Welcome to Political Science 150, a completely online class. Lectures, notes, discussions, class work, and exams will be online. If you like reading and writing, and can work independently, you can excel in this class. 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 anywhere doing whatever you want, but you set aside some time each week for this class! (From February 9 to June 4).

Log on to the Blackboard class website and ensure your enrollment. In order to access Blackboard please use your username (student ID) and your password (student). Please log on to the course on the first day of the class to get started.

In this class we will improve our ability to understand and critically evaluate American Politics. We will understand the structure and the functions of American politics, beginning with the foundations of the American system to linkage institutions and then to the major government institutions. We will also examine the possible ways to get involved in politics. Please relate what we are studying to current political events.

The course is designed around weekly readings from the textbook and analyzing what you have read by answering questions and submitting them on the Discussion Board. The discussion board helps you brainstorm with one another about the issues that are presented each week. So, during the course you will be answering discussion questions posted on Discussion Forum and you will get ideas from one another. You will have to engage yourself in an active learning by raising questions and answering others in order to expand your understanding of the subject matter. Read the postings carefully and respond to them with your thoughts and opinion.

I will post the weekly discussion topics on Mondays and you will have until Thursday to respond to them in two or three short paragraphs. You will also be required to write a one paragraph response to the opinion of a fellow classmate of your choice, by Saturday. Our discussions on Blackboard should be courteous and respectful.

Required reading materials are found in the textbook:
The assignments and the test questions will be listed under “Assignments.”

So, in this course you will have three main tasks: first, weekly discussions on Discussion Board; second, one term paper (a short essay, two to three pages) on one of the topics listed in the syllabus; third, three exams (two mid-terms and one final). For deadlines consult the syllabus.

I know most students will do quite well in the course. I always enjoy the discussions I have with students whether online or face-to-face.

I emphasize critical thinking skills and treat the course as an opportunity for you to better know your political identity, rather than treat it as a course just about political fact.

Please log on to the course on the first day of the class to get started. If you need it, there is an online orientation to Blackboard which shows you how to log on to the course.

Also, click on the Syllabus and find out about the reading schedule and grading.

Welcome to POLSC 150,

Dr. R. B. Shirinian