



El Camino College
COURSE OUTLINE OF RECORD – Official

Course Acronym:	POLS
Course Number:	C1000H
Descriptive Title:	American Government and Politics - Honors
Division:	Behavioral and Social Sciences
Department:	Political Science
Course Disciplines:	Political Science
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. This is an honors course. Note: Students may take either POLS C1000 or POLS C1000H. Duplicate credit will not be awarded for POLS C1000 and POLS C1000H.
Prerequisite:	
Co-requisite:	
Recommended Preparation:	Eligibility for English 1A
Enrollment Limitation:	
Hours Lecture (per week):	3
Hours Laboratory (per week):	0
Outside Study Hours:	6
Total Course Hours:	54
Course Units:	3
Grading Method:	Letter Grade only
Credit Status:	Credit, degree applicable
Transfer CSU:	Yes
Effective Date:	Fall 2017
Transfer UC:	Yes
Effective Date:	Fall 2017
General Education: ECC	Area 2B - Social and Behavioral Science
Term:	
Other:	
CSU GE:	Area D - Social Sciences

	Term:	
	Other:	
	IGETC:	Area 4 - Social and Behavioral Sciences
	Term:	
	Other:	
	SLO #1 Articles and Amendments In a multiple choice test, students will demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of the United States Constitution including its Articles and Amendments, as well as those for the government of California. SLO #2 Linkage Mechanisms In a multiple choice or written essay test, students will demonstrate an understanding of how political parties and interest groups serve as channels for popular participation, and compare/contrast the techniques they use to do so. SLO #3 The Executive Branch In a written essay or multiple choice exam, students will demonstrate an understanding of the various roles played by the President and California Governor, the political resources available to them to meet the expectations associated with those roles, and how those resources are limited.	
Student Learning Outcomes:		
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.	
Major Topics:	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
Total Lecture Hours:	54
Total Laboratory Hours:	0
Total Hours:	54
Primary Method 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. Methods of evaluation and appropriate representative assignments will be determined at the discretion of local faculty. 1) Substantial writing assignments
Typical Assignment Using Primary Method of Evaluation:	Ross Perot's effort to create a new political party was another in a line of third party efforts in American Politics. None of these efforts has succeeded in capturing the presidency within the last several decades, although the ideas advanced by some minor parties have had important impacts. How do you explain the transitory nature of third parties and their inability to capture important offices during the twentieth century? Write a six- to eight-page paper in which you address this question as well as provide an analysis and evaluation of the roles played by third parties in recent and contemporary politics.
Critical Thinking Assignment 1:	Although Federalism in constitutional terms refers only to the relationship between the national government and the states, public policy making is also influenced by local governments. In most policy areas there is an ongoing interaction among all 3 levels of government. Select a policy area (such as welfare, education, environmental regulation, transportation, etc.) and write an eight- to ten-page paper in which you assess the current state of American federalism by using that policy area as an example. Consider the roles played by each level of government, whether any one level of government is dominant, and whether our federal system ought to be changed. You should probably start with a brief explanation of your understanding of contemporary federalism and a brief overview of what has happened recently in the policy area of your choice.
Critical Thinking Assignment 2:	By establishing separate legislative and executive branches, the founders seem to have set an opportunity; some would say an invitation, for conflict between the president and congress. This has seemed especially true when it comes to foreign policy. In an eight to

	ten-page paper please address the following questions: What do you understand to be the foreign policy responsibilities of congress and those of the president? Is the relationship between the branches only one of conflict, or are there instances of cooperation? What explains why there might be cooperation instead of conflict? Conclude your paper with an evaluation of which branch ought to be more dominant in foreign policy.
Other Evaluation Methods:	Completion, Essay Exams, Matching Items, Multiple Choice, Term or Other Papers, True/False, Written Homework
Instructional Methods:	Discussion, Group Activities, Lecture, Multimedia presentations
If other:	
Work Outside of Class:	Answer questions, Required reading, Study, Written work (such as essay/composition/report/analysis/research)
If Other:	
Up-To-Date Representative Texts:	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.
Alternative Texts:	
Required Supplementary Readings:	
Other Required Materials:	
Requisite:	
Category:	
Requisite course(s): List both prerequisites and corequisites in this box.	
Requisite and Matching skill(s):Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s).	
Requisite Skill:	
Requisite Skill and Matching Skill(s): Bold the requisite skill(s). If applicable	
Requisite course:	
Requisite and Matching skill(s):Bold	

the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s).	
Requisite Skill:	Eligibility for English 1A
Requisite Skill and Matching skill(s): Bold the requisite skill. List the corresponding course objective under each skill(s). If applicable	This course involves reading college level textbooks, developing research projects, essays, and answering essay questions. A student's success in this class will be enhanced if they have these skills. Summarize, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize college-level texts. Write a well-reasoned, well-supported expository essay that demonstrates application of the academic writing process.
Enrollment Limitations and Category:	
Enrollment Limitations Impact:	
Course Created by:	Eduardo Munoz
Date:	10/15/2015
Original Board Approval Date:	12/19/2016
Last Reviewed and/or Revised by:	Laurie Houske, Josh Casper
Date:	10/10/2024
Last Board Approval Date:	11/18/2024
Effective Term:	FA 2025