



## Syllabus Cover Sheet for US Government & Politics

### Course Information

Semester & Year: Fall 2021

Course ID & Section #: POLSC 10 – V1915

Instructor's name: Professor Gary A. Sokolow

Course units: 3.0

### Instructor Contact Information

Office hours: As arranged with student

Phone number: None

Email address: via Canvas messaging system

### Catalog 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.

### Course Student Learning Outcomes *(from course outline of record)*

- 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.

### Accessibility

College of the Redwoods is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability-related services and accommodations, please contact your instructor or [Disability Services and Programs for Students](#) (DSPS). Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS based on their campus location:

- Eureka: 707-476-4280, student services building, 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- Del Norte: 707-465-2324, main building near library
- Klamath-Trinity: 530-625-4821 Ext 103

If you are taking online classes DSPS will email approved accommodations for distance education classes to your instructor. In the case of face-to-face instruction, please present your written accommodation request to your instructor at least one week before the needed accommodation so that necessary arrangements can be made. Last minute arrangements or post-test adjustments usually cannot be accommodated.

**COURSE SYLLABUS** (v2)  
**ON-LINE**

Professor Gary A. Sokolow

Office Hours: By Appointment

Telephone: 707-444-8630 (home)\*

E-mail: via Canvas webpage

**COURSE HOME PAGE:**

**[redwoods.instructure.com](http://redwoods.instructure.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/ASSIGNMENTS**

The essays and exams will contain detailed instructions for their completion and the electronic submission of them to the Turnitin.com website, via Canvas. I will grade the exams in the Turnitin.com site, where you can then see both your grade and my assignment comments. *If any assignments (including the political questions discussion board) 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 use mobile devices, download and use the Canvas and Turnitin apps for those devices. I strongly advise you, however, to submit the exams via a desktop/laptop computer.** 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](mailto: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, there is a fairly extensive on-line help menu using the search feature therein. I will help you with computer/technical issues if I can, but my main expertise is in teaching the course, not computer issues.

*\*The best way to reach me is usually via e-mail through the “inbox” 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. Generally, I will respond to e-mails within 24 hours (except on Sundays).*

**REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:**

1. *American Government-Your Voice/Your Future*) – 7<sup>th</sup> Edition; Kerbel; Academic Media Solutions; ISBN: 978-1-950377-26-8
2. *California Politics-A Primer: 6<sup>th</sup> Edition*; VanVechten; CQ Press; ISBN: 978-1-5443-8867-0

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

- ✓ Two Exams 80% of grade
- ✓ Weekly Political Discussions 20% of grade

Instructor-Initiated Class Withdrawal Policy: -- “Excessive Absences” – defined as either failing to post an introductory post to the Canvas discussion board by Monday, August 30 or a period of inactivity of two weeks or more on the Canvas site or failing to complete either of the exams .

\*\*A failing grade (<61%) on either exam or the political discussions category may 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.**

**ASSIGNMENTS:**

Every week there will be a new reading assignment and homework in the form of posting both a response to the “political question” discussion board, and to the posts of two classmates on this board. Over the course of the eight weeks, you’ll need to write an essay analyzing one or more political concepts. There will be two exams for the course. One at the end of the fourth week and the second, at the end of the eighth week.

# 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:***

- **Personal Responsibility** - I expect that all of you will be spending an average of at least ten to fifteen hours per week on this course. That time should be spent reading the assignments, watching the weekly course video, and completing all assignments. I expect that you will complete all graded assignments on time. An additional aspect of personal responsibility for your own education includes asking for help if there is something you do not understand. Waiting until the time an assignment is due is usually too late. So, if you do not understand something we are covering in the course, ***ask!***
- **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 other sources, whether or not credit is given to those sources. This includes the work of fellow students. *If a student is found to have plagiarized the work of others, the penalty which the instructor may include a failing grade for the particular 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 or me from time to time, but such disagreements must 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 any graded assignments. The instructor will respond to phone calls and E-mails within a day, sooner if possible.
- **Civility** – Students have a right for the instructor to treat them with respect both in and out of our virtual classroom and to ensure that all students have an opportunity to express their opinions on relevant matters.
- **Virtual 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.*

***The syllabus is subject to change upon advanced notice by posting such changes on our Canvas course website.***