The Department of Government offers two challenge examinations. The first examination fulfills the state requirements for proficiency and knowledge of the U.S. Constitution, National Government, and California State and Local Government. The second examination fulfills the state requirements for proficiency and knowledge of California constitution and government. Both exams will be administered by the Department of Government at CSUS to any currently enrolled CSUS student who wishes to challenge rather than enroll in classes to demonstrate proficiency.

These examinations do not constitute the challenge of the actual courses. There are neither units nor grades awarded for successful completion of the exams, but certification that the requirements have been satisfied. Government majors cannot take the challenge exams. GOVT 1 (or its equivalent) is required for the major. Government majors may also take GOVT 150 instead of GOVT 1.

Each exam is comprised of 100 multiple-choice questions and is two hours in length. A passing score is 70 or more. No student will be allowed to take either examination more than once. A fee of $5.00 (exact cash) per exam will be charged.

There are no specific dates for these exams. Examination dates and times are scheduled on an individual basis by calling the department’s Administrative Support Coordinator at (916) 278-7696. Your Sac State ID number is required.

A reading list of recommended texts is below.

Suggested Reading List

I. UNITED STATES NATIONAL GOVERNMENT (U.S. Constitution)

The challenge examination for American National Government covers American political and Constitutional history, federalism, civil liberties, political parties, elections, interest groups, the three branches of government at the national level as well as the bureaucracy.

Material discussed in the books listed below is on the examination. A thorough reading of one of these texts plus the additional readings should be adequate preparation for most students. The edition of the text should be no more than 4 or 5 years old.

1. Larry Berman and Bruce Allen Murphy, Approaching Democracy, 8th ed.
2. Barbour and Wright, Keeping the Republic, 5th ed.

Additional readings:
Federalist papers 10,15,51,78. Brutus, Anti-Federalist 1. These can be found on the Internet.

II. CALIFORNIA STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The challenge examination for California State and Local Government encompasses political and Constitutional history, political parties and interest groups, candidate and ballot measure elections, the three branches of government at the state level, and local government.

Material discussed in the books listed below is on the examination. A thorough reading of one of the following texts should be adequate preparation for most students. The edition of the text should be no more than 4 or 5 years old.