

POSC 1201 Spring 2015
Monday/Wednesday 12-2 Music - Rm. 2605

Instructor: Crystallee Crain

Office: MI 4093 Office Hour: MONDAY 2-3 p.m.

E-Mail: crystallee.crain@gmail.com

Class blog: www.professorcrain.org

Course Description:

A survey course, providing students with a full understanding of how American political institutions operate: their history, structure, evolution, current status, and prospects for the future.

Among the areas studied are: Elites and Organized Interests; Congress; The Presidency; Courts and the Justice System; State and Community Systems; Global, Military, and Foreign Policy Issues.

Learning Outcomes:

Students will acquire a full understanding of how governments function in the United States, especially on the Federal level. This includes historical and structural elements, evolution of institutions, and variations in institutional power.

Students will be able to appreciate fully major current elements in government on issues of contemporary importance. Concentration on precedents and historical contexts in analyzing contemporary developments.

Students will be able to evaluate the interplay of personality, politics, and principle in the formation and implementation of governmental policy.

Textbook (Required)

1 - Crain, C. A People's Primer: Exploration of Government & Social Change. Course Manual. (purchase online)

2 - Zinn, H. A People's History of the United States (free online -hyperlinked in the syllabus)

Optional Readings:

- thenation.com
- nytimes.com
- washingtonpost.com
- realclearpolitics.com
- democracynow.org

Class Rules

Classes begin and end on time.

Lateness or early departure must be arranged with instructor.

Unauthorized absences result in half a grade point deduction.

No use of laptops, cellphones, i-pods etc. during class. No texting. (For emergency notification authorization, see instructor.)

Grades

- 4 Short Essays (25 points each) 100
- 10 weekly Blog Discussions (10 points each) 100
- Midterm Assignment (75 points) 75
- Final (100 points) 100

TOTAL 375

Note: If you do not attend class regularly you will be docked 5 points per week that you are not in class. Attendance will be taken every Tuesday when we meet in person.

Plagiarism:

It is the policy of the CSU in general and the Political Science department in particular to treat plagiarism as a very serious violation.

For a full discussion, please see the department's posted statement. All quotations and citations in responding to assignments should be attributed fully. If you have questions, please consult instructor.

Instructor's Leadership Obligations

Dr Crain is a *Commissioner* for the Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission (Alameda County). There are meetings/events that happen on Wednesdays. We will not have class on those days. These dates are noted in the class schedule.

- April 1, April 8, April 20, May 13, June 10

Students are required to attend at least one “field trip” for class. See options below. If you do not attend an event during the term you will be docked 25 points at the end of the term. NOTE: You can propose alternative events via email or in person before or after class.

Week by Week Reading/Subjects of Class/Themes

(NOTE: As current political events dictate, there may be modifications of subject emphasis some weeks.)

Unit 1: Consent

Week 1

Monday March 30

Introduction to Course Objective, Course Themes, Assignment, Review Blog

Wednesday April 1 (instructor out)

Read

1. [Columbus, The Indians, and Human Progress](#)
2. [Drawing the Color Line](#)

Blog #1

Week 2

Monday April 6

Read:

APP - Introduction

Wednesday April 8 (instructor out)

Read:

APP - Chapter 2, Chapter 3

Blog #2

Week 3

Monday April 13

Read:

3. [Persons of Mean and Vile Condition](#)
4. [Tyranny is Tyranny](#)
5. [A Kind of Revolution](#)

Film in class - The End of America

Wednesday April 15

Blog #3

Short Essay #1

Read:

APP - Chapter 4, Chapter 5

Unit 2: Dissent

Week 4

Monday April 20 (instructor out)

Read:

APP - Chapter 6

Wednesday April 22

Blog #4

Power Article - on class blog

Week 5

Monday April 27

Film in class - Black Power Mixtape

Wednesday April 29

Blog #5

Short Essay #2

Week 6

Monday May 4

Read:

APP - Chapter 7

Wednesday May 6

Blog #6

Read:

14. [War Is the Health of the State](#)

Week 7

Monday May 11

Midterm Assignment Due (assignment sheet given week 3)

Wednesday May 13 (instructor out)

Blog #7

Read:

18. [The Impossible Victory: Vietnam](#)

19. [Surprises](#)

20. [The Seventies: Under Control?](#)

Unit 3: Systems

Week 8

Monday May 18

Read:

APP - Chapter 8

Wednesday May 20

Blog #8

Read:

APP - Chapter 9, Chapter 10

21. [Carter-Reagan-Bush: The Bipartisan Consensus](#)

Short Essay #3

Week 9

Monday May 25 - Holiday (no class)

Read:

23. [The Clinton Presidency and the Crisis of Democracy](#)

24. [The Coming Revolt of the Guards](#)

25. [The 2000 Election and the "War on Terrorism"](#)

Wednesday May 27

Blog #9

Unit 4: People Power

Week 10

Monday June 1

Blog #10

Read:

APP - Chapter 11

Short Essay #4

Wednesday June 3

Film in Class - Weather Underground

Week 11

Monday June 8 FINAL PAPERS DUE 10 p.m. on blackboard.