



C-ID Descriptor

Introduction to American Government and Politics

Descriptor Details

- **Descriptor Title:** Introduction to American Government and Politics
- **C-ID Number:** 110
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General Description

An introduction to United States and California government and politics, including their constitutions, political institutions and processes, and political actors. Examination of political behavior, political issues, and public policy.

Prerequisites

None

Corequisites

None

Advisories

None

Content

1. The political philosophies of the framers of the U.S. Constitution and critics of the Constitution.
2. The process of amending and interpreting the U.S. Constitution and California constitution.
3. The theory and practice of federalism.
4. The interaction between the federal government and Native Americans.
5. Contemporary operations of United States political institutions and processes, including the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government and nongovernmental institutions.
6. The rights and liberties of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions.
7. Contemporary operations of California state and local political institutions within the framework of federal-state relations.
8. Individual and group political behavior of Americans and Californians within the frameworks established by the U.S. Constitution and California constitution, such as elections, interest groups, political parties, and the media.
9. Factors that shape politics and policymaking including race, ethnicity, gender, class, political culture, political socialization, media, political ideologies, political movements, and public opinion.
 - a. Other factors that shape politics and policymaking, such as the following, can also be examined: ability status, age, citizenship status, environmental justice, gender expression, language, religion, and sexual orientation.
10. Domestic, economic, and foreign issues and policies.

Lab Activities

N/A

Objectives

At the conclusion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. Explain the founding and development of the U.S. Constitution.
2. Identify and evaluate institutions and political processes within the United States and California.

3. Discuss and analyze contemporary political issues and operations in the United States and California.
4. Explain the civil liberties and civil rights of individuals as articulated in the U.S. Constitution and federal court decisions.
5. Analyze the role of culture, race, ethnicity, gender, class and 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.

Evaluation Methods

May include as appropriate:

In-class or take-home examinations
Research papers or projects
Written assignments
Analytical papers
Simulations
Oral presentations
Participation in class discussions and debates

Textbooks

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

Barbour and Wright. *Keeping the Republic*.

Dye, Ziegler, and Schubert. *The Irony of Democracy: An Uncommon Introduction to American Politics*.

Harrison and Harris. *American Democracy Now*.

Janda, Berry and Goldman. *The Challenge of Democracy*.

Krutz, Glen. 2019. *American Government 2e*. OpenStax

McClain, Paula D., and Steven C. Tauber. 2019. *American Government in Black and White: Diversity and Democracy*. 4 edition. Oxford University Press.

Magleby. *Government by the People*.

O'Conner and Sabato. *American Government: Roots and Reform.*

Patterson. *We the People.*

Schmidt, Shelley, and Bardes. *American Government and Politics Today.*

Turner, Stephenson, Bresler, Friedrich, and Karlesky. *Introduction to American Government.*

Welch, Gruhl, Rigdon and Thomas. *Understanding American Government.*

Wilson, Dilulio, Bose. *American Government: Institutions and Policies.*

May also include any college level introduction to California government and politics textbook including, but not limited to

Field. *California Government and Politics Today.*

Giventer. *Governing California.*

Lawrence. *California: The Politics of Diversity.*

Van Vechten. *California Politics: A Primer.*

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