

**POLS 1 Course Outline as of Fall 2011****CATALOG INFORMATION**

Dept and Nbr: POLS 1 Title: INTRO TO U.S. GOVERNMENT

Full Title: Introduction to United States Government

Last Reviewed: 10/12/2020

Units		Course Hours per Week		Nbr of Weeks	Course Hours Total	
Maximum	3.00	Lecture Scheduled	3.00	17.5	Lecture Scheduled	52.50
Minimum	3.00	Lab Scheduled	0	6	Lab Scheduled	0
		Contact DHR	0		Contact DHR	0
		Contact Total	3.00		Contact Total	52.50
		Non-contact DHR	0		Non-contact DHR	0

Total Out of Class Hours: 105.00

Total Student Learning Hours: 157.50

Title 5 Category: AA Degree Applicable

Grading: Grade or P/NP

Repeatability: 00 - Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

Also Listed As:

Formerly:

**Catalog Description:**

Principles and problems of government with emphasis on national, state and local governments in the United States.

**Prerequisites/Corequisites:****Recommended Preparation:**

Eligibility for ENGL 1A or equivalent

**Limits on Enrollment:****Schedule of Classes Information:**

Description: Principles and problems of government with emphasis on national, state and local governments in the United States. (Grade or P/NP)

Prerequisites/Corequisites:

Recommended: Eligibility for ENGL 1A or equivalent

Limits on Enrollment:

Transfer Credit: CSU;UC.

Repeatability: Two Repeats if Grade was D, F, NC, or NP

## **ARTICULATION, MAJOR, and CERTIFICATION INFORMATION:**

<b>AS Degree:</b>	<b>Area</b>		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
	D	Social and Behavioral Sciences	Fall 1981	
	F	American Institutions		
<b>CSU GE:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
	D	Social Science	Fall 2011	
	D8	Political Science, Govt, Legal Instutns		
	X2	Constitution and American Ideals		
	D	Social Science	Fall 2010	Fall 2011
	D2	Economics		
	D4	Gender Studies		
	D8	Political Science, Govt, Legal Instutns		
	X2	Constitution and American Ideals		
	D	Social Science	Fall 1981	Fall 2010
	D2	Economics		
	D4	Gender Studies		
	X2	Constitution and American Ideals		
<b>IGETC:</b>	<b>Transfer Area</b>		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
	4	Social and Behavioral Science	Fall 1981	
	4H	Political Science:Govt and Legal Instutn		
	XB	Constitution and American Ideals		
<b>CSU Transfer:</b>	Transferable		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
			Fall 1981	
<b>UC Transfer:</b>	Transferable		<b>Effective:</b>	<b>Inactive:</b>
			Fall 1981	

### **CID:**

CID Descriptor: POLS 110 Introduction to American Government and Politics  
SRJC Equivalent Course(s): POLS1

### **Certificate/Major Applicable:**

Major Applicable Course

## **COURSE CONTENT**

### **Outcomes and Objectives:**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Formulate and examine their own political values and beliefs.
2. Research contemporary political issues drawing on diverse sources.
3. Assess and distinguish between factual and interpretive sources of information.
4. Trace how and why American political structures and institutions at the state and federal levels have evolved over time and discuss current controversies in light of these developments.
5. Evaluate different forms of political communication and the methods employed to shape

public opinion.

6. Assess the influence of political institutions on the American population and the methods by which citizens can participate in the political process and shape policy outcomes.

## **Topics and Scope:**

### **I. Foundations of U.S. Government**

#### **A. What is Political Science?**

1. Survey of the discipline
2. Assumptions, methodology, tools
3. Core concepts, such as liberty and theories of democracy

#### **B. The Founding Era**

1. The legacy of British Rule
2. Philosophical influences, such as Locke and Montesquieu
3. The Declaration of Independence
4. The Articles of Confederation
5. The Constitutional Convention

#### **C. The U.S. Constitution**

1. The Preamble (the goals of government)
2. The Articles (government institutions, federalism, amending)
3. The Federalist Papers (selling the document)
4. The Bill of Rights

#### **D. Federalism**

1. Constitutional provisions (definitions and rationale)
2. Historical evolution from the Founders to the present
3. Advantages and disadvantages of a federal system

#### **E. California Government and Politics**

1. The State of California (constitution, institutions, direct democracy)
2. Local Government and Politics

### **II. Linkage Institutions**

#### **A. Public Opinion**

1. Political Socialization
2. Ideology
3. Polling
4. Manipulation

#### **B. The Media**

1. Historical development from the founding to the present
2. Biases in media coverage in the U.S.
3. Evaluating sources of information

#### **C. Political Participation**

1. Conventional and non-conventional forms
2. Voting behavior, trends and reforms

#### D. Political Parties

1. The functions of parties
2. The evolution of the party system
3. Why a two-party system?

#### E. Campaigns and Elections

1. The nominating process (primaries and caucuses)
2. The general election (electoral college)
3. Campaign finance
4. Electoral strategies

#### F. Interest Groups

1. Their composition and activities
2. The pros and cons of group politics

### III. Government Institutions

#### A. The Legislative Branch

1. A bicameral legislature (differences in the House and Senate)
2. Functions of Congress (representation, legislation, oversight)
3. The structure of congressional leadership and committees
4. Legislative strategies

#### B. The Executive Branch

1. The Constitutional Presidency (formal powers)
2. The expansion of presidential power (causes and consequences)
3. The bureaucracy (presidential advisors, government agencies)

#### C. The Judicial Branch

1. Structure of the judiciary (federal and state)
2. Judicial Review
3. Judicial appointments
4. The judicial decision making process

### IV. Citizens and the State

#### A. Civil Liberties

1. Incorporating the Bill of Rights within state constitutions and laws
2. Judicial rulings on rights (such as speech, press, religion)

#### B. Civil Rights: The expanding search for "equal justice under law."

### V. Policy-Making (optional)

- A. Domestic Policy
- B. Foreign Policy
- C. Economic Policy

### **Assignment:**

1. Read and study one to two chapters in the texts and anthologies weekly.
2. Regular attendance and extensive note-taking in class is expected and assumed.
3. Two to four multiple-choice, and/or essay examinations including a final

4. Six to ten pages of writing. These will be either reaction papers, analytical essays or research papers. An analytical component will be part of these assignments. Optional assignments may include written summaries of current events, oral presentations, debates or group work.

### Methods of Evaluation/Basis of Grade:

**Writing:** Assessment tools that demonstrate writing skills and/or require students to select, organize and explain ideas in writing.

Analytical essays	Writing 30 - 50%
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**Problem Solving:** Assessment tools, other than exams, that demonstrate competence in computational or non-computational problem solving skills.

None	Problem solving 0 - 0%
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**Skill Demonstrations:** All skill-based and physical demonstrations used for assessment purposes including skill performance exams.

None	Skill Demonstrations 0 - 0%
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**Exams:** All forms of formal testing, other than skill performance exams.

Two to four exams including a final that incorporate a writing component	Exams 40 - 50%
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**Other:** Includes any assessment tools that do not logically fit into the above categories.

Class participation, oral presentations and debates	Other Category 0 - 30%
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### Representative Textbooks and Materials:

The Struggle for Democracy, (9th). Greenberg/Page. Longman: 2009 with the companion website

Challenge of Democracy, (10th). Janda, Berry Goldman, Houghton-Mifflin N.: 2009

American Government and Politics Today, (15th). Bardes, et al. Wadsworth Publishing Company: 2009-2010 with companion web site

We The People, (Shorter 7th Edition), Ginsberg, Lowi, & Weir. W.W, Norton & Company: 2009 and supporting web site.

Taking Sides: Clashing Views on Political Issues, (17th). McKenna & Feingold, McGraw Hill: 2009.

The Democratic Debate, (5th). Miroff et. al. Houghton Mifflin: 2010,

Ravitch's The American Reader Perennial, (2nd). Harper Collins: 2000

California Politics: A Primer. Van Vechten. Congressional Quarterly Press: 2009

Governing California in the 21st Century (3rd). Anagnoson et al. W.W. Norton: 2011

Instructor Prepared Materials