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Political Science (POLS) C1000 American Government and Politics (3 Units) CSU:UC  
[formerly Political Science 1, Political Science 1501]

Advisory: Eligibility for English 1500 strongly recommended

Hours and Unit Calculations:

48 hours lecture. 96 Outside of class hours (144 Total Student Learning Hours) 3 Units.

Catalog 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. C-ID: POLS 110

Representative Texts, Manuals, and/or OER that is equivalent, Other Support Materials:

Patterson. 2024. *We the People*. 15th ed

Krutz and Waskiewicz. 2024. *American Government 3e*. OpenStax (OER)

Sidlow and Henschen. GOVT 12: Principles of American Government. 2025

Reti. 2023. Introduction to California Government and Politics. (OER)

Van Vechten. 2021. California Politics: A Primer.

Type of Class/Course: Degree Credit

Course Objectives:

At the conclusion of this course, the student should 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 Level Student Learning Outcomes

SLO1: Summarize arguments or an unusual current topic.

SLO2: Identify and analyze the process of self government

SLO3: Evaluate and analyze components of government, special interest groups, and the media as they relate to the dissemination of information.

#### Local Level General Education Learning Outcomes

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the rights and obligations of individual citizens in the political system established under the U.S. Constitution
2. Analyze the influence of major social, cultural, economic, and political forces on human behavior and institutions using the major concepts, models, and concerns developed through the social sciences in contemporary as well as historical settings and in a variety of cultural contexts.
3. Apply research methodologies employed in social scientific inquiry.
4. Demonstrate the principles, concepts, models of value systems, and ethics framework employed in social scientific inquiry

#### 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 non- participation 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

Learning Activities Required Outside of Class:

The students in this class will spend a minimum of 6 hours per week outside of the regular class time doing the following:

1. Studying
2. Completing required reading
3. Written work

Methods of Instruction:

1. Class discussion of current problems
2. Lectures by the instructor
3. Audio-visual presentations

Methods of Evaluation:

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.

1. In-class or take-home examinations
2. Research papers or projects
3. Written assignments including substantial research paper
4. Analytical papers
5. Simulations
6. Oral presentations

7. Participation in class discussions and debates

Supplemental Data:

TOP Code:	220700: Political Science
SAM Priority Code:	E: Non-Occupational
Distance Education:	Online; Offline
Funding Agency:	Y: Not Applicable(funds not used)
Program Status:	1: Program Applicable
Noncredit Category:	Y: Not Applicable, Credit Course
Special Class Status:	N: Course is not a special class
Basic Skills Status:	N: Course is not a basic skills course
Prior to College Level:	Y: Not applicable
Cooperative Work Experience:	N: Is not part of a cooperative work experience education program
Eligible for Credit by Exam:	E: Credit By Exam
Eligible for Pass/No Pass:	C: Pass/No Pass
Taft College General Education:	IG4H: IGETC Area 4H LAHI: Local Course American History LSBS: Local GE Social/Behavioral Sci
Disciplines List:	Political Science