

POLITICAL SCIENCE 1 Government of the United States and California Fall 2013  
Section 4734

Instructor: Ruebensaal

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Office Hours MW 10:30-11am M 5:30-6:30pm T/Th by appt.

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TEXT: There are two text books for this course:

American Government and Politics Today 2012-13: Brief Edition (AG) Schmidt

California Government 5th edition (CA) Korey

WEEK OF	MAJOR CONCEPTS OF AMERICAN GOVERNMENT	
August 26	Introduction and Political Concepts (AG) Chapter 1	
September 4*	Concepts of Government cont. Ideology and Government	(CA) Chapter 1
September 9	The Constitution	(AG) Chapter 2 (CA) Chapter 2
September 16	Constitution cont. (Federalism)	(AG) Chapter 3 (CA) Chapter 9 pgs.96-101
September 23	subject continued	
September 30	EXAM #1	
CONSTITUTIONAL CENTERS OF POLITICAL POWER		
October 7	The Congress (Legislative Branch) The California Legislature	(AG) Chapter 9 (CA) Chapter 6
October 14	The Presidency (Executive Branch) The California's Plural Executive	(AG) Chapter 10 (CA) Chapter 7
October 21	EXAM #2 The Supreme Court (Judicial Branch) (AG) Chapter 12	
October 28	Judiciary and Civil Liberties	(AG) Chapter 5
November 4	Civil Liberties cont.	
November 13*	subject continued	
November 18	EXAM #3	

## THE NON-CONSTITUTIONAL CENTERS OF POLITICAL POWER

November 25	Campaigns, Elections and the Media (AG) Chapter 6, 8
December 2	Political Parties and Interest Groups (AG) Chapter 7 Semester Essay is due 12/2 (selected Topics)
December 9	FINAL EXAM WEEK EXAM #4 (12/9 11:30-1:30pm)

### GRADING:

4 exams (the lowest exam grade will be dropped)  
1 semester essay (equivalent to an exam - - not dropped)

### EXAMS:

The exams for this course will be in two parts: Part 1 is multiple choice and Part 2 is written i.e. identification, fill-in, and short essay. The exams are not cumulative. If you miss an exam you may take a make-up before the next scheduled exam. The make-up exam is essay format.

### ATTENDANCE POLICY:

(1% + or -- borderline cases) students note: Your grade will be negatively affected by not attending class. To me attendance signifies attitude. AND I am big on having the right attitude. However, just showing up to class is not a guarantee for passing this class. You have to read the materials, pass the exams, and do the required work. The maximum number of missed (excused or unexcused) classes that will begin to affect your grade is \_\_\_\_\_ (this is equivalent to two weeks missed). All absences, if known in advance, should be noted to the instructor. Unscheduled absences should be called in/or a voice message left/or an e-mail sent before the next class.

### DROPPING THIS CLASS:

It is not the instructor's responsibility to drop a student from the class. If you plan on dropping this course then do it on your own and within the scheduled time frame.

NOTE: the date in the FALL schedule of classes for the following:

Drop class with a W is Friday, November 15th. If you fail to drop the class and decide to stop going to class thinking that the instructor has dropped you...your final grade will be a fail/F.

### RECORDING OF LECTURES and GENERAL CLASSROOM CONDUCT AND PROCEDURES:

You may tape all the instructor's lectures. You do not need my permission. Turn off all cell phones while in class especially during exams. When in class assume that you are here to learn, to discuss and to follow the lectures. If this is NOT your intention do not

bother coming to class. Arrive to class on time...consistent lateness could lower your grade. If you come to class late, after roll is taken, then see the instructor at the END of class to note your attendance. My policy on cheating and plagiarism follows the policy set out in the college catalogue.

**DSPS: Learning Challenges and Accommodations**

If you are a registered student through DSPS then testing accommodation could be arranged through their office (SS Building). Please inform the instructor if this applies to you and supply the necessary documentation regarding your case.

**MAJOR NOTE TO ALL STUDENTS!!!!**

Since this is a class regarding political discourse proper language and respect for other's points of view (POVs) are to be tolerated. If you are not mature enough to handle free speech then I would suggest that you enroll in another class. The very essence of free speech within a democratic society is to allow for controversy. Democratic societies are messy. I might not agree to what you say, but I will defend your right to say it.....now, that said remember whatever you say or whatever you believe must be supported with fact and investigation..... and not feelings. So much of political discussion is based on gut reaction/emotions and not on educational investigation. So be able to back up what you believe in and what your opinions are.....do the homework.

Hope you have a successful semester..... Professor Ruebensaal

What are the STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES for this course (SLOs) aka - -  
In taking this course and what would you hope to take with you at the end of the semester?

- 1- The first purpose of this course is to learn about YOUR Government.  
The information that you study is based on facts ..... (from the text book and lectures)  
Yet from fact we learn to draw ANALYSIS which leads us to.....Critical Thinking
- 2- CRITICAL THINKING is one of the SLOs to be gained in this course. By this I mean to be able to analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinion, using evidence, and using facts to specify multiple solutions (hypothesis) [  $A + B = C$  ] and their consequences. CT develops in you a sense of critical reading, writing and ultimately, your participation. What better service can you give your government than your mind followed by your involvement.
- 3- The second SLO for this course is to promote a future interest in government, or put another way to develop in you a sense of CIVIC RESPONSIBILITY- - by understanding how political responsibilities relate to work, family, community and the global planet.  
Maybe after this course you will realize  
the importance of how government affects your life, your community, and the planet.  
AND..... how you might become better involved and take some responsibility in the political process.
- 4- Last but not least... it is a Requirement for Transfer and/or AA Degree-it fulfills your Constitutional requirement.....

What are we going to study in this Course: as related to the two SLOs above: Critical Thinking and Civic Responsibility:

In this course, we are going to study two major human activities: POLITICAL BEHAVIOR and POLITICAL THINKING. Both of these activities are rooted in the notion of choice. We choose how we act and we choose what we think. Oftentimes, what we thinking motivates how we act.

- 1-The Study of Political Behavior as related to POLITICAL EFFICACY (Acting)  
The WHY and the HOW people act politically (or not). What influences our political behavior. WHY we act? or not. AND what are the various types of political activity. i.e. register to vote, vote, attend a court of law (as an observer), serve on a jury, work on a particular election, support a political candidate, become active around a particular political issue. (see Purpose #3)
- 2-The Study of Political Opinion is related to POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION (Thinking)  
Why do we choose one way of thinking over another??? What factors influence our thinking? Our bias?? Can we change our ideas, our attitudes, and even our values?

Question: Does the study of Politics differ from the study of Government???

THE FORMULA:

In understanding Politics or the Political System we must understand a basic FORMULA  
This formula is based on the notion that CONTROVERSY, is the very nature or essence of politics.  
However, out of controversy emerges DISCUSSION, and it is through discussion that we arrive at  
CONSENSUS. In politics, and in life, there is no such thing as a ZERO SUM GAME-I always will  
win and the other person will always lose--. In most cases we can not get all that there is to get !!  
There are few all win/all lose solutions to a problem. AND since we are dealing with human beings  
rarely are there final, absolute solutions to problems. In every case you got to win/ lose to win. OR  
you got to give up something in order to get something. This is the art of negotiation/arriving at  
CONSENSUS.

Government is an institution/when this institution operates it is politics. One popular definition of  
government is the [Allocation of Scarce Resources among competing interests.] These various  
interests often break down into organized "groups." These "interest groups" then compete against each  
other for what resources are available and what there is to get. As the resources get smaller (finite) the  
competition becomes more intense. The notion of competing interests for scarce resources resulting in  
bargaining and compromise is what is known as PLURALISM- - Pluralistic Democracy.

Another definition for the role of a particular AGENT of government- - - What are the three main  
agents of government? \_\_\_\_\_

This is how ALL governments are set up – structurally.

. . . . . is to Balance INDIVIDUAL interests against the COLLECTIVE interests of society.

individual interests

vs

society's interests

This role is often assigned to the referees of society (Courts). The courts are one of those agents of  
government. Courts will often apply the rule in decision making as to Who gets What?, How Much?  
and When?. This often applies to civil liberties and civil rights issues.

With the above two definitions of government in mind we can, therefore, make the hypothesis that  
All governments perform the same three functions. Which are? \_\_\_\_\_  
YET, not all governments perform these three functions in the same way.

FOUR basic forms of Government:

Presidential Form, Parliamentary Form, Totalitarian Form, Authoritarian Form,