Dear Students joining our Political Science 150 online class!

Welcome to the completely online Political Science 150 course. In this course, we will examine how American politics works, develop our own opinions and share them with one another, and consider how we can improve the American political system.

We begin by determining our own ideologies. Are you a communist? A liberal? A conservative? A libertarian? An independent? It’s okay to not know who you are. We study how the ideas of the Framers shaped the U.S. Constitutional system. Next, we examine all the different ways to get involved: voting, interest groups, political parties, campaigning, etc. I ask you to relate what we are studying to current political events. Third, we study how the institutions of government process all of our demands. Are Congress, the Presidency, and the Courts doing a good job?

This class involves reading from two textbooks each week and analyzing what you have read each week by answering questions and submitting them to me. The discussion board helps you brainstorm with one another about the issues that are presented each week. There are also three essay exams that help you synthesize what you have learned in each unit.

Most students excel in this course. If you like reading and writing, and can work independently, you will do just fine. All you need is a reliable computer, an internet connection and a word processing program. All the work is online (no proctored tests on campus) so you can be spelunking in New Zealand or visiting family in South Korea, as long as you set aside some time each week for this class!

I have taught the online PS 150 for several years now. I find most people do quite well in the course. Additionally, I teach the regular Political Science 150 course at the College of the Canyons. I always enjoy the discussions that we have together.

I have a PhD in Political Science from UC Santa Barbara. I emphasize critical thinking skills and treat the course as an opportunity for you to better know your political selves, rather than a course just about political facts.

The books for the course are:

(1) Ginsberg et. Al, We, the People (any edition is acceptable) You may want to pick one up used.

(2) Anagnoson et al, Governing California in the Twenty-First Century, (any edition is acceptable).
More information:

This is a 100% online course, with no on-campus meetings. All work will be conducted online, including exams. The course syllabus and calendar is posted online under “Course Information.”

Please log on to the course on the first day of the class to get started. There is an online orientation to Blackboard at the College of the Canyons distance learning website. This online orientation shows you how to log on to the course. If you know your user name and password, you can access our course directly at http://bb9.canyons.edu. If you add the course, it may take a day or two before you can access it.

You can contact me by email at steven.reti@canyons.edu. I check my email on a daily basis during the week and on most weekends.

Review the syllabus for the requirements. It is under “Course Information.” Powerpoints are under “Course Documents.” Due dates are on the syllabus as well as under “Assignments.” Please submit all work through blackboard.

Double check your email address under “personal information” immediately so that I can contact you. I email announcements and comments about class work every week, so check your Canyons email.

Get the books from the bookstore and good luck!

Email me if you have questions.

Sincerely yours,

Steven Reti