

Syllabus for: (name of class) U.S. Government and Politics	
Semester & Year:	Summer 2014
Course ID and Section Number:	POLSC 10- V5798
Number of Credits/Units:	3
Day/Time:	May 27—July 31
Location:	Online
Instructor's Name:	Emenaker
Contact Information:	Email:ryan-emenaker@redwoods.edu
Course Description (catalog description as described in course outline): This course addresses 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 the federal and California constitutions.	
Student Learning Outcomes (as described in course outline) : Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explain the history and philosophy of the Constitution, politics, and government in the US. 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). 5. Analyze contemporary issues facing California and the US system of government. 	
Accommodations: Everyone deserves a learning environment that maximizes their strengths, therefore, students with the appropriate paperwork from the office of Disabled Student Programs and Services (DSPS) should notify me of any accommodations required. If you believe you might benefit from disability related services and may need accommodations, please see me or contact DSPS. Through DSPS students can request alternative media. No last-minute arrangements or post-test adjustments will be made. ESOL students may be allowed to utilize a bilingual dictionary on some parts of the exams-please see the instructor for more information.	
Academic Honesty: Cheating, plagiarism, collusion, abuse of resource materials, computer misuse, fabrication or falsification, multiple submissions, complicity in academic misconduct, and/ or bearing false witness are expressly prohibited by the College of the Redwoods Student Code of Conduct (http://www.redwoods.edu/District/Board/New/Chapter5/Ap5500.pdf) and will NOT be tolerated in this class. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will <i>automatically fail</i> that component of the course and may also, at the instructor's discretion, be assigned a failing grade in the course. All students caught cheating or plagiarizing, regardless of the nature or severity of the offense, will be referred to the Vice President of Student Services and may be subject to additional college-level sanctions, which, depending, on the nature of the offense, can include suspension or expulsion from the College.	
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<http://redwoods.edu/departments/distance/>

POLSC 10: US Government & Politics Summer 2014 Course Syllabus

I advise you to review this document often.

Professor: Ryan Emenaker -- ryan-emenaker@redwoods.edu

Office Hours: I am available via email and will make arrangements to call you if that is helpful. Please think of me as a resource. I will reply to all emails within 36 hours (not counting weekends and holidays). I am happy to chat about anything going on in this class, politics, or whatever is on your mind.

This class is taught entirely online. The course is not self-paced, and you will have to log-in multiple times per week to complete the assignments.

Course Introduction: Ideally, you would leave this class able to remember the particulars about U.S. government years from now. Realistically, you should be able to apply the principles of this course to political issues for years to come. Facts are simple to memorize, but they fade quickly. Thinking and analyzing stay with you forever. Even if years from now you can't remember great deal about how a bill becomes a law, but you can support your opinion in a political debate with friends or family, this course will have succeeded in empowering you.

In this class significant attention will be given to thinking about questions with no clear answer, especially the issues of how: (1) democratic is American politics and (2) how much emphasis should be given to the competing values of security, liberty, and equality. Students are encouraged to raise questions at any time. The professor does not have all the answers; you should feel free to question and challenge me.

Meeting Times/Locations: MyCR; May 27th through July 31st

Computer Skills Required: You must be comfortable navigating websites; opening and downloading or reading files; using a word processor; and submitting assignments online. All quizzes and exams (midterm and final) are taken online, so you should become familiar with the process. Most computers and internet providers will be satisfactory, but you must be able to access the internet at least three times a week and for upwards to an hour or two at a time. I recommend broadband services such as cable, satellite, or DSL.

Commitment: Taking a course online is different from taking a traditional face-to-face course. While you do not need to attend class, there are still responsibilities and tasks that must be completed by specific dates. You are required to read weekly course notes and textbook readings; participate in online discussion boards, submit chapter paper assignments, and take online quizzes and exams. Also this is a 10 week course rather than the traditional 16 week semesters at CR. This means you will be cramming more work into each week. Expect to spend about 13 to 15 hours per week on this class.

Text (required):

1) By the People: Debating American Government by Morone and Kersh (Oxford University Press) is a traditional textbook. You will need to bring this text with you to most class sessions.

2) POLSC 10 Course Packet is a collection of readings I have compiled. You will notice on the online version of the syllabus that some readings are hyperlinks; you will click on this links and read the articles. For the articles listed in the syllabus that are not hyperlinks you will notice that there is a (CP) listed next to them. This stands for Course Packet. These articles are posted in a folder in the Resources section of MyCR labeled Course Packet. These readings will be critical to your success in this class. You will be asked questions from

these articles for online discussion post, for the quiz, the Midterm, and the Final. You will also use these readings along with the textbook for Reading Responses. You will notice that a substantial number of articles come from the NY Times. You are allowed 10 free articles per month from the NY Times. You may find that you surpass this limit; **you may need to purchase access to the NY Times online site. They offer a reduced student rate.** You can sign up for one month, download all the articles needed for the class and then cancel your subscription. This is by far the cheapest way to get these materials into your hands.

3) Additional readings and/or activities will be assigned throughout the semester. The readings and handouts are intended to help broaden your understanding of classroom discussion.

4) You should keep up with national and local news. Most news sources are on the web. I will be giving an assignment early in the semester that helps you identify some of the better known news sources.

Instructor Expectations Students should be aware that a considerable amount of reading, web research, and other work will be required. To receive a passing grade a minimum of 13 to 15 hours will be required to prepare for week. Additional time will be needed to prepare for the Quiz, the Midterm, the Final, and to complete homework and writing assignments.

At a minimum, students are expected to:

1. Do the assigned reading, complete any assignments, think about the material, view the online lectures, engage in the online discussions and ask questions as they come up.
2. Expect that most of the work will be interesting and stimulating; contribute to making it so.
3. Keep abreast of current events. This includes regularly reading at least one newspaper.

MyCR: Be certain that you know how to use MyCR and can check your MyCR e-mail. I will be communicating to the class by e-mail and through MyCR with some frequency; I will assume you check your MyCR e-mail at least every other day. MyCR will be used to, post assignments, PowerPoints and lecture notes, send out announcements, and make changes to the course outline. If you are not able to use MyCR, or are not receiving messages from me, do not wait to fix this problem.

Grading:	Class Participation & Homework = 250 points	Reading Responses = 200 points
	Major Quiz = 50 points	
	Midterm Exam = 200 points	Final Exam = 200 points
	6 Weekly Quizzes = 100 points	
		Total Semester Points = 1,000

Grading Scale:

A	= 930 – 1000 pts	C+	= 750 – 799 pts
A-	= 900 – 929 pts	C	= 700 – 749 pts
B+	= 866 – 899 pts	D	= 600 – 699 pts
B	= 830– 865 pts	F	= 0 – 599 pts
B-	= 800 – 829 pts		

***An “incomplete” grade will not be given except under extraordinary circumstances.
A worksheet will be handed out to help you compute your class grade.***

Assignments & Grading:

1. Class participation & Homework is 20% of your grade and vital for success in this class. I do not accept excuses for missed participation; you either participate or you don't. You can't participate if you're not logging into MyCR and replying to the posts and discussion questions. Participation in this course means taking an active role in online discussions, group-work, written assignments, completing all assigned readings, and other assigned homework.

Discussion Boards will open each week on Monday at 8am. They will close on Sunday at 11:45pm. By Thursday (by 11:45pm) of each week you are responsible for posting your initial response to each of the Discussion Questions. By Sunday at 11:45pm you need to post 1 reply to another student's comments in each of the Discussion Forums. The more thorough, well-thought out and original your posts, the more points you will earn.

2. Reading Responses are written pieces to 10 of the required readings. Please do not attempt to summarize the entire chapter or article. Instead, pick a direct quote, theme, or idea from one of the assigned readings for that week then (1) write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing the author's intended meaning and (2) write 1-2 paragraphs describing your reactions to the quote or theme. *I do not simply want to know what the authors said; I want to know what YOU think about what they said.* A sample reading response is included in the course packet.

You must be responding to the current week's readings. You may only turn in two per week; absolutely no excuse--no matter how valid--will allow you to turn in more than two per week. Since you only need to turn in 10 for the entire semester you are already allowed to "miss" a certain number of reading responses during the 10 weeks our class meets. If you fail to turn in 10 Responses--no matter the reason--then you do not deserve to receive full credit for this portion of the class. Extra credit will not be given for turning in more than 10.

These writings are designed to get you thinking about the readings we do throughout the semester, they reinforce classroom discussion and sharpen your analytical skills. *Each response piece should be at least one typed page. You must have at least one turned in by Tuesday June 10th; however, you should feel free to turn one in before this.*

3. 6 Weekly Quizzes will be given throughout the semester. The weeks they are due are listed on the course outline below. For the weeks they are due they are all due on Sunday of that week at 11:45pm. Each Quiz will be worth approximately 15 points (some will be worth a few more and some a few less). The quizzes will focus on the readings and course lectures for that week.

4. Major Quiz is a build up to the Midterm and Final; it will be very similar in style, but it will consist of fewer questions. The hope that the Major Quiz will help you understand what is expected of you for the Midterm. Due Sunday June 15th 11:45pm.

3. Midterm Exam will be due at the end of week 6 of the course (Sunday July 6th at 11:45pm). It may include true/false, multiple choice, identification, as well as short and long answer questions. Make-up exams are not allowed except under the most exceptional circumstances and are allowed at the discretion of the instructor. In such cases a student must: (1) contact the instructor immediately; (2) provide written documentation of a medical, legal, or similarly serious circumstance; and (3) schedule a time to take the exam within 72 hours of the original exam. The Midterm Study Guide will be handed out the week before the exam. A past semester's Study Review Guide is included in the Course Packet; you may want to look at this throughout the semester to ensure you are learning the relevant material.

4. Final Exam, will be due July 31st at 11:45pm. The format will be substantially similar to the Midterm.

Classroom Etiquette for Posting on Web Boards:

- + Assume the best of others in the class, and expect the best from them.
- + Recognize and value the experiences, abilities, and knowledge each person brings to class. Value the diversity of the class.
- + Participate actively in the discussions, having completed the readings and thought about the issues.
- + Pay close attention to what your classmates write in their online comments. Ask clarifying questions, when appropriate.
- + These questions are meant to probe and shed new light, not to minimize or devalue comments.
- + Think through and re-read your comments before you post them.
- + Never make derogatory comments toward another person in the class.
- + Disagree with ideas, but do not make personal attacks.
- + Be open to be challenged or confronted on your ideas or prejudices.
- + Challenge others with the intent of facilitating growth. Do not demean or embarrass others.
- + Encourage others to develop and share their ideas.
- + Be willing to change

Responsibility: Most errors occur online because students do not take the time to read the syllabus, weekly guide, announcements, or the class calendar. It is your responsibility to read them and be aware of what is required each week. The syllabus outlines the reading requirements and other vital information about the course. The course outline in the syllabus, the weekly lessons, and the announcements are posted to inform you what assignments are required for the week and when they are due. If you do not find the answer to your question(s) in the syllabus, announcements, or weekly lessons please contact me. I am more than willing to assist you, but I do expect you to try to find the answer(s) to your question(s) before contacting me.

Course Outline, Readings, and Due Dates Subject to Change at Instructors Discretion

POLSC 10: US Government & Politics

Course Outline & Reading Schedule

FOUNDATIONS OF US POLITICAL THOUGHT

Week #1 (1.1) **Class Session:** Review Course Outline and Syllabus. Post introductions and respond to the questions: (1) Why are you in this class? What do you hope to get out of it?

(5/27—6/1)

Readings: 1) Course Syllabus & Outline. *Make sure to read thoroughly.*
2) All Readings Labeled 1.1 in Course Packet (CP)
3) [“Why are some countries Rich and Others Poor?”](#)
4) The Declaration of Independence (CP)
5) Sample Reading Response (CP)
6) News Survey Assignment Posted (Assignments)

(1.2) **Class Session:** Declaration of Independence: What are unalienable rights? Why do people form governments? Where does the legitimate power of government come from?

Readings: 1) Preface & Ch. 1 from Text
2) [“What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” Frederick Douglass](#)
3) [“It’s Now the Canadian Dream,” Nicolas Kristof. NY Times.](#)
4) Citizenship Test (Assignments)

(1.3) **Class Session:** **First Weekly Quiz Due Sunday 11:45pm.** Democracy: How is democracy defined?

Readings: 1) Chapter 2 from Text
2) “Noam Chomsky on Democracy.” (CP)
3) [“60% - Most Egyptians Want Their Laws to Strictly Follow the Quran” PEW Research. Dec. 13 2012.](#)
4) [“Some Truths are not Self-Evident,” Howard Zinn](#)
5) [“Fred Korematsu, 86, Dies.”](#)
6) “Not Legal, Not Leaving,” Jose Antonio Vargas, June 25, 2012, Time. (CP)

Week #2 (2.1)

Class Session: **News Survey Assignment Due Monday 11:45pm.** What is Social Contract theory? Would you form a government if you lived in the “original condition?” The Articles of Confederation: the first U.S. Constitution, why wasn’t it the last?

(6/2—6/8)

Readings: 1) Ch. 3 from Text p. 60-75.
2) “4 Myths about the Constitution.” (CP)
3) Constitution Scavenger Hunt Assignment (Assignments)
4) Last Semester’s Major Quiz Review Guide. (CP)

(2.2) **Class Session:** **Citizenship Test Due Thursday 11:45pm.** What does citizenship mean? What is the role of government? US Constitution: Why was it written? Who was excluded US Constitution?

Readings: 1) Chapter 3 from Text p. 75-105.
2) [How Democratic is the American Constitution?](#) Ch. 3 “The Constitution as a Model: An American Illusion” Robert Dahl (CP) *This may be the most difficult reading of the semester; however, I also think it is the most important. Make sure to give yourself enough time to read this article slowly, and enough time to read it more than once.*

(2.3) **Class Session:** **2nd Weekly Quiz Due Sunday 11:45pm.** US Constitution: What structures did it establish? Why Does Robert Dahl think the US constitutional system is unique?

Readings: 1) Ch. 4 from Text
2) [“The Health Reform Battle Will Go on,” American Prospect.](#)
3) [“Supreme Court Appears Divided in Cross Case”](#)
4) [“President Obama’s Recess-Appointment Bet Sours,” Politico.](#)

Week #3 (3.1)

(6/9—6/15)

- Class Session:** **Must have at least one Reading Response turned in by Monday 11:45pm.** Separation of Powers: What are the powers of the 3 branches of government? How can each branch check the other two?
- Readings:** 1) "Jumping Frogs, Endangered Toads, and Ca's Marijuana Law," (CP)
2) ["Leery of Washington, Alaska Feasts on Its Dollars," NY Times.](#)
3) ["From State to State, Varied Responses to the Issue of Gun Violence," Cooper, NY Times, Feb. 3, 2013.](#)
4) State Government Action Assignment (Assignments)
5) Review Guide for Major Quiz (Resources)

(3.2)

- Class Session:** **Constitution Scavenger Hunt & State Government Assignment Due Thursday 11:45pm.** Federalism: Why did the founders establish federalism? What does it mean for us today?
- Readings:** 1) ["We the People' Loses Appeal with People Around World," NY Times](#)
2) ["Let's Give Up on the Constitution," Louis Seidman, Dec. 30 2012, NY Times](#)

(3.3)

- Class Session:** **Major Quiz Due Sunday 11:45pm.** Constitutional Summation.
- Readings:** 1) Ch. 13 from Text
2) "How Congress Works." (CP)
3) ["Smaller States Find Outsize Clout Growing in Senate," Liptak, NY Times.](#)
4) Legislative Branch Assignment (Assignments)

GOVERNING INSTITUTIONS

Week #4 (4.1)

(6/16—6/22)

- Class Session:** **Legislative Assignment Due Monday 11:45pm** Legislative Branch: What are the powers of Congress? How is law made?
- Readings:** 1) ["Earmarks Could Help Candidates in Midterms," PEW Research](#)
2) ["Cuts Hit Home for Boehner, Cantor," POLITICO](#)
3) ["What if Senators represented people by income..."](#)
4) ["Congress and Country: Behold the Differences," Sam Roberts.](#)
5) Last Semester's Midterm Review Guide. (CP)

(4.2)

- Class Session:** Legislative Branch. What influences decision making? How well does Congress represent the people?
- Readings:** 1) Ch. 14 from Text
2) ["Congress's Unused War Powers," George Will](#)
3) ["Obama Turning to Executive Power to Get What he Wants," McClatchy News, Anita Kumar, March 19, 2013.](#)

Week #5 (5.1)

(6/23—6/29)

- Class Session:** Executive Branch: How has the presidency grown? What constrains the president?
- Readings:** 1) ["Why Obama \(And Any President\) Fails To Meet Expectations," NPR News.](#)
2) ["Rethinking the U.S. Presidency: 3 Alternative Realities," NPR News.](#)

(5.2)

- Class Session:** **3rd Weekly Quiz Due Sunday 11:45pm.** Executive Branch.
- Readings:** 1) Ch. 16 from Text
2) ["Why States and Localities are Watching Lower Courts"](#)
3) ["Federal Court Strikes Down California Same Sex Marriage Ban"](#)

Week #6 (6.1)

(6/30—7/6)

- Class Session:** Judicial Branch-- What is the role of an undemocratically appointed Supreme Court in a democratic society? Do we have an imperial judiciary?
- Readings:** 1) "Should the Courts Seek the 'Original Meaning'?" (CP)
2) Judicial Branch Assignment (Assignments)

(6.2) **Class Session: Judicial Assignment Due Thursday 11:45 pm.** Judicial Branch: How do judges interpret the law?

- Readings:**
- 1) Official Mid-Term Review Guide (Resources)
 - 2) [“The High Court not Final Say on U.S. Law,” Times-Standard](#)
 - 3) [“Crush Videos: A Constructive Dialogue”](#)

(6.3)

!!!MID-TERM!!! Due Sunday July 6 11:45pm.

- Readings:**
- 1) Ch. 10 from Text
 - 2) [“Justice Department Blocks Texas on Photo ID for Voting,” NY Times](#)
 - 3) [“Portland, Maine, Weighs Letting Noncitizens Vote”](#)
 - 4) [“Beyond the Voting Rights Act,” Reclaim Democracy](#)
 - 5) [“How Maps Helped Republicans Keep an Edge in the House,” NY Times.](#)

POLITICAL FORCES

Week #7 (7.1)

(7/7—7/13)

Class Session: Elections: How has access to the vote expanded? How does the Electoral College work? Why is it unlikely to change?

- Readings:**
- 1) [“How to Expand the Voter Roles,” NY Times](#)
 - 2) [“A President by Popular Vote,” LA Times](#)
 - 3) “Is Low Turnout a Problem?” (CP)
 - 4) Last Semester’s Final-Review-Guide (CP)
 - 4) Political Parties Assignment (Assignments)

(7.2)

Class Session: Elections: Why do people vote the way they do? Does voter turnout matter?

- Readings:**
- 1) Ch. 11 from Text
 - 2) “Third Parties in Amer. Politics: Rich History, Many Roles” (CP)
 - 3) [“Can Activist Win by Losing?” Congress.org](#)
 - 4) [“Include all Candidates in Presidential Debates,” Farai Chideya](#)
 - 5) Polling Assignment (Assignments)

(7.3)

Class Session: Political Parties Assignment Due Sunday 11:45pm. 4th Weekly Quiz Due Sunday 11:45pm. Political Parties: What do political parties do? What impacts do they have? Should the role of parties be expanded?

- Readings:**
- 1) Ch. 8 from Text
 - 2) “Dysfunction: Maybe it’s What the Voters Want,” Sac Bee (CP)
 - 3) [“Growing Support for Gay Marriage: Changed Minds and Changing Demographics,” March, 20, 2013. PEW Research.](#)
 - 4) [Women and the “I Don’t Know” Problem. NY Times.](#)

Week # 8 (8.1)

(7/14—7/20)

Class Session: Polling Assignment Due Monday 11:45pm. Public Opinion & Polling: What is public opinion? How much does it influence policy? How much should it?

- Readings:**
- 1) Ch. 9 from Text
 - 2) [“The Perils of Polling,” Benjamin Ginsberg](#)

(8.2)

Class Session: Video: [Manufacturing Consent: Noam Chomsky & the Media.](#)

Readings: Manufacturing Consent Video Questions (Assignments)

(8.3)

Class Session: Manufacturing Consent Assignment & 5th Weekly Quiz Due Sunday 11:45pm. Media: What role does the media play in politics?

- Readings:**
- 1) Ch. 6 from text.
 - 2) “A History of the Civil Rights Movement” (CP)
 - 3) “Did Brown Matter?” Cass Sunstein (CP)
 - 4) Interest Group and Social Movements Assignment (Assignments)

Week #9 (9.1)

(7/21–7/27)

Class Session: Civil Rights/Civil Liberties What rights and liberties do we have as US citizens?

- Readings:**
- 1) [“What We Want,” Stokely Carmichael](#)
 - 2) [Rosa Park’s Gift to the Disabled,” Charles Wilson](#)
 - 3) [Feminism is for Everybody](#) “Feminist Politics: Where We Stand,” bell hooks (CP)
 - 4) [“Despite New Law Gender Salary Gap Persist,”](#)
 - 5) Ch. 5 from Text.

(9.2)

Class Session: **Civil Rights and Social Movements Assignment Due Thursday 11:45pm.**

Civil Liberties.

- Readings:**
- 1) “An Issue of Sovereignty” Josh Lohmer (CP)
 - 2) [“Water Rights Tear at an Indian Reservation,” Jack Healy, April 21, 2013. NY Times.](#)
 - 3) Ca. Gov. Article (CP)

(9.3)

Class Session: **6th Weekly Quiz Due Sunday 11:45 pm.** State Government & Tribal-Federal Relations.

- Readings:** 1) Official Study Guide for Final (Resources)

Week #10 (10.1)

Class Session: Course Review

Readings: Study for Final

Final Exam Due: 7/31