Bill Mark, Ph. D

Political Science 150
Introduction to American Government On-Line
Sections 28448 & 28447

College of the Canyons
Fall 2017

Textbook required:
We The People by Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, and Tolbert. Custom Edition. This edition contains as the last two sections:
Governing California In The Twenty-First Century

*Be advised that if you purchase any edition other than the one sold in the bookstore you might have difficulty matching the pages I reference in my notes.

Welcome to Introduction to American Government. This section of POLISC 150 is listed as 100% on-line class however, all exams are taken in the TLC or at another location which must be approved by the TLC. The course is a survey course of the institutions, process, and problems of the American Government and the California State Government. A survey course means that we will be covering a wide range of subjects in a short amount of time. The emphasis is on the development and principles of the American Constitution, the mechanics of democratic politics and policy-making, and the nation’s and the state’s contemporary challenges.

It is often easy to get caught up in the technical aspects of this type of course but above all the idea is for you to gain an understanding of how our national and state governments work and that hopefully you will feel prepared to participate in them by, at the least, voting.

If you are new to distance learning, it is strongly suggested that you consider enrolling in Counseling 070. This can be done simultaneously with the course and will help you understand how best to take a course using this method. You can find information about this at: https://www.canyons.edu/Offices/DistanceLearning.

The college is now using a new Learning Management System. You might have taken a class using Blackboard and now you will be using Canvas. The system is similar to Blackboard in that it contains everything you will need as far as course requirements
which includes Lectures, Discussion Boards, exams (Canvas labels them quizzes) and other materials. Log in to Canvas by visiting.
http://cv.canyons.edu

You will probably not be able to get to the course materials until just a few days before classes begin. And, if you enroll within a few days of the class beginning it takes a few days to add you to the course. In the mean time you can begin to get a jump on the material by reading the first three chapters in the textbook We The People, and the first chapter in Governing California which is included at the back of the We The People Textbook. You can purchase the textbooks at the bookstore. Be sure you purchase the correct edition of the textbook since my lecture notes on-line reference specific page numbers.

Once you have access to the course material on Canvas you will find the syllabus, schedule of when you need to take the exams, my lecture notes, a number of handouts, several study guides (one for each exam), the discussion boards, and the location where your grades will appear. Additional instructions are to be found in the syllabus.

A note about commitment:
On-line classes require a great deal of self-discipline and commitment. It is easy to become disconnected from the course since we do not meet at a specific place and time. I will prod you from time to time but eventually it is up to you to get the material, respond to the discussions, and take the exams within the allotted dates.

The following link takes you to an assessment that helps you determine if on-line courses are for you.
http://www.canyons.edu/offices/distance_learning/info/Assessments.asp.

If you have any questions please feel free to call me (310) 947-2632 or e-mail me at willymark1@aol.com. E-mailing me at my AOL address is the best way to contact me.

Sincerely,

Bill Mark, Ph. D