

BUTTE COLLEGE

COURSE OUTLINE

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION

POS 2 - United States Government

3 Unit(s)

Prerequisite(s): NONE

Recommended Prep: Reading Level V; English Level IV

Transfer Status: CSU/UC

51 hours Lecture

An introduction to United States and California government and politics, including their constitutions, political institutions and processes, and political actors. Examination of political behavior, political issues, and public policy. POS 2 partially satisfies U.S. History, Constitution and American Ideas requirement at the CSU. (C-ID POLS 110).

II. OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Explain the founding and development of the U.S. Constitution.
- B. Identify and evaluate institutions and political processes within the United States and California.
- C. Discuss and analyze contemporary political issues and operations in the United States and California.
- D. Explain the civil liberties and civil rights of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions.
- E. Analyze the role of culture, diversity and ideology in shaping public opinion and public policy in the United States and California.
- F. Analyze how to effectively participate in politics at the national, state, county and/or city levels.

III. COURSE CONTENT

A. Unit Titles/Suggested Time Schedule

Lecture	
<u>Topics</u>	<u>Hours</u>
1. The political philosophies of the framers of the U.S. Constitution and critics of the Constitution.	6.00
2. The process of amending and interpreting the U.S. Constitution and California constitution.	6.00
3. The theory and practice of federalism.	6.00
4. Contemporary operations of United States political institutions and processes, including the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government and nongovernmental institutions.	5.50
5. The rights and liberties of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions.	5.50
6. Contemporary operations of California state and local political institutions within the framework of federal-state relations.	5.50
7. Individual and group political behavior of Americans and Californians within the frameworks established by the U.S. Constitution and California constitution, such as elections, interest groups, political parties, and the media.	5.50

8. Factors that shape politics and policymaking including diversity, political culture, political socialization, political ideologies and public opinion.	5.50
9. Domestic, economic, and foreign issues and policies.	5.50
Total Hours	51.00

IV. **METHODS OF INSTRUCTION**

- A. Lecture
- B. Group Discussions
- C. Guest Speakers
- D. Homework: Students are required to complete two hours of outside-of-class homework for each hour of lecture
- E. Discussion

V. **METHODS OF EVALUATION**

- A. Exams/Tests
- B. Papers
- C. Class participation

VI. **EXAMPLES OF ASSIGNMENTS**

- A. Reading Assignments
 1. Select the article focusing on comparative election process (Federal and State) from your supplemental edited volume. Read the article and be prepared to discuss it in class. Focus your discussion on executive, and legislative positions. How do term limits differ (e.g. federal to state) in terms of different impacts on how elections are organized.
 2. Read the article on Veto power. Be able to discuss how the president of the U.S. uses veto power. Contrast Andrew Jackson's use of veto power with the way in which president Clinton used veto. Discuss how president Ronald Reagan used the threat of veto power.
- B. Writing Assignments
 1. Write a three page essay on comparisons and contrasts between Republican and Democratic View's on tax reform. Your essay should include general differences in the way(s) both Republicans and Democrats interpret "free-market" views on taxation, revenue building, and banking regulation.
 2. Write a short essay on how the economic theories of John Maynard Keynes has influenced Federal economic policy making over the last 4 years. Focus specifically on Keynes views on government spending on infrastructure.
- C. Out-of-Class Assignments
 1. This week two of the candidates running for Congress (opposing one another) will be in town campaigning; attend both campaign events. Be able to discuss the major similarities and differences of the two events. Also, note differences in the makeup of the audiences.
 2. Attend the student debate on campus dealing with diversity and education. Be prepared to discuss in class. Know what "Affirmative Action" is; how was this idea is treated by various parties in the debate. Were there alternative views to affirmative action presented?

VII. **RECOMMENDED MATERIALS OF INSTRUCTION**

Textbooks:

- A. Janda, B., Goldman, H. The Challenge of Democracy. 11th Edition. AP Associated Press, 2011.
- B. Patterson, T.E.. We The People. 10th Edition. McGraw Hill, 2012.

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