

Syllabus for: POLSC-10-D5475 US Government and Politics	
Semester & Year:	Spring, 2014
Course ID and Section Number:	POLSC-10-D5475
Number of Credits/Units:	3
Day/Time:	Tuesday, 6:50 pm
Location:	Del Norte
Instructor's Name:	Owen
Contact Information:	Office location and hours: Campus Office Annex Phone: 707-954-3021 Email: tom-owen@redwoods.edu
Course Description (catalog description as described in course outline): A course addressing both the philosophic roots and the contemporary operation of American national, state, and local government. Specific topics include constitutional development, federal-state relations, and the rights and obligations of citizens under both the federal and the California constitutions.	
Student Learning Outcomes (as described in course outline) : <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the history and philosophy of the Constitution, politics, and government in the United States. 2. Identify the major provisions of the California and US Constitution. 3. Compare the three branches of California and US Government, and related political institutions. 4. Outline the relationship between the states and national government (ie. federalism). Analyze contemporary issues facing California and the US system of government. 	
Special accommodations: College of the Redwoods complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. Please present your written accommodation request at least one week before the first test so that necessary arrangements can be made. No last-minute arrangements or post-test adjustments will be made. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability related services and may need accommodations, please see me or contact Disabled Students Programs and Services. Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS.	
Academic Misconduct: Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, abuse of resource materials, computer misuse, fabrication or falsification, multiple submissions, complicity in academic misconduct, and/ or bearing false witness will not be tolerated. Violations will be dealt with according to the procedures and sanctions proscribed by the College of the Redwoods. Students caught plagiarizing or cheating on exams will receive an "F" in the course.	
The student code of conduct is available on the College of the Redwoods website at: http://redwoods.edu/District/Board/New/Chapter5/AP%205500%20Conduct%20Code%20final%2002-07-2012.pdf	

Course Content:

1. Federalism and the role of state and local government in the US.
2. Separation of Powers, three branches of government, and checks and balances.
3. Democracy, Majority Rule & Minority Rights.
4. Declaration of Independence, and natural and inalienable rights.
5. Civil rights and civil liberties in both the federal and California constitutions.

Issues:

1. Local control versus centralism.
2. National security versus individual liberties.
3. Bias in public policy favoring dominant/elite groups.
4. Representative versus direct democracy.
5. Difficulty of reaching consensus.

Themes:

1. Struggle for inclusion in the political system by historically oppressed groups.
2. Tensions between majority rule and minority rights.
3. Necessity and art of compromise.
4. Race.
5. Gender.
6. Class.

Grading System:

- 4 quizzes each worth approximately 50 points, the worst quiz grade out of the four will be dropped (150 points total. This total is approximate, since some quizzes might have more or less than 50 points)
- Final Essay Exam worth 75 points
- 1 (3-5 pages) written assignment worth 35 points

Written Assignment: This will be available under the assignment link. I require double spaced, size 12 font, Times New Roman or Calibri black font only. You must cite your sources using either MLA, APA, or Chicago Manual of Style citations guidelines. I prefer footnotes or endnotes. **IT IS PREFERABLE THAT YOU ATTACH A WORD-PROCESSED FILE IN THE ASSIGNMENT LINK. NOTE, HOWEVER, THAT I CANNOT READ “.WPS” FILES. MAKE SURE YOU SUBMIT YOUR WORK IN A “.DOC”, “.DOCX” OR “.RTF” FORMAT. You can change the format of your document by choosing “Save AS” and changing the format there.**

Extra Credit Assignment: This assignment will also be posted in the assignment area and a corresponding announcement will let you know when it becomes available.

Quizzes: The quizzes will be a mix of fill in the blank, multiple choice, and one or two essay questions.

Final: Your final exam will consist of three essays, final details of which to be

announced during the semester.

Topical Outline:

Myth and Reality in American Government

- A. Ideologies in America
- B. Conservative
- C. Liberal
- D. Libertarian
- E. Democratic Socialism
- F. Communism
- G. Anarchism

Historical background of the Constitution

- A. Articles of Confederation
- B. Compromises

Federalism

Civil Rights and Liberties

- A. The post civil war amendments
- B. Jim Crow
- C. Brown vs. Board of Education
- D. Affirmative Action

Public Opinion and Political Participation

Political Parties

Elections and political campaigns

- A. The Obama campaign
- B. The Republican Revolution of 1994 and the New Federalism
- C. Obama forges a new coalition, wins a huge victory
- C. Developing a critical thinking approach to modern Campaigns

Interest Groups and their tactics

The Media and Politics

Institutions of Government

- A. Congress
- B. The Presidency
- C. The Bureaucracy
- D. The Judiciary

The politics of public policy

State Government in California

Attendance.

Classroom attendance is strongly recommended, since the lectures and exams rarely come directly from the reading material. Attendance is taken daily, but no formal deduction will be made for missed classes.

Note: If you are a disabled student who needs testing accommodations or other help please let me know. Please be aware that College of the Redwoods has a Disabled Students Programs and Services Department that is always willing to help students to overcome learning obstacles. The contact information for Disabled Student Services is located on the college website at: <http://www.redwoods.edu/district/dsps/contact.asp>.

College of the Redwoods DSPS, Del Norte: (707) 465-2324
[College of the Redwoods DSPS, Del Norte:](#) (707) 962-2638

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