

GOVT 96, Section 1

Essential California Government and Politics
Fridays, 1-5 pm
(will meet 4 consecutive Fridays, beginning September 1)

Mary Kirlin, Tahoe 3036, kirlinm@csus.edu

Office hours Fridays 11:30-12:45 or by appointment until September 25

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

GOVT 96 is a course specifically designed for students who have fulfilled the American Constitution and Government portion of the legislatively mandated American Institutions (AI) requirement, but who have not fulfilled the portion of the AI requirement for instruction on California state and local government. This course focuses specifically on California state and local government. This course does NOT satisfy any portion of the General Education requirement.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Summarize key points from California history that shaped the current governmental system we have today.
2. Describe the structure of the three branches of California government – the legislative branch, the plural executive system, and the judicial branch
3. Explain the concept of federalism and how the national government shapes the choices California is able to make in governing itself
4. Explain the relationship between various levels of government in California including the state government, county governments, municipal governments, and special districts, including school boards
5. Discuss in some depth at least one area of public policy challenges currently facing the state

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

Anagnoson et al. *Governing California*, 6th Edition. Norton Publishing. New York. 2017.

STUDENT EVALUATIONS:

Students will demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes through:

- 2 quizzes on the assigned readings (30 pts.) September 8 and 15.
- 1 final exam (30 pts.) September 22 or, possibly, a take home.
- *3ish* page paper on a policy issue facing California (30 pts.) Due September 22.

- A total of 10 questions based on the readings and/or current state/local government events, that you would like discussed in class. We will discuss in class the first day. No more than 4 questions can be submitted per session. Questions will be graded on clarity, content and depth. One point per question. Must be submitted by email (to kirlinm@csus.edu) by 11am the day of class.

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY AND PROCEDURES: [University policy manual](#)

I expect you to adhere to University policies on academic honesty.

STUDENT WITH DISABILITIES SERVICES: Please let me know immediately if you need assistance so that I may plan ahead.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Class attendance is critical because this class only meets four times. Each absence will result in a reduction of 10 points from the total points earned.

TRANSPORTATION: One class meeting will be at the State Capitol Building. It is each student’s responsibility to find a way to get to and from the Capitol (which is served by bus lines, light rail, bike lanes, public parking garages, or about a four mile walk each way).

SCHEDULE

	Topic	Reading Assignments
September 1	Orientation to the course; Political History of CA; CA Constitution	
September 8	Legislative, Executive and Judicial Branches; Direct democracy	Skim chapter 1, read chapter 2, 5, 6, and 7. Quiz on readings for today.
September 15	Local governments; State budget processes; policy issues	Chapters 8-10 Quiz on readings for today.
September 22	Tour of State Capitol; Media, interest groups, parties and elections; Final Exam	Chapters 3 and 4 Meet at State Capitol; Final Exam including readings for today.

Note:

I will be leaving the University at the end of September. I will send you your final grades by September 26. If you have ANY question, please contact me ASAP so we can resolve issues before the end of the month.