I fully expect that you will post well before the test dates). For example, the first 2 forums, which are posted, require your response now and before the 1st test (so you must finish posting by midnight of the day before the first test period). That means you must post by midnight to EACH of those two forums 2 times by the day before the start of Test 1. The first posts must occur soon (all 1st posts must occur well before the due date and the date for 1st posts to boards is listed under assignments schedule at ecampus).
I really want dialogs with each other so you need to post now. There may be other forums added at any time. You must respond thoughtfully and present logical arguments and also *politely*. You must never disparage another class member in your posts or attack them personally. You are graded on the content of your posts and following protocol in number (2) and *when* you posted. You have to post on time. It does little good to post on the last day before a test as that does not facilitate dialogue and it is not acceptable to post after a due date for few if any students will look at your posts and you receive no points for late posting. I would advise posting at least 5-9 sentences per post and using other research or sources in your posts. I want carefully thought arguments not “what a great idea” or “I agree”. I want you to reach beyond your personal experiences (although they are a starting point) and expand your ideas.

Forums 1-2 are graded and the grades visible for you to see and discuss. However boards 3 onwards are often graded last and their individual grades are not visible and are rolled into the final total score at the end of the class.

You are also provided a model board under announcements after the first 2 boards deadline to assist you in quality posting.

3. Amistad movie: You may be granted permission to find and view the movie, Amistad FOR EXTRA CREDIT *IF PERMISSION IS GRANTED*. This movie is readily available at HULU, Amazon, Netflix as well as other online sites. Permission is usually granted if you have competed all assignments including the first tests and boards as required and the completion of those assignments is of sufficient quality. You must also request permission very soon after the deadline for the first test (1-2 days).

Questions regarding the movie will be posted under assessments/tests. You must respond to these questions by sending me your response by email as an attachment. Please follow the directions for those responses.
Of particular importance is the naming of the attached document and the heading in the subject line of your email.

**Format for Email, Documents:** There is a strict format for email and documents. You must always put in the subject line of all emails yourname-2305-81462-amistad. I have several classes and this allows me to know who you are, what class you are in, and what you are requesting. The same type of format is used when you save documents or and send me your attachment). Yourname -2305-81462-subject (for example rsmith-2305-81462-bio). That means you must save the file with this name BEFORE you upload it. DO NOT USE 9000 numbers. Try to send any documents in rtf format not word and do not use html extensions

**Grading Scale:**

The grading scale for the course unless otherwise adjusted is as follows: Exact [points vary as we add or reduce assignments.

90-100% =A
78-89.99% = B
68-77.99% = C
60-67.99% = D
59.99%-below =F

The exact points will be calculated later and this syllabus revised once the points allotted for other assignments such as movies and boards are finally tabulated. This course is being revised so the total points will be established later..

You can determine your grade at any time by looking at your total points and dividing by the number possible at that time. That gives you a percentage and that generally is your grade.

For example if you have 182 points after 2 tests (and the first 2 tests are worth 220), you divide 182 by 220 = 82 or a middle B.
If you have questions at any time of what is your overall grade, you may email me except during the last five days of class (before finals week or day). I will provide you as much information as possible.

**Make up tests are provided only for extraordinary reasons.** If you fail to take a test, then you may be provided an opportunity to take a make up test. You must not miss the final exam for any reason. There is no make up test for the final exam for any reason.

**Success Keys**

Read the text book as suggested and at the time assigned. This is very important, as reading is essential to your understanding of course material. If you are not used to reading, now is the time to start reading more. It is very important to read the material when it is assigned. This is particularly true for online courses which depend on reading and writing to a greater extent.

Use any extra material that may be available for the course under course documents and posted in other folders. There may be none posted.

Try reading a few pages (3-4) and then close the book and write down three or four points that you just read in outline form. Then read the next 3-4 pages, etc. This will take time but is a good way to take notes and retain material.

Please see me, email or call me if you have questions. I am available to help you in any way possible. If you do not understand material, please contact me. I will help. YOU MUST CHECK YOUR EMAIL ADDRESSES AT BOTH ECAMPUS AND ECONNECT. I email using both sources to all students and if your address is not correct you will not receive important emails concerning the course.

**Documents**

Keep all your emails, papers and tests if you have copies in case they are lost.

Follow the format (yourname-2305-81462-name of document) for naming documents that you send me.
## Institutional Policies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Stop Before You Drop</strong></th>
<th>For students who enrolled in college level courses for the first time in the fall of 2007, Texas Education Code 51.907 limits the number of courses a student may drop. You may drop no more than 6 courses during your entire undergraduate career unless the drop qualifies as an exception. Your campus counseling/advising center will give you more information on the allowable exceptions. Remember that once you have accumulated 6 non-exempt drops, you cannot drop any other courses with a “W”. Therefore, please exercise caution when dropping courses in any Texas public institution of higher learning, including all seven of the Dallas County Community Colleges. For more information, you may access <a href="https://www1.dcccd.edu/6drop">https://www1.dcccd.edu/6drop</a></th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Withdrawal Policy</strong></td>
<td>If you are unable to complete this course, it is your responsibility to withdraw formally. The withdrawal request must be received in the Registrar’s Office by (instructor inserts semester’s drop date here). Failure to do so will result in your receiving a performance grade, usually an “F.” If you drop a class or withdraw from the college before the official drop/withdrawal deadline, you will receive a “W” (Withdraw) in each class dropped. For more information about drop deadlines, refer to the current printed Credit Class Schedule, contact the Admissions/Student Records office at 972-238-6100 or 6101 (Thunderduck Hall, T170), or contact the division office.</td>
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<td><strong>6Drop</strong></td>
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<td>Repeating a Course</td>
<td>Effective for Fall Semester 2005, the Dallas County Community Colleges will charge additional tuition to students registering the third or subsequent time for a course. All third and subsequent attempts of the majority of credit and Continuing Education/Workforce Training courses will result in additional tuition to be charged. Developmental Studies and some other courses will not be charged a higher tuition rate. Third attempts include courses taken at any of the Dallas County Community Colleges since the Fall 2002 Semester. <strong>See Third Attempt to Enroll in a Course at</strong> <a href="http://www.dcccd.edu/thirdcourseattempt/">http://www.dcccd.edu/thirdcourseattempt/</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Aid</td>
<td>If you are receiving any form of financial aid, you should check with the Financial Aid Office prior to withdrawing from classes. Withdrawals may affect your eligibility to receive further aid and could cause you to be in a position of repayment for the current semester. Students who fail to attend or participate after the drop date are also subject to this policy.</td>
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| Academic Honesty | Scholastic dishonesty is a violation of the Code of Student Conduct. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating on a test, plagiarism, and collusion.  

As a college student, you are considered a responsible adult. Your enrollment indicates acceptance of the DCCCD Code of Student Conduct [published in the DCCCD Catalog at](http://www1.dcccd.edu/cat0506/ss/code.cfm) (Select Purpose) |
| **ADA Statement** | If you are a student with a disability and/or special needs who requires accommodations, please contact the college Disability Services Office at 972-238-6180 (Voice/TTY), visit Thunderduck Hall, suite T120, or go to http://www.dcccd.edu/Current+Students/Student+Services/Disability+Services/  

(CTRL + Click to access “Current Students” site to “Student Services” to “Disability Services”) |
| **Religious Holidays** | Absences for observance of a religious holy day are excused. A student whose absence is excused to observe a religious holy day is allowed to contract with the instructor to take a make-up examination or complete an assignment within a reasonable time after the absence. |
| **Campus Emergency Operation Plan** | Richland College and the Dallas County Community College District have developed policies and procedures for dealing with emergencies that may occur on campus.  

To familiarize yourself with these procedures, please take time to watch the overview video:  
http://video.dcccd.edu/rtv/DO/emergency_dcccd.wmv  

The complete Emergency Operations Plan can be viewed and printed at the following website:  
http://www.rlc.dcccd.edu/emergency  

If you have questions or concerns, please contact the Richland College Office of Emergency Management. This office can be reached by phone (972/238-3794) or by e-mail (rlcoem@dcccd.edu). |
### Academic Progress

Students are encouraged to discuss academic goals and degree completion with their instructors. Specific advising is available throughout the semester. Check **Step 6 - Advisement and Registration at** [www.richlandcollege.edu/admissions/process.php](http://www.richlandcollege.edu/admissions/process.php) for more details.

### Richland College's Quality Enhancement Plan ~ Learning to Learn: Developing Learning Power

Richland College is piloting its Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) in select classes. The QEP provides techniques, practices, and tools to help students develop the habits, traits or behaviors needed to be effective and successful lifelong learners in college and in life. For more information, please log onto [http://www.richlandcollege.edu/qep2013/](http://www.richlandcollege.edu/qep2013/).

### Withdrawal/Drop Deadlines

- **Last day to drop with a "W is December 11**

The instructor reserves the right to amend this syllabus as necessary.
COURSE OUTLINE

Not all topics are covered in all courses but this a topic listing Always subject to change!

1: Introduction to Politics: Why Important, What we think we know,
   How Politics is reflected and reflects everything we believe
   AND THINK AND ACT, KEYS TO SUCCESS, POLITICAL CULTURE

2: Our first immigrants: Why people immigrate and their impact;
   The values we share and The American Political Culture and
   Value System: (What makes Americans as a people); Our Constitution is a reflection
   of the assumptions of that group that created the Constitution. The nature of man
   and why we are focused on the allocation and distribution of power

3. The Rule of Law and Federalism:
   The Division of Power between state and national and joint power. How we resolve
   the issue of creating a strong national government while maintaining the character
   and power of states

4. Our unique election system- winner take all politics

5. Civil Rights and Civil Liberties- individual rights and the protection of group interests
   and identity

6. The American Political Institutions- purposes and impact

7. American Foreign Pollicy- The Big driver of the 20th and 21st centuries

8. American Welfare Policy –too little to succeed
9. Final Note on the American Economy - times are changing - technology and the generations gap