

Political Science 180: California State & Local Government

Fall 2019

Section 06: Tuesdays 6:00pm – 8:50pm

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Office Hours: By appointment or drop-in (check Canvas calendar for each week's times)
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WELCOME

California is a country living in the body of a U.S. state. If it were an independent country, California would be the 36th most populous in the world (out of 234), ahead of Canada, Australia, Chile, Malaysia, and the Netherlands. It is an economic superpower, ranking ahead of every country on the planet except China, Germany, Japan, and the combined remainder of the United States. The economy of Los Angeles alone rivals Australia's, and even just the Sacramento regional economy outproduces not just Budapest but the entire nation of Hungary. California's diversity—human, geologic, and geographic—is legendary. Its place on the global stage as a driver of worldwide culture, trends, and innovation is unrivaled. It has produced more Nobel Prize laureates than any country except the rest of the USA, the UK, and Germany.

But California isn't an independent country. As far as the U.S. Constitution is concerned, it is indistinguishable from Rhode Island (with a statewide population smaller than Sacramento).

How does one of the planet's most powerful and important countries govern itself as a U.S. state? In this course, we'll explore the history (including its dark underbelly) and scope of California as a state. We'll focus on its institutions and politics, and their two-way relationship with the culture, psychology, national context, and endlessly changing demography of the place. We'll hone our skills at the tools of government, whether for future careers (and virtually every career is influenced in some way by state or local government) or for effective citizenship in influencing policy.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK & RESOURCES

I have structured the course materials required for this course to minimize your expenses, and the class meets the Low Cost Course Materials designation by the university. I do this to help make your education more affordable, not to reduce the amount of reading. There will be many required readings you'll access online for free through Canvas.

Required Textbook: *Governing California in the Twenty-First Century* by J. Theodore Anagnoson, Gerald Bonetto, J. Vincent Buck, Jolly Emrey, James J. Kelleher, Nadine Koch, and Melissa Michelson

Publisher Information: W. W. Norton & Company; Seventh edition (July 1, 2019)

ISBN-13: 978-0393675368

The number of options for buying or renting the textbook can be confusing. I don't care which edition of the book you get, but in this case you will not save money by renting or buying a used book. What is critical is that you get the Inquisitive access code, since our reading quizzes will use that system. If you don't need a paper copy, your best option is getting the Inquisitive code (which includes the full eBook) from the bookstore for \$21.25. If you do get the paper copy (remember that the Hornet bookstore has a price match), it is very likely that you'll be able to sell it back to the bookstore later, since the used book will be assigned for some other sections of POLS 180 in the future. Here's a comparison of your options:

Cheapest Option	Bad Option	Bad Option	Bad Option	Paper Option
Hornet Bookstore Option #2	Hornet Bookstore Option #3	Hornet Bookstore Option #3		Hornet Bookstore Option #1
ebook only from Hornet Bookstore	Rent used book from Hornet Bookstore	Buy used book from Hornet bookstore	Buy new from Amazon	Buy new from Hornet Bookstore
(Access code included)	Buy access code	Buy access code	(Access code included)	(Access code included)
\$21.25	\$42.38	\$53.00	\$46.00	\$42.25

Other Required Readings:

1. **Canvas:** I will post links to academic journal articles, news stories, reports, and videos each week. Except when noted otherwise, these are required.

2. You are expected to scan one or both of these news aggregator sites at least twice each week, read at least two linked news articles related to this course (hint: most articles about President Trump are not considered “related to this course”), and post one reflective comment about each article on the course discussion within Canvas.
 - a. **Rough & Tumble** (<https://www.rtumble.com/>)
 - b. **CalMatters** (<https://calmatters.org/>)

OPTIONAL TEXTBOOK & RESOURCES

To deepen your understanding of the subject, I recommend these optional books, which are available at the Library (and, for purchase or rent, at the Bookstore):

- *Governing California: Politics, Government, and Public Policy in the Golden State.* Ethan Rarick, editor.
- *Democracy in California: Politics and Government in the Golden State.* Janiski & Masugi.
- *California Crack Up: How Reform Broke the Golden State and How We Can Fix It.* Matthews & Paul.

REQUIRED PLATFORMS & ACADEMIC RESOURCES:

This course makes extensive use of Canvas for required readings, assignments, discussions, surveys, games and simulations, updates, and other elements essential to the course. Most assignments will be submitted by you exclusively within Canvas, and I will not accept paper copies in class or by email. Within Canvas, we will also be using:

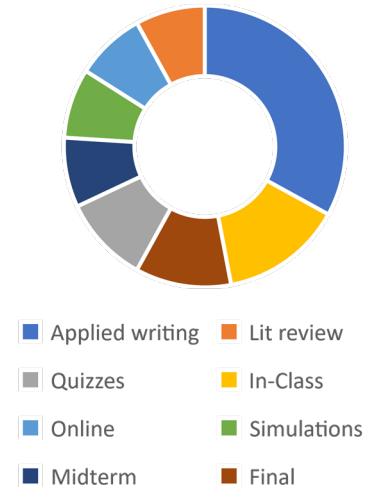
- Sign Up
 - Inquizitive (required)
 - Top Hat (required; let me know if you have not received an email invitation from TopHat)
 - Badgr (optional; we won't be using this until week 5)
- Built Into Canvas
 - Turnitin (required)
 - Respondus (required)

You must sign into Canvas on a regular basis—in class and at least twice per week. You'll likely end up signing in almost daily. We will use Top Hat and Canvas in class for required and graded activities. These can be accessed via laptop, tablet (iOS or Android), or smartphone (iOS or Android). I strongly recommend using a laptop or tablet rather than a phone. For the midterm and final exams, a laptop or compatible tablet is required. If you do not have access to a laptop or tablet, please let me know so that we can make arrangements.

GRADING

Grading is based on many small assessments rather than a single high-stakes paper or exam. I've designed the assignments and assessments to give you the opportunity to use your growing skills and mastery to create, to play, to demonstrate, to apply, and to extend. But relax...the point of this is that at no single moment will your entire grade or future be on the line. Your grade is broken down as follows:

Applied professional writing assignments (4)	33%
Literature review	8%
Reading quizzes (Inquizitive) (10)	10%
In-class engagement/contribution/presentations/ Top Hat assessments, assignments & exit tickets	14%
Canvas discussions/games/peer assessments	8%
Policy proposal, public comment & simulations	9%
Midterm exam	7%
Final exam	11%



For the four applied professional writing assignments, your highest scoring assignment will count for 150% and your lowest will count for 50% of its scored value.

Late work will be reduced by 10% for each day it is late and will not be accepted at all after two days. For instance, most writing assignments are due by 1:00pm on Sunday prior to the class. Turning the assignment in at 1:15pm will incur a grade penalty of 10%. Turning it in on Monday at 1:15pm will incur a penalty of 20%. And after 1:00pm on Tuesday, it will not be accepted.

Skipping an assignment altogether will result in a 50% penalty. For example, not turning in the literature review will mean both zero points (of 8% possible) toward your grade, but also a *reduction* of 4% from the final grade.

The midterm and final are both cumulative. In other words, the final will cover concepts and material from the full course, not just the weeks after the midterm. The exams will draw from (1) textbook readings, (2) other assigned readings, videos, and instructional materials, and (3) lectures and discussions. **I do not offer makeup exams.**

You are an adult and I don't take attendance after the add/drop period. However, active presence is the only way to earn graded credit for "In-class engagement/contribution/presentations/Top Hat assessments, assignments & exit tickets" and for the simulations. It is mathematically impossible to earn an A or B grade without participating in class. The learning of other students depends on your participation, especially in simulations.

THE MAIN ASSIGNMENTS

If this is your first upper division course, prepare yourself and your schedule. You will be reading, a lot. And you will be answering, assessing, and applying, all the time. I'm not a living Wikipedia article and this class isn't about memorizing dates, names, and random facts. Instead, you'll be learning the key structures, institutions, trends, and history primarily from your reading. Then we'll apply that learning in the classroom, with cases, exercises, simulations, and projects. When I lecture, it will be to challenge our thinking, to place our learning in context, and to extend ideas and concepts. In other words, don't expect lectures to summarize the readings or highlight the key points that might be on an exam later.

You will be writing every week. This is frequent but short writing, usually about one page but never more than three. There will be two basic types of writing: *applied writing* in various professional, career-related formats and *synthetic writing* in an academic format summarizing the key points and implications of scholarly research and published reports. University policy requires upper-division General Education courses to include writing assignments that collectively total more than 1,500 words. Your grade on each writing assignment will include both an evaluation of your response to the specific assignment and an evaluation of your writing, including style, grammar, and clarity.

In class, we'll be doing two large simulations. Congratulations, you're now a Senator, Governor, cabinet secretary, or professional advocate. You're a mayor or a county supervisor or school board trustee. We'll be playing computer games, creating and making things, and using our class and group discussions to tug and pull to build true mastery. Like all play and creativity, your success and your fun will depend on your preparation and your exposure to new ideas. You will have no fun and will learn little in these simulations, discussions, and game unless you've really dived into the reading and the writing between classes.

1. **Applied professional writing assignments.** You'll write four assignments that are "real-world" work products. This gives you the opportunity to learn and practice writing for your career. You will hone your skill at expressing ideas, analyzing information, and describing concepts for different audiences and in different styles. I will share a template or example on Canvas for each assignment. These assignments vary in length from 250 words to three pages. If you achieve a grade of B+ or higher on some of the assignments, you will also be issued a digital badge through Badgr (on Canvas) to provide evidence of your competency to employers or graduate schools (more on this later in the semester). The four assignments are:
 - Legislative bill analysis.
 - Application for official appointment.
 - Memo to the mayor.
 - Newspaper opinion piece (alternate assignment: campaign video ad as a group project).

2. **Literature review.** Using resources at the University Library and Google Scholar, you'll search, read, and analyze the academic research literature on a policy topic you'll choose by the second week. You'll write a three-page integrative summary of the literature (including at least six, peer-reviewed academic journal articles), plus a list of references incorporating the cited research. I will share examples and a guide on Canvas. This is the sort of competency that every university graduate is expected to have mastered, whether for graduate school admission or for analyst- or management-level professional employment.
3. **Reading quizzes.** In each of the ten weeks when we're reading *Governing California in the Twenty First Century*, you'll take an adaptive quiz using the Inquizitive platform. These quizzes assess your familiarity, recall, and comprehension of the reading. They're based on the latest learning science and use artificial intelligence to help strengthen your mastery. You must achieve the target score on the quiz by the 6pm start time of class in order to receive a grade. However, you can continue to take the quiz after class to consolidate your competency, which is a great way to maximize your readiness for the midterm and final weeks later. The quizzes will be unlocked weeks in advance, so if you're the type of student who likes to read ahead, go for it.
4. **Simulations.** Over the course of semester, you will play the role of a legislator, governor, mayor, county supervisor, city councilmember, school board trustee, and/or other official. The best way to learn and understand the dynamics and forces operating on state and local government is immersion in the institutions. You will write a proposal for state or local legislation, and try to get it enacted. In class, you'll present two minutes of testimony on an issue pending before a simulated city council, school board, or county board of supervisors. The issue will be one that another student has proposed, and that other students are writing a staff memo about (as an applied professional writing assignment). You'll consider, debate, and vote on student proposals. Your grade for the simulations will be composed of the policy proposal, the public comment, and your participation, contribution, and demonstrated proficiency in the simulation itself. In addition, as a member of a group, you will produce a campaign video for a senatorial campaign.
5. **News Comments.** You'll scan a news aggregator site at least twice each week, read at least two linked news articles related to California state and/or local politics, and post one reflective comment about each article on the course discussion within Canvas.

Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings *	Main Assignment Due
August 27	Intro/Overview; State Government in Context		
September 3	Who Needs a Government, Anyway?	Chapter 1	Policy proposal; budget decider
September 10	Political History & Constitutional Evolution	Chapter 2	Literature Review; policy proposal peer review
September 17	Legislature	Chapter 5	Policy proposal revision; district profile post
September 24	Legislative simulation	Policy proposals	Bill Analysis
October 1	Executive Branch	Chapter 6	Bill Analysis peer review
October 8	Bureaucracy & Judiciary	Chapter 7	Application Letter
October 15	Budget & Finance	Chapter 8	Budget Game Proposal
October 22	Counties, schools & special districts	Chapter 9: pp 234-241 and 251-253	Bill Analysis revision
October 29	Cities & regions	Chapter 9: pp 242-250 and 254-260	Memo to the mayor: check-in outline
November 5	Review; local gov simulation (comment)	Policy proposals	MIDTERM; Public comment
November 12	Local gov simulation (deliberate)	Policy proposals	Memo to the mayor
November 19	Interest groups, media, participation, protest & engagement	Chapter 3	
November 26	Campaigns & elections, direct democracy, reform	Chapter 4	Op Ed or Campaign website
December 3	Review; Senate floor simulation	Bill analyses	Redistricting Game
December 10			FINAL

* plus additional required & supplementary readings/videos posted each week on Canvas

I adapt the course to you as we progress through the semester, which will sometimes mean changes in this schedule. Be sure to check for updates on Canvas, which will always have the most current, official schedule/plan/requirement for the class.

COURSE INFORMATION

Catalog Description: “*POLS 180. California State and Local Government.* California state, city, and county politics and government. Comparisons with governments in other states. Meets State requirements in California State and Local Governments. Permits students who have fulfilled U.S. Constitution requirement in another state to meet graduation requirements for California State and Local Governments.”

This course will cover Area US-3: California State and Local Government. You will be able to:

1. Explain the structure and functions of California’s constitution, including plural executive, legislative and judicial branches, local governments, and the function and history of direct democracy in California politics and government.
2. Describe the historical development of California’s political institutions, including California’s finance and budgetary processes, as well as its electoral system.
3. Explain the contributions of diverse groups to California’s political evolution.

In exploring this content, the course will strengthen your capacity in the Area D Learning Goals:

1. Describe and evaluate ethical and social values in their historical and cultural contexts.
2. Explain and apply the principles and methods of academic disciplines to the study of social and individual behavior.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of the role of human diversity in human society, e.g. race, ethnicity, class, age, ability/disability, sexual identity, gender and gender expression.
4. Explain and examine social dynamics and issues in their historical and cultural contexts.

You’ll be able to use these competencies to be an effective, engaged citizen in your state and community, and to understand how your future career paths interact with state and local governments. The course’s learning activities will strengthen your ability to write for and communicate with professional and public audiences, navigate politics at the individual and institutional level, and strategize and advocate for policy change.

CONDUCT

This is a course about politics, so we expect controversy and argument about things that matter. Learning happens when our current knowledge, assumptions, and boundaries are challenged—and it can be uncomfortable or even stressful. Assume positive intent, challenge ideas with civility and respect, and be both brave and humble.

- [View the Hornet Honor Code](#)
- [Academic Integrity Policy from Sac State](#)
- [NETIQUETTE](#)

TECHNOLOGY

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS

We will use Top Hat and Canvas in class for required and graded activities. These can be accessed via laptop, tablet (iOS or Android), or smartphone (iOS or Android). Some Top Hat activities can also be accessed using a basic phone with SMS text messaging capability. However, some in-class activities will involve typing responses of up to a few sentences. So I strongly recommend using a laptop or tablet rather than a phone.

For the midterm and final exams, a laptop or compatible tablet is required. If you do not have access to a laptop or tablet, you can checkout a laptop for free from Instructional Resources & Technology or the University Library.

Using these or other devices for non-class purposes (texting a friend, surfing the web, posting on social media, etc) is not allowed in class, except with advance approval. If you do so, I may bar the use of your device and require that it be turned off and stowed. This will prevent you from earning any grade points for Top Hat or Canvas activities in class. So please respect our class and avoid any non-instructional use of your phone or computer.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

If you have a documented disability and require assistance or academic accommodation, please contact Services for Students with Disabilities immediately to discuss eligibility. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities (SSWD) is located on the Sacramento State Lassen Hall 1008, 916-278-6955 (Phone), 916-278-7239 (TDD). For a complete listing of services and current business hours visit <http://www.csus.edu/sswd/>

Sacramento State is committed to ensuring that our online learning tools are usable by all students and faculty including those with disabilities. If you encounter any accessibility issues with course or instructional content, please contact our SSWD office. They will assist you with resolving the issue or, where appropriate, connect you with appropriate staff.

STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES

Sacramento State offers a wide variety of campus and online academic services. These include tutoring services, library services, advising services, and support for students experiencing hunger, homelessness, mental health, and other challenges. I've provided direct links to these services on Canvas.