Welcome to Political Science 202:

American Government and Politics

Summer 2017

CRN 50400 and 50620 and 50945

Welcome to the course and welcome to distance education at Cuesta College. I am Victor Krulikowski and I will be your instructor for this distance ed course. On this page you will find some important information that you will need to take, and succeed in, this class.

***This is a fully online course. Every aspect of the course will be online and there will be no required in-person meetings at all. However, for the three exams for the class there will be specific dates on which you have to take the exam. You will have a 48 hour window during which you will have to take the exam. During that period you will need to log in and access the exam. Once you start the exam you will have about one hour to complete it, but you can start anytime within that two day window. So, you will need to be absolutely certain you will available during those windows of time to take the three exams. There are NO exceptions to this. If you won't be able to meet those terms, do not sign up for this class. The target dates for the exams to begin are Wednesday, June 21st, Wednesday, July 5, and Wednesday, July 19.

I will send out some basic information a few days before summer session begins. It will go to your Cuesta email account so be looking for it there.

***You must log in to the course by 8pm, Wednesday June 14 or you will be dropped from the class.

Thoughts about summer classes

Just a word of caution about the combination of summer classes and online courses. For this course you are reading the same material in the textbooks as students taking my in-person versions of this course. You, however, will also be reading my "lectures". That means the reading load is about double that of the in-person sections. Add to that the compressed nature of the 6 week summer session (compared to 18 weeks in spring or fall) and that's a lot of reading in a short period of time. On the other hand, summer is a great time to knock out a course in a few weeks compared to the long slog of the 18 week long semesters. Many students do very well in my summer online class and very much benefit from the more intensive nature of the shorter time frame and the flexible nature of an online class. Others, do not. If you fall a little behind or aren't as disciplined as you need to be, it is easy to very quickly become overwhelmed by the amount of work you'll need to do. I'd highly recommend making sure your schedule allows the time you'll need and that you think about setting a schedule of your own to set aside dedicated work time for this class. Just to put it in perspective, an equivalent in person class would be putting in almost nine hours of lecture a week. Unless you read very fast, you should probably consider that a baseline for how much time you'll need to put in each week in the online class.

The nature of the course:

As mentioned above, this course is 100% on-line. Virtually all communication and course material will be by electronic means. The pacing of the course will somewhat match that of my traditional, face-to-face classes. Essentially, we will have three sections of course material, each running for two weeks. I'll post all of the material for each two week section at the beginning of that time frame. Within that two week period you'll be able to work through the material at whatever time and pace you desire. The only exceptions to that will be the dates for the exams and a few homework assignments. You will need to complete all necessary material by those

dates in order to perform adequately in the course. Those three exams will make up the vast majority of your grade for the semester.

The class will become available to you on the Monday, June 12. I will typically send out a reminder a few days before that.

Technical Requirements:

I realize this is stating the obvious, but you must have an email account and access to the World Wide Web. There is a very useful page of information about distance education at Cuesta. You can find it here . In particular, you will want to view the FAQ page which provides some assistance with the technical side of distance ed (for ex. suggested minimum system requirements, how to get technical assistance, etc). This course will be taught using the Moodle platform.

Textbooks:

In addition to the information provided online, there are two textbooks required for the course. They are: By the People: Debating American Government (Brief Second Edition) by James A. Morone and Rogan Kersh and Walter Stone's *Republic at Risk*. These are available at both the San Luis campus bookstore and the North County Campus (Paso) bookstore. The By the People text has been in use for a couple of years so it may be possible to find used copies of that text at our bookstores and/or other stores and online sites. Even new it is pretty reasonably priced compared to many textbooks and you might be able to find good deals on it. The Stone text is very inexpensive at our bookstore so only buy one elsewhere if you can get it really, really cheap. Do not pay a lot of money for the Stone text. Some sellers seem to think older versions are collector's items and charge a lot for them taking advantage of the relatively high cost of textbooks these days. Don't fall for it.

For your general information, you can always find information for textbooks for all of your classes as soon as registration opens. When you open the class finder page, there is a box in the middle at the top that has a link that says, "Find textbooks for your classes here!" Knowing this will give you maximum lead time to locate books and try to get the best price.

Here is a direct link, but don't forget the directions above so you can find it at any time: http://bookstore.cuesta.org/buy_courselisting.asp?

Logging on the the course:

We will probably be using Moodle for summer session. Directions for that are shown below. If there is a change, I will let you know. Please be aware that you will not be able to log in to the course until the first day of the semester. Once the semester begins you will be able to log in using the following instructions:

1. Go directly to http://moodle.cuesta.edu.

2. Click the "login" link in the upper right hand corner. It is not a very obvious link but will become underlined when you move your mouse over it.

2. Type in your Username. Your username will be the same as your myCuesta login id. For most of you, that will be your first name, an underscore, and your last name. For example: gwen_stefani.

3. Type in your Password. If you haven't used Moodle before, your default password is "Changeme1". Use that the first time you log in. It will request that you change that password the first time you log in.

Support

If you are having trouble signing in or this course isn't showing up, contact: support@my.cuesta.edu   Include a brief description of the problem, your name, login ID (not your password) and the course CRN#.

Other:

You can find information about how the waitlist works here: http://academic.cuesta.edu/admrreg/waitlist.htm

You can find information about semester dates, adding, dropping, etc., here: http://academic.cuesta.edu/admrreg/infodate.htm

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