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Course Outline for POLI 12

INTRODUCTION TO CALIFORNIA STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Effective: Fall 2009

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

POLI 12 — INTRODUCTION TO CALIFORNIA STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT — 3.00 units

Organization and operation of government and politics at the state, county and municipal level; emphasis on current issues and the influences of historical, geographical, political, economic and social factors on public policy. Strongly recommended: Eligibility for English 1A. 3 hours lecture.

3.00 Units Lecture

Prerequisite

ENG 1A - Critical Reading and Composition

ENG 100B - Reading, Reasoning, and Writing II
or

ENG 104 - Integrated Reading and Writing II

Grading Methods:

Optional

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT:

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

Before entering the course a student should be able to:

A. ENG1A

B. ENG100B

1. use strategies to assess a text's difficulty, purpose, and main idea prior to the act of reading
2. annotate a text during the act of reading
3. employ strategies that enable a critical evaluation of a text
4. respond critically to a text through class discussions and writing
5. use concepts of paragraph and essay structure and development to analyze his/her own and others' essays
6. write effective, objective summaries of texts that avoid wording and sentence structure of the original
7. respond to texts drawing on personal experience and other texts
8. organize coherent essays around a central idea or a position
9. apply structural elements in writing that are appropriate to the audience and purpose
10. provide appropriate and accurate evidence to support positions and conclusions
11. demonstrate academic integrity and responsibility, particularly when integrating the exact language and ideas of an outside text into one's own writing
12. utilize effective grammar recall to check sentences for correct grammar and mechanics
13. proofread his/her own and others' prose

C. ENG104

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

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

- A. define the critical issues facing the various governmental units
- B. analyze concept of federalism and evaluate its evolution and impact on the California political system and public policy making
- C. analyze the history and conflict of federal, state relations; and of state and local relations; and intergovernmental relations
- D. interpret historical and political events in the framework of California's history and State Constitutional structure: federal, state, local
- E. explain the operation of state, local, intergovernmental relations within the political processes
- F. describe California's historical development in relation to its political, cultural, geographical, psychological, economic, and social development
- G. identify the development and implementation and enforcement of public policy at state, city, county, special and regional governments
- H. interpret political events in framework of different governmental structures and processes at the state, city, county, special and

- regional governments
- I. describe California's unique characteristics contributing to its political development
- J. analyze California State Constitution and establishment of local charters
- K. analyze California government in action: economic and social public policy making at the state, city, county, special and regional governments
- L. describe the historical development of California's Political Party's and interest groups/organizations
- M. discuss and evaluate the contemporary roles of political parties, media, and interest groups at State and Local level
- N. identify, distinguish, interpret and explain the institutions, roles and processes of political parties; interest groups and organizations, the media, and the public, at the State and Local levels
- O. assess the development, interaction and contemporary roles state, city, county, special and regional governments
- P. identify, distinguish and explain the development and roles of State governmental structures, institutions, and political processes, i.e. executives; legislatures; judiciaries; bureaucracies
- Q. identify, distinguish and explain the development of local governmental structures, institutions, and political processes, i.e. mayors and city managers; councils and Board of Supervisors; judiciaries; bureaucracies, special districts
- R. assess campaigns and elections at the State and Local level
- S. identify and explain electoral process at State and Local levels: i.e. indirect v. direct forms of voting, i.e. representative v. propositions, referendums, and recalls; district v. at large elections; and regional and special district process
- T. analyze and explain budgetary process, revenue sources, spending at the state, city, county, special and regional governments
- U. analyze, discuss, describe California's unique diversity, culture, psychological, and socialization in relation to governments, politics, processes at the state, city, county, special and regional governments
- V. compare and contrast inputs and outcomes of various ethnic groups including, Native (California) Americans; European Americans, Spanish (Latin) Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans African Americans on California politics and society
- W. demonstrate an appreciation for California's unique multicultural history experiences and contributions from ethnic cultures other than their own
- X. Discuss ethnic related issues such as:
 1. Assimilation versus cultural uniqueness
 2. Open ("color blind") public policies
 3. Differences in perceptions and values between various ethnic groups critique and evaluate political experiences, referencing and incorporating multicultural state and local society into procedure, process and decision and policy-making.

V. CONTENT:

- A. The structure of the community, federalism; i.e. relationship of federal, state, city, county, special and regional governments;
- B. Structure of the community: i.e. state, city, county, municipal and regional governments;
- C. State government: Executive, legislative, judicial; and bureaucracies;
- D. Local government: Executive, legislative, judicial; and bureaucracies;
- E. Lawmaking and public policy implementation process at state, city, county, special and regional governments;
- F. Area-wide governments: Regional governments; intergovernmental, and special districts;
- G. Selected governmental agencies; i.e. bureaucracies, commissions, grand juries;
- H. Budgets, taxing and spending policies; setting priorities;
- I. Urban redevelopment, tax policies, and land use and zoning;
- J. Campaigns and elections at the State and Local levels:
 1. Election and appointment process of state, city, county, special and regional governments;
 2. Election structures and processes;
 3. Role and responsibilities of leaders, public officials, governmental institutions, "interest groups", and citizens;
 4. Role and responsibilities of political parties and the media;
- K. Intergovernmental relations of National, State, and Local governments and politics
 1. Historical patterns and influence of national affairs on state, city, county, special and regional governments politics and public policies;
 2. Contemporary patterns and influence of national and state affairs on city, municipal, regional governments and special districts;
 3. Role and responsibilities of leaders, public officials, governmental institutions and citizens;
- L. Intergovernmental relations of State and Local governments and politics
 1. Historical patterns and influence of state affairs on local governments and politics;
 2. Contemporary patterns and influence of state, city, county, special and regional governments;
 3. Role and responsibilities of leaders, public officials, governmental institutions and citizens;
- M. Ideology and Politics
 1. Concept of political ideas and approaches to governments, politics, and processes;
 2. Role of ideology (ideas) from historical context relating to development of California's unique political, cultural, psychological, social, economic, influence on public policy, governmental institutions, politics, and processes;
- N. The following cultural groups will be studied in relation to the historical to modern contributions and involvement in the political processes of intergovernmental relations within national, state, and local governments and in the process of state, city, county, special and regional governments; additionally, as leaders, public officials, and citizens' role: Native (California) Americans, European Americans, Spanish (Latin) Americans, Mexican Americans, Asian Americans African Americans. Each group will be presented in relation, but limited to:
 1. History and background
 - a. Immigration and migration
 - b. Representation of culture, social, economic, and political impact of the ethnic groups in California Politics and Society
 1. e.g. Native (California) Americans – from traditional political societies to Spanish Missions to "Sovereignty" and self-reliance;
 2. e.g. European Americans – from Russia's Fort Ross to early Europe-American fur traders and settlers to the Bear Flag Revolt to the Gold Rush to the present
 3. e.g. Mexican Americans – from Spanish migration to legal and illegal immigration to "Chicano culture" to the 'silent majority' to the diversity of State's Latino population
 4. e.g. Asian Americans – from early immigration patterns and forced labor to present day diversity of State's Asian population
 5. e.g. African American – from U.S. Constitution's "Runaway Slave Provision" to the 1850 California State Constitution's "Fugitive Slave Act" to WWII to present day influence
 - c. Elements of consensus and conflict expressed in State and Local procedures, policies, and decision-making
 - d. Ethnic identity and pride
 - e. Political, social, cultural, and economic issues
 - f. Relations between ethnic groups
 - g. Issues of immigration and migration to policies of affirmative action
 - h. Issues, process, decisions relating to and impacting specific ethnic populations
 - i. Assimilation versus cultural uniqueness
 - j. Open ("colorblind") society
 - k. Differences and similarities in perceptions and values between various ethnic groups
 - l. What ethnic groups bring to California society

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Field Trips** - Excursions to state/local government offices, field trips (some optional)
- B. **Audio-visual Activity** - Use of appropriate audio-video media
- C. **Lecture** - Formal and informal lectures, discussions, guest presenters
- D. **Discussion** - Seminars and class discussions
- E. **Projects** - Research project and/or Oral presentation
- F. Role playing simulations

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Reading from handouts and text: 1. Reading from Gerston and Christensen, Chapters 1 and 2, analyzing the historical and political issues of immigration and immigration policies influencing California politics; 2. Reading from Handout: analyzing the difference between a city, a county, and a special district. B. Writing assignments 1. Research and compare and contrast two political parties in California. 2. Find the most recent census data for your city or county (at the library or on the World Wide Web) and compare the statistics for your local area to those for the state of California. Analyze the results; 3. Compare and contrast the powers of the Assembly Speaker and Senate President Pro-Tem. How have these powers changed over the years? To what extent do they reflect the personalities of those who hold them? C. Class discussion 1. "In California the most important policy decisions are made by the voters, not by elected officials"; what is the meaning of this quote? Is it less or more significant today than in the past? 2. Discuss campaign techniques in State (local) elections. Which techniques are most important in State (local) and why? 3. Discuss the pro's and con's of term limits. What is the effect on the selection of legislators and the legislative process? 4. Discuss the advantages and disadvantages of district versus at-large city council elections. D. Small group discussions 1. Discuss the historical and contemporary significance of party organizations on State (local) politics and government; 2. Discuss: "Weak political parties enhance the influence of interest groups in California politics." Consider how group power in California would be affected by stronger political parties. 3. Should judges be elected or approved by the voters? Does this make them too political? Would judges appointed for life terms, like the members of the U.S. Supreme Court be better? How? 4. Discuss the state's (local) major sources of revenues and expenditures; what is the role of voters in the budget making process. E. Research Project/ Presentation 1. Select your (an) elected state/local representative, researching his/her election, including campaign policy positions, contributions, etc, connecting his/her legislative voting record, public positions, to assess objective, rational, motivation, and influences within the political process....; F. Field Trips 1. State Capitol; City Council and/or Board of Supervisors meetings; California Supreme Court

VIII. EVALUATION:

A. **Methods**

- 1. Exams/Tests
- 2. Research Projects
- 3. Oral Presentation
- 4. Group Projects
- 5. Class Participation

B. **Frequency**

- 1. Two midterms
- 2. Oral presentations
- 3. Eight to ten quizzes
- 4. Three to Five written assignments

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

- 1. Gerston, Larry, and Christensen, Terry *California Politics and Government: A Practical Approach*. 8th ed., Thomson Wadsworth Publishing, 2006.
- 2. Saltzstein, Alan *Governing America's Urban Areas*, Thomson-Wadsworth, 0.
- 3. Lawrence, David *California: The Politics of Diversity*. 5th ed., Thomson Wadsworth, 2007.
- 4. Lawrence, Giventer *Governing California*, McGraw Hill, 2004.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Green/Blue books
- B. Original source documents, case studies and daily news sources