

Pols1: Spring 2019 Essentials of Government Robert Friedman

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Addresses:

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sign up online on the canvas calendar, at least,
12 hours in advance

A basic course which examines the U.S. Constitution, the U.S. system of government and the ideas and values on which they are based. Fulfills GE Area D and CON+CA requirements. To select the section of this class (classroom or web) which best meets your needs, please refer to the guide posted on the web. The class also has an associated one-unit tutorial classes which meets TR 8:00A.M. or at the same time online. Enrollment in the tutorial course is not required but highly recommended.

As a result of your enrollment in the course, you should be able to do the following:

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, for example, race, ethnicity, class, age, ability/disability, sexual identity, gender and gender expression.
4. Explain and critically examine social dynamics and issues in their historical and cultural contexts.

Area US-2: US Constitution

1. Explain the political philosophies of the framers of the US Constitution, including the fundamental ideas of the Declaration of Independence; the Federalism-Anti-Federalism debate; ideas about representative democracy; checks and balances; and the foundations of the Bill of Rights and a limited Constitution.
2. Explain the characteristics, operation, and interaction of institutions in the US Constitution. A. Congress: Legislative process, operation and structure, and elections. B. Executive: Electoral College, unitary executive, exercise of executive power, and the functioning of the bureaucracy. C. Judicial: Judicial review, decision making, and selection.
3. Explain the rights and obligations of citizens under the US Constitution, including the Bill of Rights, and the incorporation of rights via the 14th Amendment.
4. Explain and analyze the history and legacy of civil rights and civil rights movements in relation to the US Constitution and legislation.
5. Explain and evaluate the function, role, and impact of campaigns and elections, interest groups, political parties, mass media, social movements, and public opinion on democracy in the United States.
6. Explain the relationship between state, local, and federal government, including enumerated, reserved, and concurrent powers under the US Constitution overtime.

Area US-3: California State and Local Government

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.

Grading Policy

*There will be **weekly quizzes** covering the assigned readings. These quizzes collectively represent 200 points. The lowest quiz score and any excused absence will not be averaged in computing the final grade.

* There will be **weekly tests** covering lecture, presentations and discussion. The tests collectively represent 150 points. The lowest test grade and any excused absence will not be averaged in computing the final grade.

*There are **two** essays (Insights) required, one essay per signup period The Insight component of the class is worth 50 points.

*A student may earn up to **40** extra credit points through attendance at designated events, Zoom Insight conferences with the instructor, oral participation, and submission of Commentaries.

Thresholds

A -- 380 points	B+ -- 355	C+ -- 310	D+ -- 260
A- 365	B -- 340	C -- 285	D -- 245
	B- -- 325	C- -- 270	D- -- 230

Texts

Ginsburg, We the People: 12th Core Edition ISBN 978-0-393-66463-8
Governing California 6th Edition ISBN 978-0-393-60369-9
 A discounted package of the texts above is available at the campus bookstore

Web Page—The World Wide Web is an integral part of this course. Reading assignments, the Insight schedule and Grades will be kept on the Web. **Any questions regarding grades** must be raised within a week of the posting of the grade.

Students with Disability: If you have a disability and require accommodations, you need to provide disability documentation to SSWD, Lassen Hall 1008, (916) 278-6955. Please discuss your accommodation needs with me after class or during my office hours early in the semester.

Academic Dishonesty: The attempt by a student to cheat on an exam or other academic assignment or to engage in plagiarism is a violation of a fundamental principle of academic honesty and integrity and will not be tolerated. At the very least, you will be given a 0 for the assignment. Other sanctions include automatic failure for the course and/or referral to Student Affairs.

* Plagiarism is the use of distinctive ideas or works belonging to another person without providing adequate acknowledgment of that person's contribution. Regardless of the means of appropriation, incorporating another's work into one's own requires adequate identification and acknowledgment. Plagiarism is doubly unethical because it deprives the author of the rightful credit and gives that credit to someone who has not earned it. It is not necessary when the material used is common knowledge. When the source is not noted, the following would constitute plagiarism:

1. Word-for-word copying.
2. The mosaic (to intersperse a few words of one's own here and there while, in essence, copying another's work).
3. The paraphrase (using someone's ideas, concepts, constructs, and the like without proper citation)
4. Fabrication (inventing or counterfeiting sources).
5. Ghost-written material (submitting another's effort as one's own).

Weekly List of Topics

Week 1:

Explanation of course requirements
Citizenry's knowledge of government

Week 2

American political values
Importance of government
Immigration: the immigrants, their lives and the political issues that surround them

Week 3

Constitutional framework and principles
Federalism – the changing role of the national and state governments

Week 4

Federalism and the Framers of the Constitution
Contemporary issues in federalism

Week 5

Civil Liberties – Bill of Rights, speech, religious, criminal defense, property, guns, gays
Civil Rights – African-Americans, women, Latinos, disabled, homosexual

Week 6

Public opinion – formation, attitudes, values, opinion polls, ethnic, religious and gender differences
Issues in opinion polling

Week 7

Direct democracy – initiative, recall, majority rule and the Framers
Media – forms, regulation, ownership, power, diversity, bias, coverage of California politics

Week 8

Issues concerning the media – objectivity, propaganda
Participation – the franchise, voting and gender, ethnicity, religion, age, SES, obstacles

Week 9

Political Parties – history, function in democracy, group affiliations (gender, ethnicity, class, etc)
Issues of political parties – community enclaves, political machines, ideology, California's parties

Week 10

Elections – history, campaigns, primaries, new technologies, how voters decide,
California's blanket primary and citizens' redistricting
Money in politics – amounts, contributors, campaign finance laws, impact on government

Week 11

Interest groups – representation, tactics, power
Interest group issues – power and tactics at the state and local levels

Week 12

Legislature – representation, organization, deliberation, power vis-à-vis the executive,
differences between the CA legislature and Congress
Issues in legislation – styles of representation, earmarking, pork barrel politics

Week 13

Executive – presidents, governors, organization, powers, differences between California
and the federal executive model
Executive personalities – Brown, Bush, Obama, styles of governing

Week 14

Bureaucracy – history, growth, duties, power
Judiciary – Constitutional basis, selection, functions, organization, how California's
judiciary differs from the federal model

Week 15

Issues of the judiciary – judicial philosophy, power
Concluding thoughts: Course assessment, Course wrap-up