

Chabot College  
**Distance Education Curriculum Support Committee**

**Course Proposal Form**  
*(Send as an email attachment to DECSC chair)*

2005-2006

These questions are meant to provide you, our faculty colleagues, a framework for your Distance Education Curriculum Proposal. These are *guidelines*, not mandates. Much of this emerged from an Academic Senate for California Community Colleges white paper, available in our resource area. We believe careful and thorough consideration of these issues will improve not just your proposal, but also your entire course design. Please feel free to elaborate where you think most important. Note: Please click on *File, Save As* to save this form as a document, so you can work on it and submit it electronically to the DE Curriculum Support Committee chair.

*Each proposal or existing course, if delivered by distance education, shall be separately reviewed and approved by the curriculum committee prior to being offered. (Ed Code 55378)*

**Course Title & Number:** POLI 1 Introduction to American Government

**Faculty Name:** Cristina Ruggiero

---

**1. Need/Justification**

POLI 1 fulfills part of the American Institutions requirement therefore a large number of students seek to take the course. In addition, the course is transferable to all CSU's and UC's which also makes it a popular course. LPC already offers a on-line version of the course, which has filled every semester it has been offered. By having Chabot offer an on-line version of the course as well, we will be meeting community needs of students who work, and cannot take the course during normal school hours. In addition, with the upcoming building renovations at Chabot, it will be advantageous to offer the class since available classroom space will be a premium.

**2. Course Content Delivery**

This course will be a web-based course that will use the current Blackboard course management system. There will be an optional orientation session scheduled the first week of classes to help students with getting acquainted with the course, the instructor and their fellow students. The instructor will hold regular virtual office hours, where student can contact the instructor in real time, as well as provide for email and phone contact during those office hours.

**3. Nature and Frequency of Instructor-Student Interactions**

As stated above, the instructor will interact with the students in a variety of ways; through virtual discussion (synchronous) and email and discussion boards (asynchronous). Discussion boards will require students participating by sharing their responses to course material and then commenting on their fellow classmates' responses. The instructor will also guide such discussion by prompting additional discussion questions about the material to help student better understand the material.

In addition to course reading materials (textbook and essays), the instructor will also be posting links to news reports, both video and audio, that students will have to watch/listen and then either answer questions or provide comments as to how the information illustrates ideas and concepts from the course. For example, on a section of the course on political campaigning, students may look at a number of campaign ads on-line in order to compare and contrast differences in campaign messages and to better understand the role media plays in elections.

Students will be assessed at regular intervals and their grades will be posted on blackboard so they will be able to track their progress in the course. Also, written feedback will also accompany a student's grade on an assignment. For example, regarding homework assignments students are given a grading rubric and examples so they know what is expected of them. When the assignment is graded, written comments are also included discussing what the student did well and where they need improvement.

In addition, students will be contacted if they have not completed assignments or are falling behind in the course. For example, the instructor will contact such students if they have missed two homework assignments within the first 4 weeks of the course and/or after the first exam, which usually occurs in the 5th week of the course. Students will first be contacted via email and then by phone.

These methods will be effective because students will be regularly apprised of their progress in the course. Also early intervention will help determine which students are having difficulty, which will enable the instructor to provide individual attention to those students if necessary.

#### **4. Assignments & Methods of Evaluation**

A variety of course assignments will be used in order to assess student learning. Homework will consist of two posted critical responses to the essays assigned on the week's topic. Each paragraph posted will be their response to an author's ideas arguments presented in the essay. Students will then have to respond to at least one of the comments posted by a fellow student. This will facilitate discussion of the content of essays, but also have student practicing their critical thinking skills. The instructor will also post responses to student comments and provide private comments to students with their grade on the weekly assignment.

In addition, there will be 'group exercises' where the instructor will posit specific questions about the material to the class and put students in 'groups' where they will discuss (via posting back and forth) their answers to the questions. These may also be exercises where students will be required to watch or listen to a short clip (from C-SPAN for example) and then discuss their response.

Students will also take three exams, each covering a 1/3 of the course. These will consist of short answer questions, such as "Discuss three reasons why 'pork barrel legislation' may help or hinder the political process; "Explain two ways Congress may provide oversight over bureaucratic agencies." and "Discuss how two examples/events from the video on Hurricane Katrina illustrate why bureaucracies cannot function like a business." After each section of the course is completed, review questions of that section will be posted. Exam questions will come from these review sheets.

Students will also write a short paper 2-3 page paper, examining a current political event, explaining how it relates to concepts from the course and providing their opinion about the event.

Students will also complete a final, which will consist of three short essays responding to statements relating to the major topics of the course. The students will present their reasoned opinion on the issue, supported by facts and materials from the course.

## **5. Technical Support**

Blackboard web software maintained by the college will be used for the course. Links to the College library, the Learning Connection, and other student support services will be made available to the students.

## **6. Student Services**

See above statement.

## **7. Accommodations for Students with Disabilities**

I plan to use Blackboard and have reviewed the sites indicated. I will work with the DSRC to insure the class site accommodates students with disabilities.

## **8. Class Size & First Term to be offered**

45 students and Fall 2007