

SADDLEBACK COLLEGE

PS 1 American Government

Course Syllabus

COURSE INFORMATION:

Day and Time:	Mon. & Wed. 4:00 to 6:50 pm	Ticket No.:	22085
Location:	BGS 329	Term:	Spring 2010
Term Dates:	Jan. 11 to Mar. 13, 2010	Final:	Wed., Mar. 10, 4:00 pm
Date of Last Instructional Class Meeting:	Mon., Mar. 8.		

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Instructor:	Dr. Howard Gensler	E-mail:	hgensler@saddleback.edu
Office:	BGS 322	Phone:	(949) 582-4450
Office Hours:	M 2:00 – 4:00 pm, and by appointment.	Mailbox:	BGS 317

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ATTN: Prof. Howard Gensler, Social & Behavioral Sciences, BGS 317

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:	Last Day To Add:	Jan. 20.
	Last day to drop w/o a “W”:	Jan 27.
	Last day to elect CR/NC:	Jan. 27.
	Last day to drop with a “W”:	Feb. 17.

HOLIDAYS:	Martin Luther King Day:	Jan. 18.
	Presidents Day:	Feb. 12-15.
	Spring Break	March 14 - 21
	Non-Instructional Day:	May 13.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course is a college level introduction to the principles, personalities, problems, and issues of government, both state and federal, with an emphasis on developing trends of the U.S. government. (Note: This course satisfies the state requirements in state and local government of California.)

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The course objectives include developing an understanding of:

- 1) the context of the American Government, including the concept of democracy, representative government and checks and balances, the purpose and place of the Constitution, Federalism and how it relates California to the central government, the California Constitution, the organization of local government and its relationship to the State government, and American political culture.
- 2) the input channels to government operation on the national and State of California levels including public opinion and voting behavior, interest groups, and political parties.
- 3) the output channels of governmental operation: federal: the Presidency and the Executive Branch, the bureaucracy, the Legislative function, and the Judicial function.
- 4) the output channels of governmental operation: state: the plural Executive, the Legislative function, and the Judicial function.
- 5) the state and federal policy process: what gets on the political agenda, how an issue becomes a policy, domestic policy, foreign policy.

COURSE METHODOLOGY:

This course will consist primarily of lectures. Student participation will be utilized and is expected. Reading the book in advance of class is required. Lectures may and will exceed the scope and content of the book. The book is a teaching aid, not a limitation on course content. You will need to attend every lecture and to take notes. Student debates will be held and participation is expected. The course is supported by Blackboard. Blackboard will be utilized for posting Power Point Presentations on some course lecture material, to post course documents including tests and the paper assignment, and to make announcements.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

INTRODUCTION TO AMERICAN GOVERNMENT, *Fourth Edition*, by Stephenson, Jr., et al. (Reno, NV: Best Value Textbooks, LLC: 2007). ISBN 1-932856-68-4.

GOVERNING CALIFORNIA, *Second Edition*, by Lawrence L. Giventer (NY: McGraw-Hill: 2008). ISBN 978-0-07-352633-1.

TEST MATERIALS:

Thirteen (13) (half-sheet green) 100 item Scantron 882-E objective test forms (50 items per side).

GRADING POLICY:

Exams: There will be twelve exams worth a total of 300 points.

Paper: The paper is worth 300 points.

Speech: The speech is worth 300 points.

Final: The final is worth 100 points.

Grade Determination: The total points for the course is 1,000 points. The grade will be calculated on the standard scale: 90% = A. 80% = B. 70% = C. 60% = D. F = below 60%.

The twelve take-home tests on the textbooks are required. All twelve must be completed and submitted on time. You must score at least 35/50 in order to receive credit for the test. If you do not get credit on 3 tests, your course grade is limited to a B. If you do not get credit on 4 tests, your course grade is limited to a C. If you do not get credit on 5 tests, your course grade is limited to a D. If you do not get credit on 6 tests, your course grade is F.

Note: Plagiarism may result in a written report submitted to the College and may result in expulsion. The paper must be submitted to Turnitin.com on time for credit.

ATTENDANCE POLICY: Attendance is required. You may miss 6 hours of class without grade point deduction. After that, you will lose 10 points per hour of class missed. Pro rations are made. If you miss a total of 13 hours of class, you will be dropped from class. If it is after the point at which you can be dropped, you will receive an F in the class. Note, it is not my responsibility to drop you. If you wish to drop the class, you should do so to make sure that you drop before the withdrawal from the class is adversely reflected on your student record. 50 points will be awarded for perfect attendance. See Class Rules for excused absence policy, making up points, perfect attendance, and late arrivals.

EXTRA CREDIT POLICY: Perfect attendance will earn 50 points extra credit. Papers which substantially exceed minimum requirements and are of exceptional quality may be rewarded with up to 50 points of extra credit. Exceptional speeches may be rewarded with up to 50 points of extra credit.

COURSE CHANGES: I reserve the right to modify the course at any time, including the timing of tests, the due dates and contents of assignments, and coverage of material.

STUDENT CONDUCT:

All of the rules and regulations of the State of California, the South Orange County Community College District (SOCCCD), and Saddleback College (SC) regarding student conduct apply. Refer to the SC Catalogue, Schedule of Classes, and website; the SOCCCD Board Policies, Administrative Regulations, and website; and other published materials for more information. See Class Rules for details.

SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS:

Oral Presentation: When assigned.

Take-home tests due pursuant to schedule.

Paper: Feb. 17.

Final: Wed., Mar. 10, 4:00 pm

SCHEDULE OF LESSONS:

The following Schedule of Lessons including reading assignments is subject to change. This Schedule represents a general plan. A lesson may take more than one class period. Two lessons may be covered in one class session. The order of lessons may be changed. Additional lessons may be added. The book is a teaching aid, not a limitation on course content. You will need to attend every lecture and to take notes.

Key: Text: Intro to Am. Govt, 5th Ed. Cal.: Governing California, 2nd Ed.

- Lesson 1. Course Introduction.
 - Lesson 2. The context of the American Government, including the concept of democracy, representative government and checks and balances, the purpose and place of the Constitution. Text, Intro, chpt 1.
 - Lesson 3. Government power. Congressional oversight. The bureaucracy.
 - Lesson 4. The Right to Bear Arms and the Role of the Militia.
 - Lesson 5. Political control, democracy, and political parties. The input channels to government operation on the national level including public opinion and voting behavior, interest groups, and political parties. Text, chpts 4 and 5.
 - Lesson 6. Campaigns, Elections and the Electoral College. Text chpt. 8.
 - Lesson 7. The federal policy process: what gets on the political agenda, how an issue becomes a policy. Text, chpts 7 and 13.
 - Lesson 8. The output channels of federal governmental operation: the Presidency and the Executive Branch, bureaucracy, the Legislative function, and the Judicial function. Text, chpts 9-12.
 - Lesson 9. Federalism and how it relates California to the central government, the California Constitution, the organization of local government and its relationship to the State government, and American political culture. Text, chpt 2.
 - Lesson 10. The input channels to government operation on the State of California level including public opinion and voting behavior, interest groups, and political parties. Cal., chpts 1, 3-4.
 - Lesson 11. The output channels of governmental operation: state: the plural Executive, the Legislative function, and the Judicial function. Cal., chpt 2
 - Lesson 12. The state policy process: what gets on the political agenda, how an issue becomes a policy. Cal. Chpt 3.
 - Lesson 13. Legitimacy, Democracy, The Supreme Court, and Abuse of Process.
 - Lesson 14. The Media. Kennedy, Nixon, Reagan and Clinton. Text, chpt 6.
 - Lesson 15. The President and the War Powers Act.
 - Lesson.16. Civil Liberties. Text, chpt 3. Cal., chpt 6.
 - Lesson 17. Foreign Policy and Treaties. Text, chpt. 16.
 - Lesson 18. Debt and Deficits, and the Social Security Crisis. Text, chpt 14.
 - Lesson 19. Welfare. Text, chpt 15.
 - Lesson 20. California State Government. Governors. Taxes and Prop. 13. Education. Cal., chpts 5 and 7.
 - Lesson 21. California Electricity Crisis of 2000-01. Cal., chpt 8.
 - Lesson 22. Nuclear War and Strategic Studies. Text, chpt 16.
 - Lesson 23. Prisons. Courts. Drugs. Foster Care. Cal., chpt 6.
- FINAL: Wed., Mar. 10, 4:00 pm