

POLS-C1000: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

Effective Term

Fall 2025

CC Approval

11/01/2024

AS Approval

11/14/2024

BOT Approval

11/21/2024

COCI Approval

11/26/2024

SECTION A - Course Data Elements

CB04 Credit Status

Credit - Degree Applicable

Discipline

Minimum Qualifications	And/Or
Political Science (Master's Degree)	

Subject Code

POLS - Political Science

Course Number

C1000

Department

Political Science (POLI)

Division

Social Sciences (SOCS)

Full Course Title

American Government and Politics

Short Title

American Government & Politics

CB03 TOP Code

2207.00 - Political Science

CB08 Basic Skills Status

NBS - Not Basic Skills

CB09 SAM Code

E - Non-Occupational

Rationale

Aligning with CCN

SECTION B - Course Description

Catalog Course Description

This course is an introduction to government and politics in the United States and California. Students examine the constitutions, structure, and operation of governing institutions, civil liberties and civil rights, political behaviors, political issues, and public policy using political science theory and methodology.

Catalog Course Description Part II

N/A

SECTION C - Conditions on Enrollment

Open Entry/Open Exit

No

Repeatability

Not Repeatable

Grading Options

Letter Grade or Pass/No Pass

Allow Audit

Yes

Requisites

SECTION D - Course Standards

Is this course variable unit?

No

Units

3.00

Lecture Hours

54.00

Outside of Class Hours

108

Total Contact Hours

54

Total Student Hours

162

Distance Education Approval

Is this course offered through Distance Education?

Yes

Online Delivery Methods

DE Modalities	Permanent or Emergency Only?
Entirely Online	Permanent
Hybrid	Permanent

SECTION E - Course Content

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Understand and explain the foundations of government in the United States: the organization, powers, and procedures of the national government; the patterns of state and local government.
2.	Demonstrate the ability to analyze and write effectively about the political process.
3.	Discuss and analyze contemporary political issues, interests, and behavior in the United States and California.

Course Objectives

Upon satisfactory completion of the course, students will be able to:	
1.	Explain the founding and development of the U.S. and California Constitution.
2.	Critique governing institutions and political processes within the United States and California.
3.	Employ introductory political science research methods to contextualize contemporary political issues and operations in the United States and California.
4.	Assess civil liberties and civil rights of individuals and groups as articulated in the U.S. and California Constitutions and subsequent court decisions.
5.	Investigate the role of identity and political ideology in shaping public opinion and public policy in the United States and California.
6.	Analyze how to effectively participate in politics at the national, state, county, and/or city levels.

Course Content

1. The purpose of government and nature of democratic governance
 - a. Political philosophies that underlie democratic government
 - b. Comparison of representative and direct democracy
 - c. The value of, influences on, and consequences of participation and nonparticipation in democratic government
2. The U.S. and California Constitutions as frameworks for government
 - a. Political philosophies of the framers and critics of the U.S. Constitution
 - b. Processes for amending and interpreting the U.S. and California Constitutions
3. The theory and practice of federalism in the United States, focusing on California
 - a. The framework and operation of federal, state, and local relations
 - b. Interaction between the federal government and Native American tribes and entities
4. The structure and contemporary operations of federal, state, and local governing institutions in the United States and California including the
 - a. Executive branch
 - b. Legislative branch
 - c. Judicial branch
5. Civil liberties and civil rights of individuals and groups
 - a. Civil liberties and rights as articulated in the U.S. and California Constitutions and federal and state court decisions
 - b. Contemporary and historical interactions between government and marginalized populations within the United States based on factors such as race, ethnicity, sex, gender and gender expression, sexual orientation, class, ability status, age, citizenship status, language, religion, and/or other forms of identity
6. Individual and group behaviors within the context of the U.S. and California constitutions, including
 - a. Elections, campaigns, and voting
 - b. Political parties
 - c. Interest groups
 - d. Social movements
7. Factors that shape politics and policymaking including
 - a. Political culture
 - b. Political socialization
 - c. Political ideologies
 - d. Public opinion
 - e. Media
8. Political issues and public policies
 - a. Domestic
 - b. Economic
 - c. Foreign
9. Introductory research methods used in political science including
 - a. qualitative tools and techniques
 - b. quantitative tools and techniques

Methods of Instruction

Methods of Instruction

Types	Examples of learning activities
Activity	On campus field trips are conducted during coverage of the "bureaucracy" topic
Discussion	Each in-person session provides Socratic inspired opportunity to pause and explore the meaning of the session's primary topic - i.e. federalism, bureaucracy, civil liberty. Abstract topics such as this necessitate conversational exploration prior to or during lecture.
Lecture	Presentation based instruction - standard lecture delivery
Visiting Lecturers	Occasional guests during relevant subject areas - local politician friends invited during the Congress chapter; military special forces friends during the foreign policy chapter, etc.

Instructor-Initiated Online Contact Types

Announcements/Bulletin Boards
 Chat Rooms
 Discussion Boards
 E-mail Communication
 Video or Teleconferencing

Student-Initiated Online Contact Types

Chat Rooms
 Discussions
 Group Work

Course design is accessible

Yes

Methods of Evaluation

Methods of Evaluation

Types	Examples of classroom assessments
Other	Examples of potential methods of evaluation used to observe or measure students' achievement of course outcomes and objectives could include but are not limited to quizzes, exams, essays, field journals, projects, critical analysis papers, service learning, simulations, research demonstrations, etc.
Exams/Tests	Midterm and Final Exams using both objective and essay formats. Example: Identify and explain the concepts of "natural rights" and the "social contract" as found in the Declaration of Independence.
Quizzes	Weekly quizzes to assess subject comprehension and course participation.
Projects	Term research assignment. Example: Develop an argumentative essay about any of the major topics in contemporary politics suitable for publication as an editorial.
Class Participation	In class Q&A, distributed to ensure equal and routine participation.

Assignments

Reading Assignments

Supplemental readings and assignments from periodical sources:

"Will Higher Education Be the Next Bubble to Burst?" The Chronicle of Higher Education, 22 May 2009. -

Analyze the article and describe the political causes and consequences of this phenomenon.

"Running Unopposed" Politics and Policy, February 2009. -

Identify and assess the pros and cons of term limits.

Writing Assignments

1. Writing will include some/all of the following: Critical thinking papers of 3 to 5 pages, research projects, book and journal reports, and critical thinking exam essays.

Example: Based on the information you have studied this semester, explain which of the three branches of government is the most powerful. Defend your position.

Write a letter to an elected official about a matter of public policy. Identify the issue, explain why the issue is important to you, and finally suggest a course of action you wish the official to take in order to rectify the problem.

Other Assignments

An example of a research project might include the following: Research the California ballot initiative process, then identify a law that needs to be added, amended, or eliminated, and prepare it for submission to a legislator for inclusion on a subsequent ballot.

SECTION F - Textbooks and Instructional Materials

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Bardes, B.A., Shelley, M. and Schmidt S

Title

American Government and Politics Today

Edition/Version

19th

Publisher

Cengage

Year

2022

ISBN #

9780357458891

Material Type

Textbook

Author

O'Conner, K. and Sabato L

Title

American Government: Roots and Reform

Edition/Version

14th

Publisher

Pearson

Year

2022

ISBN #

9780137655656

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Evans and Michaud

Title

Central Ideas in American Government

Edition/Version

15th

Publisher

Soomo

Year

2025

ISBN #

978-1-954890-77-0

Material Type

Open Educational Resource (OER)

Author

Krutz and Waskiewicz

Title

American Government

Edition/Version

3rd

Publisher

OpenStax (OER)

Year

2024

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Van Vechten

Title

California Politics: A Primer

Edition/Version

7th

Publisher

CQ Press

Year

2023

ISBN #

9781071875445

Material Type

Textbook

Author

Patterson

Title
We the People

Edition/Version
15th

Publisher
McGraw Hill

Year
2023

Rationale
Common Course Numbering Recommendation

ISBN #
9781265026684

Material Type
Textbook

Author
Sidlow and Henschen

Title
GOV 12: Principles of American Government

Edition/Version
12th

Publisher
Cengage

Year
2025

Rationale
Common Course Numbering Recommendation

ISBN #
9798214147062

Material Type
Open Educational Resource (OER)

Author
Reti

Title
Introduction to California Government and Politics

Publisher
LibreTexts

Year
2023

ISBN #
[https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Political_Science_and_Civics/Introduction_to_California_Government_and_Politics_\(Reti\)](https://socialsci.libretexts.org/Bookshelves/Political_Science_and_Civics/Introduction_to_California_Government_and_Politics_(Reti))

Course Codes (Admin Only)

ASSIST Update

No

CB00 State ID

CCC000327152

CB10 Cooperative Work Experience Status

N - Is Not Part of a Cooperative Work Experience Education Program

CB11 Course Classification Status

Y - Credit Course

CB13 Special Class Status

N - The Course is Not an Approved Special Class

CB23 Funding Agency Category

Y - Not Applicable (Funding Not Used)

CB24 Program Course Status

Program Applicable

Allow Pass/No Pass

Yes

Only Pass/No Pass

No