PSC 100 – INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT

Course Description
Structure and organization of the American national government. Evolution of the United States Constitution and the federal system, civil rights, voting and elections, Congress, the President, and the federal courts.

Required Text

Course Objectives
This detailed survey course is designed to acquaint students with American government as widely taught in U.S. universities. The text emphasizes the competition of individuals and interests for power and policy influence in American politics. Our course customizes that emphasis by directing attention to the institutional forms and embedded processes that have shaped our political outcomes both historically and currently.

Reading Expectation
There is no mandatory reading for this class apart from one assigned text. The assigned chapters in the text are mandatory reading. By enrolling and remaining in the course, a student makes a commitment to read the text closely week by week in preparation for class. Skimming the text or perusing it inattentively will not suffice. Please take this seriously.

In-Class Activity
Students will be expected to respond to occasional questions and will participate in discussion that requires reading comprehension and an understanding of lecture material. The teacher reserves the right to develop in-class activities where students may review and comment upon each other’s written work or oral contributions.

Class Schedule

Schedule of Events
The assignments are to be read before the class period begins.

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<th>Chapter One</th>
<th>The Constitution</th>
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<td>Chapter Two</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
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Exam #1

Chapter Five     Public Opinion and Political Participation
Chapter Six      The Media
Chapter Seven    Interest Groups and Political Parties

Exam #2

Chapter Eight    Campaigns and Elections
Chapter Nine     Congress
Chapter Ten      The Presidency

Exam #3

Chapter Eleven   Bureaucracies
Chapter Twelve   The Supreme Court and the American Judiciary

Exam #4

The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the class assignments and times listed above.

Grading System: There will be four grades throughout the semester. This will consist of four examinations each worth 25% of the grade.