**Politics and Political Analysis - Political Science 120 – Fall 2013**

Meeting Time: M and W 2:00 – 3:15  
Place: Room 581  
Instructor: Dr. Todd Myers   
Telephone Number: 644-7848

Office: 508B  
E-mail Address: [todd.myers@gcccd.edu](mailto:todd.myers@gcccd.edu)  
Times Available: Office hours are R 2:00 – 4:30 and W 12:30 – 2:00 and 3:30 -4:30. Other times can be arranged as appropriate. Please contact me 24 hours in advance so I can make certain no conflicts exist with your desired meeting time.

**Text:**

Douglas A. Van Belle & Kenneth M. Mash *A Novel Approach to Politics: Introducing Political Science Through Books, Movies, and Popular Culture*, 3rd edition.

Other readings or films may be assigned during class and you will be held accountable for these assignments

**Introduction**  
Politics is both an art and a science. Over the course of the next several weeks I hope to give you an appreciation of politics as it is lived and how political scientists try to make sense of it. This course will also introduce you to three sub disciplines of political science as it is taught in the United States including political theory, comparative government, and international relations.

**Week 1**

Reading: Chapter 1 - Introducing the Ancient Debate

August 19- August 23

M Introduction

W Chapter 1

**Week 2**

Reading: Chapter 1 - Introducing the Ancient Debate and Chapter 2 - Why Government?

August 26 – August 30

M Chapter 1

W Chapter 2

**Week 3**

Reading: Chapter 2 – Why Government?

September 2 – 6

M Labor Day Holiday

T Census Day

W Chapter 2

**Week 4**

Reading: Chapter 3 – Governing Society

September 9 – 13

M Chapter 3

W Chapter 3

**Week 5**

Reading: Chapter 4 – Government’s Role in the Economy

September 16 – 20

M Chapter 4

W Chapter 4

**Week 6**

Reading: Chapter 5 – Structure and Institutions

September 23 – 27

M Chapter 5

W Chapter 5

**Week 7**

Reading: Chapter 6 – El Grande Loco Casa Blanca

September 30 – October 4

M **Test 1**

W Chapter 6

**Week 8**

Reading: Chapter 6 – El Grande Loco Casa Blanca and Chapter 7 – The Confederacy of Dunces

October 7 – 11

M Chapter 6

W Chapter 7

**Week 9**

Reading: Chapter 7 – The Confederacy of Dunces and Chapter 8 – Brazilian Bureaucracy

October 14 – 18

M Chapter 7

W Chapter 8

**Week 10**

Reading: Chapter 8 – Brazilian Bureaucracy and Chapter 9 – Courts and Law

October 21 – 25

M Chapter 8

W Chapter 9

**Week 11**

Reading: Chapter 9 – Courts and Law and Chapter 10 Not Quite Right, but Still Good

October 28 – November 1

M Chapter 9

W Chapter 10

**Week 12**

November 4 – 8

Political Economy Week

**Week 13**

Reading: Chapter 10 Not Quite Right

November 11 – 15

M Veterans Day

W Chapter 10 Political Economy Week Papers Due

**Week 14**

Reading: Chapter 11 – Media, Politics, and Government

November 18 – 22

M Test 2

W Chapter 11

**Week 15**

Reading: Chapter 11 – Media, Politics, and Government and Chapter 12 - International Politics

November 25 -29

M Chapter 11

W Chapter 12

Th Thanksgiving holiday

F Thanksgiving holiday

**Week 16**

Reading: Chapter 12 – International Politics and Chapter 14 – Political Culture

December 2 – 6

M Chapter 12

W Chapter 14

**Week 17**

Reading: Chapter 14 – Political Culture

December 9 – 13

M Chapter 14

T

W Final Exam – Research Paper Due 1:45 – 3:45 PM

**Student Learning Outcomes**

After completing this course students will:

1. Identify why governments are created and compare and contrast how power and freedom are balanced in various political systems.
2. Analyze the strengths and shortcomings of political institutions at the domestic and international levels
3. Utilize the basic tools of political science to analyze contemporary political situations
4. Distinguish between different ideologies and explain the historical factors underpinning their development.

**Assessments and Grading Policies**

**Attendance and Participation 10%**

You are expected to attend lectures on a regular basis and attendance will be taken. I reserve the right to drop you from the course if you miss more than three classes. You should read the materials assigned for each week and have questions about those materials for class discussion. **This class lives or dies on the basis of your participation. The best way to earn a strong participation grade is to read or watch political news from reputable sources.** You may also be expected to engage in various group activities. . Give thoughtful responses to the questions the instructor asks you. Do not use lap tops, e-messaging devices or any other technology devices that will hinder you from being present in the class. The classroom is a special space where we can come together and learn about important things and you should respect that space. Remember to be polite to both your instructor and fellow classmates since failure to be so will negatively impact your participation grade. . If you violate these basic principles, I will ask you to leave the classroom and you will be counted absent for that day. If you continue to be rude and disruptive during the course, you will be suspended for two days for each such incident.

**Political Economy Week 10%**

You will be expected to attend two political economy week events and write a two page reaction paper that identifies the argument of the speaker or speakers at the events you choose to attend and offers your thoughtful response to their arguments. Approaching these papers from a theoretical perspective is essential to receiving full credit for this exercise.

**Research Paper 20%**

You will be expected to write a research paper or a literature review for this course dealing with a topic of significance for comparative politics, international relations, public policy, or political theory. Your paper should be between 5-8 pages in length and should cite at least seven quality references in an annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography is a bibliography that identifies a work and offers 2-3 sentences describing the content of the reference. The bibliography does not count toward your 5-8 page target for the length of your analytical essay. The final draft of your paper will be due with the final exam. I will discuss how you might achieve a positive outcome on this paper throughout the semester. You should start early so you can produce the best quality paper.

**Three Tests 60%**

There will be three tests administered over the course of the semester. Each test will be worth 20% of your grade. The tests may be multiple choice, true false, brief impromptu responses to questions posed by the instructor or essay type questions. The tests may or may not be cumulative. I will let you know before each exam.

Plagiarism will result in no credit for the plagiarized assignment.   
  
The following table contains the grading scale on which you will be evaluated:   
  
Grading Scale:   
A =  +90, B = +80, C = +65, D = 60, F = Below 60  
  
Grade consequences for less than completed performance of course requirements:   
  
1. Written assignments will be lowered a letter grade if turned in late.   
2. In-class presentations, tests, and individual presentations cannot be made up if missed.   
  
The instructor reserves the right to use his discretion in individual circumstances that may not be covered by this syllabus or if the application of the rules of the syllabus would result in a miscarriage of justice. . If you have any problems with the class or the instructor please come to talk to me about these issues during office hours so that we can work the issues out.  I am a reasonable person and will try to address your concerns in a manner that will be mutually satisfactory. If you are not satisfied with the resolution we arrive at, you should contact my Chairman, Todd Myers at 644-7848.

**For Students with Special Needs**

Students with disabilities who may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to notify the instructor and contact disabled student services & programs (DSP&S) early in the semester so that reasonable accommodations may be implemented as soon as possible.  Students may contact DSP&S in person in room 110 or by phone at (619) 644-7112 or (619) 644-7119 (tyy for deaf).

**Supervised Tutoring Referral**

Students are referred to enroll in the following supervised tutoring courses if the service indicated will assist them in achieving or reinforcing the learning objectives of this course:

IDS 198, Supervised Tutoring to receive tutoring in general computer applications in the Tech Mall;

English 198W, Supervised Tutoring for assistance in the English Writing Center (Room 70-119); and/or

IDS 198T, Supervised Tutoring to receive one-on-one tutoring in academic subjects in the Tutoring Center (Room 70-229, 644-7387)

To add any of these courses, students may obtain Add Codes at the Information/Registration Desk in the Tech Mall.

All Supervised Tutoring courses are non-credit/non-fee. However, when a student registers for a supervised tutoring course, and has no other classes, the student will be charged the usual health fee.

**About the Instructor**

My professional background includes a stint in West Africa as an agricultural teacher trainer, work as a sales rep for Prentice Hall Publishing, internships in a variety of agencies for the State of Louisiana, curriculum development and teaching for the Institute of Reading Development, and educational and national security consulting for a variety of federal government agencies.  I have been teaching at Grossmont for the past eight years and joined the faculty as a full time member in the Fall of 2005.

I have been a student for most of my life and have a Bachelor's of Arts from Eureka College in Illinois, a Master in Public Administration from Louisiana State University, and a Ph.D. in political science from that same university.  I have studied in Germany where I was awarded a Deutscher Akademischer Austauschdienst Stipendiat (The German government's version of the Fulbright Grant) to study political science, economics, and philosophy. I also have studied in Brazil as a Ronald W. Reagan Fellow. Most recently, I have received awards from the NEH to study Chinese culture, the Freeman Foundation to study Japanese culture, and the Lehrman Institute and the James Madison Institute at Princeton University to study American statesmanship. I am deeply interested in the relationship between politics and the stories peoples tell about themselves. I have been published in the *International Encyclopedia of Political Science*, the *Encyclopedia of Cultural Sociology*, the *Encyclopedia of U.S. Latin American Relations*, and *Education About Asia*. My present research projects include developing a student-centered think tank focusing on political, cultural, and economic reforms in Asia, writing about American foreign policy and wars in Asia, and writing about the use of film as a medium expressing social critique and order.

In my free time (Is there such a thing?), I read for pleasure (I like to read literature written by Nobel laureates, history, philosophy and economic theory), read, watch, and listen to the news (I like NPR and read the New York Times), play strategy games, spend time with my wife and my three sons, hike, play Frisbee, practice Aikido, and appreciate nature.