

POLSC 10 – US GOVERNMENT & POLITICS – COVER SHEET	
Semester & Year:	SPRING 2015
Course ID and Section Number:	POLSC 10 – V7064
Number of Credits/Units:	3.0 units
Day/Time:	ON LINE
Location:	Cyber-space
Instructor's Name:	G. Sokolow
Contact Information:	Office location and hours: AJ 106 – By Appointment Phone: (See Syllabus) Email: via Canvas
Course Description: 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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain the history and philosophy of the Constitution, politics, and government in the United States. • Identify the major provisions of the California and US Constitution. • Compare the three branches of California and US Government, and related political institutions. • 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://www.redwoods.edu/District/Board/New/Chapter5/Ap5500.pdf	
College of the Redwoods is committed to equal opportunity in employment, admission to the college, and in the conduct of all of its programs and activities.	

COURSE SYLLABUS
DISTANCE EDUCATION SECTION – V7064

Professor Gary A. Sokolow

Office: AJ 106

Office Hours: By Appointment

Telephone: 444-8630 (home)*

E-mail: via Canvas webpage

COURSE HOME PAGE (CANVAS):

redwoods.instructure.com

EXAM SUBMISSION PAGE:

www.turnitin.com

AFTER SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THIS CLASS, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:

- Explain the history and philosophy of the Constitution, politics, and government in the United States.
- Identify the major provisions of the US and California constitutions.
- Compare the three branches of California and US Government, and related political institutions.
- Outline the relationship between the states and national government (i.e. federalism).
- Analyze contemporary issues facing California and the US system of government.

WEB SITE/CLASS PARTICIPATION/ EXAMS

The exams will contain detailed instructions for their completion and the electronic submission of them to the *Turnitin.com* website. The exams are “paperless”. Therefore, you will not need to give me a hard (paper) copy of them. I will grade them in the Turnitin® site, where you can then see both your grades and my comments typed directly on them. After they are graded electronically via Turnitin, I will post the grades to your Canvas Gradebook. The Turnitin site will always be open for the submission and viewing of the exams. *However, if the exams are turned in late, they will be assessed a late grade penalty of my choosing. Employment issues, child care, computer issues, etc. are not excuses for the submission of any late work. Plan ahead.*

If you are experiencing computer glitches or problems with the Canvas site, either contact me at my home phone number* listed above or E-mail me directly and/or the College of the Redwoods help desk – its@redwoods.edu or call them at **707.476.4160**. Before contacting me

however, I suggest you first try to solve the problem with the help of the guides posted in our Canvas Help folder or the help menus.

Under the “Files> Documents” section of our website, you will find several documents which will guide you in the use of the Canvas and Turnitin websites. Please note that once you log in to Canvas and click on the “help” button in the top right corner of your screen, you will find a fairly extensive on-line help menu there. If I can, I will help you with computer/technical issues. However, my main expertise is in teaching the course, not computer issues. If you can’t get a Canvas issue resolved after visiting their Help site and perhaps, submitting a “ticket” for help, contact me.

I spend very little time in my office. I am typically either in the classroom teaching my face to face classes or in meetings of one kind or another. I am available by appointment in person or by phone. Other than this, I work from my home. Therefore, the best way to reach me is usually via e-mail through the Messages tool of our Canvas course webpage. By E-mailing me through our Canvas website, rather than sending me a direct E-mail via the main CR website, I can better keep track of all of your e-mail messages. When you E-mail me, leave me a contact phone number as well. If the matter is too urgent or complicated to be handled via E-mail, than by all means call me at home and leave a call-back number where I can call you as soon as possible.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

American Government - Your Voice, Your Future – 5th Edition, Korbelt; Yolo Learning Solutions; ISBN: 978-0982324172

California Politics: A Primer – 3rd Edition, Van Vechten; Sage/CQ Press; ISBN: 978-1483340135

COURSE GRADE: The course grade** will be composed of the following four parts:

- | | |
|---------------------------|--------------|
| ✓ Two Exams | 60% of grade |
| ✓ Weekly Discussion Posts | 20% of grade |
| ✓ Political Topics | 20% of grade |

Instructor-Initiated Drop Policy: -- “Excessive Absences” – defined as missing *more than two weeks in a row without posting discussion items, Political Topics essays, or the exams.*

A failing grade (<61%) on any one exam **or the discussion post category **or** the Political Topics category will result in an “F” grade for the entire course.

GRADING SCALE:

A	=	>95% - 100%
A-	=	>90% - 95%
B+	=	>85% - 90%
B	=	>82% - 85%
B-	=	>80% - 82%
C+	=	>75% - 80%
C	=	>70% - 75%
D	=	61% - 70%
F	=	<61%

An “incomplete” grade will not be assigned except under extraordinary circumstances.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Most weeks, you will have only one chapter to read from each text. Some weeks, you may have only one chapter from the *American Government* textbook or the *California Politics* textbook. Occasionally, you may have short “class handouts” to read as well.

Additionally, ***every week***, you will need to post a response to the discussion board on the Canvas website. ***Four times during the semester***, you will need to post a more detailed “essay discussion” for a selected Political Topic which is relevant to recent reading assignments. You may work with one or two classmates on the “Political Topics” essays. Finally, twice during the semester, you will need to complete both a mid-term exam and the final exam on your own, of course.

All assignments for each week, with instructions for their completion, will be found in the “modules” section of our Canvas course website. You should be “checking in” with the website no less than two to three times a week to keep current on the assignments.

AG – American Government textbook
VV – California Politics textbook

Week One:

1. Introduce yourself to the rest of the class – Post to the “Class Introductions” Discussion Topic
2. AG - Read Chapter One – *Should We Care About Politics?*
3. AG - Read Chapter Two – *The Constitution & Federalism*
4. VV – Read Chapter One – *Introduction*
5. Post a response to the 1st Weekly Discussion Topic

Week Two:

1. AG - Read Chapter Three – *Public Opinion*
2. Post a response to the 2nd weekly discussion topic

Week Three:

1. AG – Read Chapter Four – *Political Culture, Socialization & Participation*
2. VV - Read Chapter Two – *Political Junctionures*
3. Post a response to the 3rd weekly discussion topic

Week Four:

1. AG – Read Chapter Five – *Mass Media*
2. Post a response to the 4th weekly discussion topic
3. Post an essay response to the **First Political Topic**

Week Five:

1. AG – Read Chapter Six – *Political Parties*
2. VV – Read Chapter Nine – *Political Parties, Elections & Campaigns*
3. Post a response to the 5th weekly discussion topic

Week Six:

1. AG – Read Chapter Seven - *Elections & Campaigns*
2. VV – Read Chapter Ten – *Political Engagement*
3. Post a response to the 6th weekly Discussion Topic

Week Seven:

1. AG – Read Chapter Eight – Interest Groups
2. VV – Read Chapter Three – Direct Democracy
3. Post an Essay Response to the 7th weekly discussion topic
4. Post an Essay Response to the **Second Political Topic**

Week Eight:

1. AG – Read Chapter Nine – The Congress
2. VV – Read Chapter Four – The State Legislature
3. Post an Essay Response to the 8th weekly discussion topic
4. Post an Essay Response to the Second Political Topic
5. Complete the **Mid-Term Exam**

Week Nine:

1. AG – Read Chapter Ten – The Presidency
2. VV – Read Chapter Five – The State Executive Branch
3. Post an Essay Response to the 9th weekly discussion topic

Week Ten:

1. AG – Read Chapter Eleven – The Bureaucracy
2. Post an Essay Response to the 10th weekly discussion topic

Week Eleven:

1. AG – Read Chapter Twelve – The Judiciary
2. VV – Read Chapter Six – The Court System
3. Post an Essay Response to the 11th weekly discussion topic
4. Post an Essay Response to the **Third Political Topic**

Week Twelve:

1. AG – Read Chapter Thirteen – Establishing Civil Rights
2. Post an Essay Response to the 12th weekly discussion topic

Week Thirteen:

1. AG – Read Chapter Fourteen – Protecting Civil Liberties
2. Post an Essay Response to the 13th weekly discussion topic

Week Fourteen:

1. AG – Read Chapter Sixteen – Foreign & Defense Policies
2. Post an Essay Response to the 14th weekly discussion topic
3. Post an Essay Response to the **Fourth Political Topic**

Week Fifteen:

1. VV – Read Chapter Seven – Other Governments
2. VV – Read Chapter Eleven – Concluding Thoughts
3. Post an Essay Response to the 15th weekly discussion topic
4. Complete the **Final Exam**

Code of Conduct

Preface:

The purpose of this code is to ensure that both the instructor and students are mindful of the rights and responsibilities of each other. Additionally, adherence to this code will help ensure that the class experience is both meaningful and interesting to all concerned.

Instructor Expectations:

- *Punctuality* -- Students should make every effort to arrive several minutes before class. Tardiness disrupts the learning and teaching process both for the instructor and students. It is rude to habitually be late for class.

- *Leaving Early* -- Students should stay for the entire class. Often, important material is covered at the end of the class period and assignments for the following class period may be made at that time.
- *Attentiveness* -- Students should stay awake and be attentive for the class period. If one is too tired to attend class, it is best not to come. Drowsing off is embarrassing both for the student concerned and the instructor.
- *Talking in Class /Cell Phones & Pagers*– The passing of notes or continuous talking to other students outside of class discussion is both disruptive to the learning process and rude to other students and the instructor. Turn off or set on “silent”, all cell phones and pagers.
- Plagiarism – Plagiarism is defined as claiming any work of another person as your own without attribution to the true author. It also includes taking a substantial portion (approximately 25% or more) of your assignment from another source, whether or not credit is given to that source. This includes the work of fellow students. *If a student is found to have plagiarized the work of another, the penalty which the instructor may impose ranges from a failing grade for the assignment to a failing grade for the entire course.*
- Netiquette - In participating in an on-line format, it is expected that all students treat each other with respect. This includes no personal attacks on any other class member or the instructor. I expect that you may disagree with the views of your classmates from time to time, but such disagreements may be expressed in a respectful manner. It is good to remember that we all bring to the class a broad array of life experiences and much of it is valuable.

Student Expectations:

- Punctuality – Students have every right to expect that the instructor will offer timely feedback to the discussion questions, crime scenarios, and the grading of exams. The instructor will respond to phone calls and E-mails within 48 hours, sooner if possible.
- Civility – Students have a right for the instructor to treat them with respect both in and out of the classroom and to ensure that all students have an opportunity to express their opinions on relevant matters.
- Classroom environment – The instructor will make every attempt to make the virtual classroom experience useful, comfortable, and interesting.

In compliance with equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with a disability. Students are encouraged to contact Disabled Students Programs and Services (DSP&S), 707-476-4280, for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

Syllabus subject to change upon advanced notice