Dear Prospective Student:

**Political Science 150: Introduction to American Government and Politics**

I cordially invite you to join me for Political Science 150, which is an “Introduction to American Government and Politics.” This course is designed to introduce you to the field of politics and Political Science, which is an educational discipline that is only about 125 years old. Some students have confessed to me that they really did not understand what politics was, let alone Political Science, and that is not hard for me to understand. In my many years of education, the term “politics” was often simply accepted as a given without discussion. We will begin our course by considering both terms, “politics” and “political science” to make sure all students know the meanings of these terms.

On one important level, political science is about the study of government institutions and processes, and that is a big part of our course. We will consider the founding of the United States and the U.S. Constitution, and then also the founding of California and the California State Constitution and how these two levels of government have both similarities and differences. We will then move to a careful consideration of institutions and federal employees that make up the three branches of our government and the civil rights and civil liberties we enjoy as citizens of the United States.

There are also other “ingredients” that go into making up politics. We will visit politicians and political parties, interest groups, lobbyists, elections and campaigns, our individual political development as people (political socialization), public opinion, and our government’s domestic and foreign policies.


This class will be totally (100%) on-line, meaning that we will not have any meetings on campus. This class will be accessed entirely through Blackboard. It will require that you access the course on-line, do the readings, participate in discussions, and take tests. The test will include both multiple choice and also some essay or short-answer tests, which will be submitted on-line. **IMPORTANT: On the first day (2/09/15), you will be required to sign in and introduce yourself in Discussion to keep your slot open.**
While this class will require some commitment and effort on your part, I will be there to assist you with problems. Hopefully, you will be able to look back at learning new things about politics and political science, while also meeting a graduation requirement, and gaining 3 transferable units to a four-year college (if that is your goal).

If you need to contact me before the class starts, I can be reached by email at rdyke4@hotmail.com. I am attaching some information below about on-line courses and the Blackboard format.

Sincerely,
Dr. Dyke

Some Facts about On-Line Learning

Welcome to the glorious world of online learning! Hopefully, you have taken the time out to gather all of your course materials prior to the class starting. If not, no problem, just head to the College of the Canyons bookstore conveniently located on campus with the instructor’s name, course section#, and the name of the class you are taking and the team members working there will be happy to assist you. If this is your first time taking an online course then you will want to familiarize yourself with Blackboard, which is what most instructors use to deliver their online class. Below is a link to an orientation for Blackboard for all of those who are new to the Blackboard platform.

Blackboard Orientation:

http://www.canyons.edu/offices/distance_learning/OnlineOrientation/

The instructor will try to have the course accessible as soon as possible when Winter Session officially begins. If your course does not appear in Blackboard please check the following things before calling Blackboard tech support

- Has the class officially started?
- Did you pay for the course?
- Do you have any holds on your account that would deny you access?
- Has it been more than 24hrs since you have added the class to your “My Canyons” account?

If you are still having problems and none of these are an issue please contact Blackboard tech support at the following:

Phone: 661-362-3344
Email: bbsupport@canyons.edu
I hope you will view this course as an opportunity to learn about politics and political science. Welcome to Political Science 150!