



---

# **POLS-C1000: AMERICAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS**

---

**Also listed as:** POLS-C1000H

**Effective Term**

Fall 2025

**BOT Approval Date**

11/14/2024

**Discipline**

POLS - Political Science

**Course Number**

C1000

**Course Title**

American Government and Politics

**Short Title**

American Government

**Credit Status (CB 04)**

D - Credit - Degree applicable

**Units**

**Lecture Units**

3.00

**Total Units**

3.00

**Hours**

**Lecture Contact Hours**

48-54

**Out of Class Hours Lecture**

96-108

**Total Contact Hours**

48 - 54

**Total Out of Class Hours**

96 - 108

**Total Student Learning Hours**

144 - 162

**Distance Education**

Yes

**Distance Education**

**Distance Education Type**

Both Fully Online and Hybrid Online

**Does the DE also apply to the Honors section?**

Yes



Honors component will meet synchronously (face-to-face or moderated through online technology such as Zoom)

**Fully Online Delivery Requirements:**

- a. Students must be notified via the college schedule of classes and the syllabus for the class if proctored tests are required for this course
- b. Any planned face-to-face meetings, such as an orientation or study session, must be optional
- c. The MSJC curriculum committee requires the use of accessible, asynchronous discussion as a component of every fully online course

**Are you using publisher content?**

No

**Regular Substantive Interaction**

Instructor-to-student, student-to-student, and student-to-content contact shall be distributed in a manner that will ensure regular substantive interaction (RSI) is maintained not only weekly but also for the duration of the course. Instructor interactions should be equivalent in time, quality and consistency to the engagement students would receive in a face-to-face course—for example, through announcements, discussion participation, personalized feedback, video messages, or other instructional communications. Instructors are expected to be responsive to student inquiries within a 24-72 hour time frame excluding holidays. RSI will be maintained through a variety of methods:

- Orientation - Students must be oriented to the online and face-to-face portions at the start of the course.
- Announcements - Announcements using the course management system must be posted at least weekly to keep students current on course events, due dates, materials, etc.
- Discussion Forums - Content-related discussion forums within the designated CMS will include appropriate instructor participation and will be initiated and maintained, with timely feedback provided. Instructors are required to monitor the discussions and related activities to provide guidance and direction. Open-ended discussion boards may be used to further learning and interaction.
- MSJC Communication – Instructor will use MSJC-administered communication tools (such as email or the designated CMS communication tools) to regularly communicate with and provide ease of access to students.
- Timely Feedback - Timely feedback on student work will be provided by the instructor, which may include comments and/or rubrics, within the Grades area of the designated CMS.
- Scheduled Meetings – Hybrid and synchronous courses will meet at regularly scheduled times. ADA Compliance - All course interactions and content must be designed with accessibility in mind and meet ADA requirements.

**Honors / Non-honors**

POLS-C1000H

**C-ID (Admin Only)**

C-ID POLS 110

**CB 00**

CCC000152764

**Course Title**

American Government and Politics - Honors

**Approved Cal-GETC Area**

AREA-4

**Approved Second Cal-GETC Area**

**Approved Third Cal-GETC Area**

**C-ID (Admin Only)**

C-ID POLS 110

**Catalog Description**

This course is an introduction to government and politics in the United States and California. Students examine the constitutions, structure, and operation of governing institutions, civil liberties and civil rights, political behaviors, political issues, and public policy using political science theory and methodology.



## Codes

### TOP Code (CB 03)

2207.00 - Political Science

### CIP Code

45.1002 - American Government and Politics (United States).

### Repeatability Code

No

### Grading Option

Letter grade OR P/NP

## GE Information

### Check GE Types Requested

AA/AS B1 - Social & Behavioral Sciences

AA/AS B2 - Social & Behavioral Sciences

## Cal-GETC Areas

### Approved Cal-GETC Area

AREA-4

## Learning Objectives

### Learning Objectives

#### Learning Objective

1. Explain the founding and development of the U.S. and California Constitution.
2. Critique governing institutions and political processes within the United States and California.
3. Employ introductory political science research methods to contextualize contemporary political issues and operations in the United States and California
4. Assess civil liberties and civil rights of individuals and groups as articulated in the U.S. and California Constitutions and subsequent court decisions.
5. Investigate the role of identity and political ideology in shaping public opinion and public policy in the United States and California.
6. Analyze how to effectively participate in politics at the national, state, county, and/or city levels.
7. Analyze how issues of diversity, including gender, race, culture, and sexuality, intersect with political systems, policies, and societal structures, and critically evaluate their impact on marginalized communities

### Honors Objectives

1. Demonstrate through critical analysis and advanced research an understanding of how political systems operate, how conflict is managed, how compromises are arrived at, and the dynamic of political change.
2. Develop a desire and ability to go beyond routine classroom work to participate in more advanced analysis and/or field activities.
3. Develop and enhance research, writing, and presentation skills.

## Learning Outcome Information

### Course Learning Outcomes

#### Learning Outcome

1. Students will analyze and critique current political topics and issues.
2. Students will participate in community and political organizations beyond the end of the class.
3. Students will evaluate the validity of their opinions and those of others.
4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of American government and politics and California government and politics.

---

## Program Learning Outcomes

### Learning Outcome

1. Students will analyze and critique current political topics and issues.
2. Students will analyze and evaluate the behavior of political institutions, organizations, and individuals.
3. Students will engage in political participation, including but not limited to, participation in community and political organizations.
4. Students will evaluate the validity of their political opinions and the opinions of others.

### Institutional Learning Outcomes

**Communication:** The student will effectively express and exchange ideas through listening, speaking, reading, writing, visual works, and other modes of interpersonal expression.

**Critical Thinking:** The student will analyze problems, gather and synthesize relevant information, evaluate ideas, information, and evaluate alternative points of view to create, innovate and implement effective solutions.

**Cultural Awareness and Humility:** The student will demonstrate knowledge of and sensitivity toward individuals of diverse ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, and religious affiliations, as well as toward those individuals with diverse abilities and socio-economic classes to respectfully interact with individuals of diverse perspectives, beliefs and values while being mindful of the limitation of their own cultural frameworks.

**Social Awareness:** The student will recognize and analyze the interconnectedness of global, national, and local concerns, analyzing cultural, political, social, and environmental issues from multiple perspectives and appreciate similarities and differences among cultures.

Civic

Personal

and Professional Responsibility

## Content

### Course Lecture Content

1. The purpose of government and nature of democratic governance.
  - a. Political philosophies that underlie democratic government.
  - b. Comparison of representative and direct democracy.
  - c. The value of, influences on, and consequences of participation and nonparticipation in democratic government.
2. The U.S. and California Constitutions as frameworks for government.
  - a. Political philosophies of the framers and critics of the U.S. Constitution.
  - b. Processes for amending and interpreting the U.S. and California Constitutions.
3. The theory and practice of federalism in the United States, focusing on California.
  - a. The framework and operation of federal, state, and local relations.
  - b. Interaction between the federal government and Native American tribes and entities.
4. The structure and contemporary operations of federal, state, and local governing institutions in the United States and California including the:
  - a. Executive branch.
  - b. Legislative branch.
  - c. Judicial branch.
5. Civil liberties and civil rights of individuals and groups.
  - a. Civil liberties and rights as articulated in the U.S. and California Constitutions and federal and state court decisions.
  - b. Contemporary and historical interactions between government and marginalized populations within the United States based on factors such as race, ethnicity, sex, gender and gender expression, sexual orientation, class, ability status, age, citizenship status, language, religion, and/or other forms of identity.
6. Individual and group behaviors within the context of the U.S. and California constitutions, including.
  - a. Elections, campaigns, and voting.
  - b. Political parties.
  - c. Interest groups.
  - d. Social movements.
7. Factors that shape politics and policymaking including.
  - a. Political culture.
  - b. Political socialization.
  - c. Political ideologies.
  - d. Public opinion.
  - e. Media.

8. Political issues and public policies.
  - a. Domestic.
  - b. Economic.
  - c. Foreign.
9. Introductory research methods used in political science including.
  - a. qualitative tools and techniques.
  - b. quantitative tools and techniques.

### **Honors Content**

1. The topics covered in POLS C1000H Political Science 101H are the same as those covered in POLS C1000. Political Science 101. The honors component will ask students to dive deeper into the theories and concepts introduced in the regular course.
2. Students should be able to recognize theory and practice and decipher the difference between theory and practice. Students will complete extended research that involves the use of primary and secondary sources, engage in group discussions with the instructor and other honors students and be introduced to extended literature on topics in political science including but not limited to:
  - a. The historical and philosophical foundations of the United States and California Constitutions including democracy and representative government.
  - b. Constitutionalism, federalism and civil rights and liberties.
  - c. The behavior of political institutions, organizations and actors/players in the United States and California including interest groups, the news media, political parties, elections and campaigns.
  - d. The theory and practice and the difference between the theory and practice of the politics and governments of the United States and California.
3. Major concepts of United States and California politics and government like political change, political conflict and conflict resolution, public opinion, and political culture and political socialization.
4. The political behavior of political institutions, organizations and actors/players in the United States and California including interest groups, the news media, in relation to political parties, elections and political campaigns.

### **Methods of Instruction**

#### **Method**

Field Trips

#### **Integration**

Field trips to political institutions and organizations will be used to familiarize students with current political topics and issues and the behavior of political institutions and organizations.

#### **DE Adaptations for MOI**

Field trips can be virtual trips such as closed captioned virtual tours that students will access through the online course management system or in-person trips as conditions permit.

---

#### **Method**

Film/video Viewing and Discussion

#### **Integration**

Films and videos will be used to examine the major concepts of United States and California politics and government, the historical and philosophical foundations of the United States and California Constitutions, and how different impact marginalized communities. Discussions of films and videos will compare and contrast theories and key concepts from the literature to the depictions in the films.

#### **DE Adaptations for MOI**

Films will be provided with closed captions through the course management system. Film discussions and analysis papers will be assigned through the course management system. Feedback will be provided through the course management system.

---

#### **Method**

Visiting Lecturers

---

**Integration**

Guest speakers will be invited from governmental institutions to discuss their duties and functions, and political candidates will be invited to discuss the dynamics of their political campaigns.

**DE Adaptations for MOI**

Guest speakers will present concepts via asynchronous or synchronous video provided to students in the course management system. Both video styles will meet accessibility standards including closed captions.

---

**Method**

Lecture

**Integration**

Class lectures will be used to further analyze key concepts and theories presented in assigned readings written by authors of various genders, cultures, races and to analyze the impact of current political issues and trends of American and California government. Lectures will be supplemented by slides, handouts, and short video clips.

**DE Adaptations for MOI**

Online lectures will be conducted asynchronously and synchronously through the online course management system. Lecture information will be uploaded to the online course management system using accessible formats. Synchronous meetings will be conducted through video conferencing and accessed through the course management system.

---

**Method**

Group Projects

**Integration**

Students will be assigned to groups to research and present on specific political issues including but not limited to election participations, Supreme Court decisions, the impact of immigration policies on undocumented individuals or the role of interest groups in advancing LGBTQ+ rights.

**DE Adaptations for MOI**

Group projects will be presented and discussed through discussion forums in the course management system. Discussion forums will meet all accessibility standards.

---

**Method**

Reading

**Integration**

Students will be given instructions on how to read and analyze texts, primary, and secondary sources, including outlining and note taking. This will give students an opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the material.

**DE Adaptations for MOI**

Students will be provided instruction through text pages and synchronous and asynchronous videos available in the course management system. Text readings will meet all accessibility standards including the use of course management system readers.

---

**Method**

Role Playing/Simulation

**Integration**

In-class role play and simulations will be used to enhance the understanding of key political concepts and roles in American and California government.

---

**DE Adaptations for MOI**

Role play simulations will be accomplished using discussion boards and synchronous online meetings using the course management system. Recordings with closed captioning will be available and all other accessibility standards will be met.

---

**Additional Methods of Instruction for Honors**

Method: Group Discussions

Integration: Small group discussions will give honors students and the instructor an opportunity to share ideas and further analyze the theories and concepts presented in class lectures and readings. In addition, group discussions will be used to discuss the concepts and theories presented in the additional honors readings. The group setting can also be used to discuss progress on the honors assignments. The instructor and honors students will meet at least three times per semester and are encouraged to meet monthly when possible.

Method: Oral Presentations

Integration: Oral presentations will provide honors students the opportunity of presenting their research projects to their honors colleagues or the regular class to facilitate the development of their presentation and communication skills.

Method: Service Learning

Integration: Service learning will allow students to gain practical experience, and apply key course concepts to real political experiences, through the participation in a political organization, or a public or community based organization.

Method: Field trips

Integration: Field trips to off campus political events will be used to encourage student participation in community and political organizations and to increase their knowledge of the impact of current political trends and issues.

**Methods of Evaluation****Method**

Class Participation

**Integration**

In-class discussions will be used to determine student knowledge and understanding of the course reading materials, recognition of fact, and demonstrate synthesis of the course materials. Class participation will be measured through a participation rubric which will measure the frequency and accuracy of their analysis of fact and understanding and application of theory.

**DE Adaptations for MOE**

Open Ended questions will be posted and submitted through the accessible discussion boards section on the online course management system. Feedback will be provided weekly through the grading tools in the online course management system.

---

**Method**

Portfolios

**Integration**

Students will create a portfolio of current events analysis one sheets related to each weeks content topic. Students will be assessed on their ability to analyze current political issues and trends, and explain the connection to course material. For example the impact of Supreme Court decisions on various ethnic groups.

**DE Adaptations for MOE**

Portfolios will be posted and submitted through the assignments section in the online course management system. Feedback will be provided weekly through the grading tools section of the online course management system. Portfolio assignments will meet all accessibility standards.

---

**Method**

Exams/Tests

**Integration**

Multiple choice, short answer, and/or essay questions will be used to demonstrate recognition, comprehension, and analysis of content.

**DE Adaptations for MOE**

Exams will be accessible in the quizzes tab and learning modules on the course management system and feedback will be provided within a week through the course management system.

---

**Method**

Group Projects

**Integration**

Group Projects and Debates will be used to assess the student's ability to analyze current political issues and trends as they relate to theories and concepts presented in class lectures, videos and readings.

**DE Adaptations for MOE**

Group project assignments will be posted and submitted through the discussion board section in the online course management system. All accessibility standards will be featured including closed captions on videos and the use of the course management system reader. Feedback will be provided within a week through the grading tools section of the online course management system.

---

**Method**

Papers

**Integration**

Papers of varying length and formats including but not limited to film and role play reflections, group project self-reflections, argument and analysis of policies and comments, will be used to assess the ability to evaluate, analyze, and integrate course material into interpretations to explain the philosophies and theories of American and California government and politics.

**DE Adaptations for MOE**

Papers will be posted and submitted through the assignments section and meet all accessibility standards in the online course management system. Feedback will be provided within a week through the grading tools section of the online course management system.

---

**Method**

Research Projects

**Integration**

Research Project will be used to assess the students ability to analyze current political issues and trends and assess students ability to demonstrate descriptive, interpretive, comparative, synthetic, and analytical skills. Students will be assessed on their understanding, accuracy, and completeness of their analysis of facts and data, as well as their ability to apply research to course theories.

**DE Adaptations for MOE**

Research projects will be posted and submitted through the assignments section in the online course management system. Feedback will be provided in no more than two weeks through the grading tools section of the online course management system. All accessibility standards will be met including closed captions videos and compatibility to the course management system reader.

---

**Method**

Self-Evaluation

---

### Integration

Self-Evaluation/reflection assignments will be used to assess students' ability to validate their own opinions as it relates to course concepts and theories. Self-evaluation assignments include but are not limited to exam reflections, simulations reflections, weekly journal entries. Students will be evaluated on their ability to demonstrate thoughtful and meaningful engagement with their own opinions and how they have been influenced, changed, or reinforced by course concepts and theories.

### DE Adaptations for MOE

Students will access, turn in and receive feedback within a week through the assignment tab in the course management system. All assignments will meet accessibility requirements.

---

### Evaluation of Honors assignments

Honors students must successfully complete the requirements for the regular portion of the course and the honors assignments to receive honors credit. The honors component of the course is expected to reflect a substantial portion of the final grade

Honors assignments will be evaluated based on the students' ability to demonstrate their understanding of their selected topic(s), conduct outside research, critically analyze and synthesize information from the literature, draw conclusions from their analysis, interpret and apply theories and concepts to draw conclusion from their own opinion and those of others, and present work at a college level including formatting, grammar and spelling.

Each assignment in the honors component of the course will have their own grading and evaluation criteria.

This research paper will be evaluated based on the depth and originality of the student's research, the development of a clear and well-supported thesis, and adherence to academic standards. Evaluation will focus on the student's ability to synthesize information, present an argument, and demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of the chosen political topic.

The political analysis paper will be evaluated based on the student's ability to clearly explain the background, economic, cultural, and societal impacts of the selected political topic. Evaluation will also focus on how effectively the student links their analysis to course concepts and theories.

The administrative case study will be evaluated on the thoroughness of the student's analysis of a federal or state agency's activities and their impact on American citizens. The paper should demonstrate the student's understanding of administrative agencies and their impact on American government.

The service learning assignment will be evaluated based on the student's ability to reflect on their 20 hours of field participation in relation to course content.

The film analysis will be evaluated on the student's ability to connect the selected film(s) to course theories and concepts, demonstrating critical thinking and a strong grasp of the material.

### Assignments

#### Assignment Type

Reading

#### In-class and/or outside of class

Outside of class

#### Formative or Summative

Formative

#### Assignment

Read and take notes on the provided excerpts from John Locke's Second Treatise of Government, The Federalist Papers #10 and Bell Hooks' essay Democratic Education. Once you have completed your reading write a 2-page analysis addressing the following questions: How does Bell Hooks' perspective on education as a democratic space challenge traditional view of democracy? Compare and contrast the philosophies of Locke and Madison. How do their ideas reflect the values of representative democracy? Based on these readings, how do you think democratic governance should address issues of diversity and inclusion in modern society? Your analysis will be written in APA formatting and does not need to include sources other than the readings provided. Your responses will be evaluated on both your comprehension of the material and your ability to critically engage with the ideas presented in the readings

---

**How assignment will be adapted in online format**

Readings will be attached to the assignment and available in learning modules on the course management system and reading analysis will be turned in through the course management system assignment tab. Readings and assignment instructions will meet all accessibility standards. Feedback will be provided within a week through the course management system.

---

**Assignment Type**

Writing

**In-class and/or outside of class**

Outside of class

**Formative or Summative**

Formative

**Assignment**

Analysis of a Constitutional Amendment. For this short writing assignment, you will need to select a Constitutional Amendment from the United States Constitution or California Constitution that has had an impact on civil liberties or civil rights. You will research the historical context in which the amendment was proposed, identify the political theories and philosophical ideas that influenced the development, and examine the social and political issues that necessitated the amendment. You will present your findings in a two-page analysis. Your analysis will be written in APA formatting and include 2 to 3 scholarly sources. Your analysis will be evaluated on the historical accuracy of your research and your ability to critically analyze and engage with the ideas presented in the Constitutional Amendment.

**How assignment will be adapted in online format**

Analysis of a Constitutional Amendment assignment will be available in the course management system and submitted as a text box or file upload through the assignment tab on the course management system. All accessibility standards will be met and feedback will be provided within a week through the course management system.

---

**Assignment Type**

Other

**In-class and/or outside of class**

In-class

Outside of class

**Formative or Summative**

Summative

**Assignment**

Simulation of a Legislative Session. You will be divided into groups each representing either a political party, an interest group (e.g., environmental, business, labor, or civil rights groups), or individual legislators. Each group will receive a real or fictional bill related to a current political issue in California, such as housing policy, climate change, or immigration reform. Legislators must prepare arguments for or against the bill based on their political party's stance and the interests of their constituents. Interest groups must prepare talking points advocating for their position on the bill and work to influence the legislators. In-Class we will, Debate: The class will hold a simulated legislative debate and each group representing legislators will present their positions, ask questions, and respond to their colleagues. Lobbying: Interest groups will have the opportunity to meet with legislators to persuade them to vote in their favor. Voting: At the end of the simulation, we will hold a vote to pass or reject the bill. After the simulation you will write a one-page reflection explaining the challenges of negotiating, lobbying, and making compromises in the legislative process. You will be evaluated on your participation in the project based on peer reviews submitted by your group and the submission of deliverables. You will also be evaluated on your accuracy and analysis of your role in the simulation.

**How assignment will be adapted in online format**

The simulation in the online environment will be conducted as a multiple week discussion using the course management system discussion board forum. All accessibility standards will be met and feedback will be provided within a week through the course management system.

---

## Honors Assignments

### Assignment

Honors students are required to complete all the regularly assigned work for POLS C1000. In addition students in the honors section are required to complete two of the required assignments. Students will choose one assignment from either the research paper, Administrative Case Study, or Service Learning Project; and they will choose one from either the Political Analysis Paper and the Film Analysis.

### Required or Optional

Required

### Honors Core Values

Academic Rigor and Research

### Justify how the assignment reflects the Academic Rigor and Research Core Value

Students are required to complete all the assignments in the regular course POLS C1000 and additional honors assignments and research. This is a vital part of the rigor and research core value, because it gives students the opportunity to challenge their understanding beyond the basics of the course.

---

### Assignment

Research Paper: As an honors student you are required to complete a research project that takes an in-depth look at a political topic of your choice. You will also be required to present original research, and an original thesis.

Your research project will conform to the following guidelines: Papers should be 12-15 pages typed, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman Font, standard one inch margins. A minimum of eight academic/peer reviewed sources are required. Course textbook and assigned course readings cannot account for more than 2 of the 8 required sources. Papers should follow standard APA citation and formatting guidelines.

You will be allowed to present your research project in one of the following options:

1. A 10-minute prerecorded video uploaded to the course management system. You should be visually present in the video and the presentation should include a visual aide, such as slides, posters, or other acceptable alternatives.
2. A 10-minute in class presentation. The in-class presentation should include a visual aide, such as slides, posters, or other acceptable alternatives.

### Required or Optional

Required

### Honors Core Values

Academic Rigor and Research

### Justify how the assignment reflects the Academic Rigor and Research Core Value

The research paper assignment aligns with the core value of academic rigor and research because it requires a 12–15-page paper that demands in-depth analysis, the development of an original thesis, and the use of at least eight peer-reviewed sources, challenging students to engage with a broad range of political science literature. The strict APA formatting and citation guidelines reinforce academic integrity, structure, and attention to detail, ensuring that students maintain high standards throughout their work. Limiting course readings to only two sources out of eight pushes students to rely on academic databases and peer-reviewed materials, ensuring the work is well-supported and researched.

---

### Assignment

Political Analysis Paper: Write a political analysis paper that analyzes a current political topic. Your paper should address the background of the topic, and its economic, cultural and societal impact. Some examples would be white privilege, religious liberty and police relations with minority communities.



Your political analysis paper will be 3-4 pages typed, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman Font, standard one inch margins. A minimum of three academic/peer reviewed sources are required. Course textbook cannot be used as a source. Papers should follow standard APA citation and formatting guidelines.

#### **Required or Optional**

Required

#### **Honors Core Values**

Academic Rigor and Research  
Inclusivity

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Academic Rigor and Research Core Value**

This political analysis paper aligns with the core value of rigor and research by requiring students to conduct in-depth analysis of a current political topic, involving a detailed examination of its background and impacts. Students must use credible sources and data to support their arguments, integrating economic, cultural, and societal dimensions into their analysis. The paper emphasizes critical thinking and academic rigor as students are expected to synthesize various perspectives and draw connections to broader political theories.

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Inclusivity Core Value**

The political analysis paper aligns with the core value of inclusivity by encouraging students to explore topics that directly affect marginalized or underrepresented communities, such as white privilege or police relations with minority communities. By examining how political topics impact different groups, students gain a deeper understanding of societal inequalities and the experiences of diverse populations.

---

#### **Assignment**

**Administrative Case Study:** As an honors student you will be required to write an administrative case study on the activities of a federal and/or state agency as they impact American citizens. Some examples would be the Border Patrol, the Justice Department, the Veterans Affairs Department and the Department of Education.

Your case study will be 10-12 pages typed, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman Font, standard one inch margins. A minimum of three academic/peer reviewed sources are required. Course textbook cannot be used as a source. Papers should follow standard APA citation and formatting guidelines.

#### **Required or Optional**

Required

#### **Honors Core Values**

Academic Rigor and Research  
Engagement

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Academic Rigor and Research Core Value**

This administrative case study assignment aligns with the core value of rigor and research by requiring honors students to deeply analyze the activities of a federal or state agency and their impact on American citizens. Students must engage in comprehensive research, using primary and secondary sources to gather information on the agency's policies, operations, and outcomes. The assignment challenges students to critically evaluate the effectiveness and broader societal implications of government action, requiring the synthesis of complex information and well-supported, evidence-based conclusions.

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Engagement Core Value**

The assignment aligns with the core value of engagement by requiring students to connect academic research with real-world governance, exploring how federal or state agencies directly affect citizens' lives. It encourages students to engage with contemporary policy issues and develop an understanding of governmental structures and functions, fostering a connection between theoretical knowledge and practical application.

---

#### **Assignment**

**Service Learning Project:** For the service learning project you will be asked to complete 20 hours of participation in a political organization (i.e. a campaign), or a public or community based organization and write a paper relating the knowledge and experience of the field activity to course content. Your paper will be 8 - 10 pages typed, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman

---

Font, standard one inch margins. A minimum of three academic/peer reviewed sources are required. Course textbook cannot be used as a source. Papers should follow standard APA citation and formatting guidelines.

Some examples would be the volunteering for the NAACP, Mecha, the Mexican Legal Defense Fund, United Farm Workers or in the field office of a member of Congress. Service learning choice of organization participation should tie into course themes. The service learning option will also be required you to record and submit hours of participation to the instructor.

#### **Required or Optional**

Required

#### **Honors Core Values**

Engagement

Inclusivity

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Engagement Core Value**

This service-learning project aligns with the core value of engagement by actively involving students in real-world political or community-based organizations. By participating in 20 hours of service, students connect course content with hands-on experience, deepening their understanding of how political theories and processes function in practice. The assignment fosters engagement by encouraging students to contribute to organizations that reflect the themes and concepts discussed in class.

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Inclusivity Core Value**

This service-learning project aligns with the core value of inclusivity by actively involving students in real-world political or community-based organizations. The assignment promotes inclusivity by offering opportunities to work with diverse organizations like the NAACP and United Farm Workers, allowing students to engage with marginalized communities and understand their perspectives. This combination of experiential learning and reflection helps students apply academic knowledge while promoting civic responsibility and inclusivity.

---

#### **Assignment**

Film Analysis: As an honors student you will be required to write an analysis of selected films as they relate to the course theories and concepts. You will be asked to explain how film and theory connect. Films can be watched as a group or individually. You will focus your analysis on 1 or more films. A list of potential films will be developed in consultation with the instructor. Films could include, but are not limited to Primary (1960), 13th (2016), Primary (1960), and Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939).

Your film analysis will be 3-4 pages typed, double spaced, 12-point Times New Roman Font, standard one inch margins. A minimum of 1 film and three academic/peer reviewed sources are required. Course textbook cannot be used as a source. Papers should follow standard APA citation and formatting guidelines.

#### **Required or Optional**

Required

#### **Honors Core Values**

Academic Rigor and Research

Engagement

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Academic Rigor and Research Core Value**

The film analysis assignment aligns with the core value of research and academic rigor because students must locate and integrate at least three peer-reviewed academic sources into their film analysis. By requiring sources beyond the course textbook, the assignment emphasizes the importance of independent research and scholarly engagement.

#### **Justify how the assignment reflects the Engagement Core Value**

The film analysis assignment aligns with the core value of engagement by allowing students to select films that resonate with their interests and connect them to course theories and concepts. Watching films either as a group or individually offers flexibility and ensures that students can immerse themselves in the material, and encourages active engagement with both the visual medium and academic theory.

---

---

## Course Materials

### Textbooks

Any college-level introduction to American government and politics textbook including, but not limited to:

Patterson. 2024. *We the People*. 15th ed.

Sidlow and Henschen. *GOVT 12: Principles of American Government*. 2025

Van Vechten. 2021. *California Politics: A Primer*.

### Other Resources

May also include supplementary materials such as, but not limited to, primary sources (e.g. *The Federalist Papers*), readers, etc.

### Open Educational Resources

Krutz and Waskiewicz. 2024. *American Government* 3e. OpenStax (OER)

Reti. 2023. *Introduction to California Government and Politics*. (OER)

## Class Size Information

### Class Size

40

### Class Size Category

A - Lecture/discussion 40

## Diversity and Inclusion

**Explain how diversity and inclusion (e.g., gender, culture/race, sexuality, etc.) is infused into the course.**

Diversity and inclusion are infused into the course by integrating content that reflects a wide range of identities and perspectives. The course content and methods of instruction includes readings from authors of various genders, cultures, races. Class discussions frequently address how different policies impact marginalized communities, encouraging students to consider perspectives other than their own. Case studies, role play simulations, and group projects will examine historical events like the Civil Rights Movement, women's suffrage, and LGBTQ+ rights activism, highlighting contributions from underrepresented groups. Multimedia resources, such as documentaries featuring diverse political leaders or guest lectures from activists, enrich the learning experience.

**Describe how assignments, instruction, evaluation, course content, and interactions are contextualized for diverse learners promoting an equitable course.**

Assignments are designed to be inclusive by offering choices that allow students to engage with topics relevant to their backgrounds, such as selecting a policy issue that affects their own community for analysis. Instruction employs varied teaching methods—including lectures, group discussions, and multimedia presentations—to cater to different learning styles and abilities. Evaluation incorporates multiple assessment forms like essays, presentations, and projects, ensuring all students can demonstrate their understanding effectively. Course content covers a broad spectrum of political issues affecting diverse populations, such as examining how legislation impacts racial minorities or the LGBTQ+ community. Interactions are structured to promote equity; for instance, group activities are facilitated to ensure all voices are heard and respectful dialogue is maintained.

## Interactions

**Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-student interaction.**

POLS C1000 will incorporate student-to-student interaction through collaborative learning activities such as discussions, debates, and projects. Students will participate in small group discussions to analyze political theories and their applications to current events, fostering peer learning and diverse perspectives. Collaborative projects may involve case studies where students work together to examine policy issues affecting different communities, encouraging the sharing of varied insights. Online discussion forums will allow students to respond to each other's ideas, promoting critical thinking and respectful dialogue outside the classroom. Peer review sessions will enable students to give and receive feedback on assignments, enhancing their analytical skills and understanding of course material.

**Explain how the course will incorporate instructor-to-student interaction.**

POLS C1000 will incorporate instructor-to-student interaction through regular lectures, feedback, and open communication channels. The instructor will provide interactive lectures, encouraging questions and discussions to clarify complex concepts in United States and California politics. Student support hours will offer students opportunities for one-on-one discussions with the instructor,

addressing individual learning needs and interests. Timely and constructive feedback on assignments will guide students in their understanding of political science theories and methodologies. The instructor will facilitate classroom and online discussions, posing thought-provoking questions and engaging with student responses to deepen the learning experience. Regular announcements and check-ins will keep students informed and connected to the course.

**Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-content interaction.**

Student-to-content interaction will be fostered through a variety of engaging learning materials and activities that require active engagement with the course content. Students will read primary source documents such as the United States and California constitutions, landmark Supreme Court cases, and influential political writings. Interactive assignments, such as analyzing current political events using political science theories, will enable students to apply concepts to real-world situations. Multimedia resources, including videos, podcasts, and online simulations, will provide diverse ways to explore political structures and issues. Regular quizzes and reflective essays will prompt students to think critically about the material and assess their understanding.

**Explain how the course will incorporate student-to-self interaction (metacognitive).**

POLS C1000 will encourage student-to-self interaction by promoting metacognitive activities that help students reflect on their learning processes and personal development. Reflective journals will be assigned, where students critically examine their evolving understanding of political concepts and their own beliefs about government and policy. Self-assessment exercises will enable students to identify their strengths and areas for improvement, setting personal learning goals. Students may be asked to write reflective essays on how historical developments have influenced their rights and responsibilities as citizens, connecting course content to their personal experiences. Class discussions will often include prompts that encourage students to consider how their identities and backgrounds shape their perspectives on political issues.

Key: 2650