

# PSCI A101: SURVEY OF CURRENT ISSUES

| Item   | Value   |
|--|---|
| Curriculum Committee Approval Date                                     | 09/26/1976  |
| Top Code   | 220700 - Political Science  |
| Units  | 3 Total Units   |
| Hours  | 54 Total Hours (Lecture Hours 54)   |
| Total Outside of Class Hours   | 0   |
| Course Credit Status   | Credit: Degree Applicable (D)   |
| Material Fee   | No  |
| Basic Skills   | Not Basic Skills (N)  |
| Repeatable   | No  |
| Open Entry/Open Exit   | No  |
| Grading Policy   | Standard Letter (S),<br>• Pass/No Pass (B)  |
| Associate Arts Local General Education (GE)                            | • Area 4 Social and Behavioral Sciences 4B Social and Economic Institutions (OD2)     |
| Associate Science Local General Education (GE)                         | • Area 4 Social and Behavioral Sciences (OSD)   |
| California General Education Transfer Curriculum (Cal-GETC)            | • Cal-GETC 4 Social & Behavioral Sciences (4)<br>• Cal-GETC 4H Political Science (4H) |
| Intersegmental General Education Transfer Curriculum (IGETC)           | • IGETC 4 Social&Behavioral Sci (4)<br>• IGETC 4H Political Science (4H)              |
| California State University General Education Breadth (CSU GE-Breadth) | • CSU D8 Political Science (D8)   |

## Course Description

Survey of current issues and events in American and/or world politics. Focus will be on issues and problems of political significance, opposing viewpoints in the political realm, analysis and evaluation of arguments, and ideological and political conflict. Transfer Credit: CSU; UC.

## Course Level Student Learning Outcome(s)

1. Explain the key controversies of selected domestic and international affairs.
2. Demonstrate critical thinking through analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of the course content.
3. Effectively communicate the knowledge and skills gained in this course.

## Course Objectives

- 1. Describe current events and issues in American and/or world politics.
- 2. Define basic terms and concepts relevant to the course.

- 3. Analyze arguments concerning issues of political significance.
- 4. Evaluate arguments surrounding current issues and events by examining logic and reasoning, evidence, and information.
- 5. Identify strengths and weaknesses of opposing viewpoints.
- 6. Identify unstated assumptions of arguments.
- 7. Provide examples of public policies designed to solve social and political problems.
- 8. Assess the success or failure of public policies designed to solve social and political problems.
- 9. Analyze the moral and practical implications of public policies.
- 10. Identify the ideological underpinnings of political arguments. Determine whether arguments are liberal or conservative in character.
- 11. Examine the source of conflict surrounding social and political problems.
- 12. Explain the history of current events and issues in American and/or world politics.
- 13. Discuss the relevance of political conflict, public policy, and ideology to the people of the United States.
- 14. Identify the political context within which social and political problems are addressed in American politics.
- 15. Compare and contrast opposing viewpoints.
- 16. Distinguish fact and opinion.

## Lecture Content

Introduction Facts and principles of American Government and politics  
Ideology in the United States Overview of course issues Current Issues  
Definition of issues, events, problems Ideological and value conflict  
Background information Topics/issues may include the following: Crime and punishment Gun control Reproductive choice Race and civil rights  
Poverty and inequality American foreign policy Education Constitutional interpretation The media Other current issues as they arise Public policy/solutions to political problems Opposing Viewpoints Ideological foundations Sources of conflict Argumentation Information and evidence  
Statistics Logic and reasoning Fallacies

## Method(s) of Instruction

- Lecture (02)
- DE Live Online Lecture (02S)
- DE Online Lecture (02X)

## Instructional Techniques

1. Lecture and explanations of arguments, issues, topics, terms, and concepts. Focus on analysis, criticism, and evaluation.
2. Lecture is outlined and detailed in some medium (online, on the board, on slides).
3. Videos and documentaries to reinforce reading and lecture material to be shown.
4. Newspaper articles and editorials may be discussed in class.
5. Other reading material (magazine or journal articles) may be provided as necessary.
6. Students may collaborate for in-class group work assignments or small group discussions.
7. Instructor may provide additional material including handouts as needed.
8. Instructor provides written feedback on exams and writing assignments.
9. Instructor provides students with sample exam questions and study guides for each exam.
10. Instructor provides written feedback on homework and/or class work assignments.
11. Instructor provides verbal feedback during class work assignments and/or class discussions.

## **Reading Assignments**

Assigned from texts, periodicals, and other media.

## **Writing Assignments**

Writing assignments may include essays in which students summarize and analyze opposing viewpoints, their assumptions and arguments, ideological foundations, and strengths and weaknesses.

## **Out-of-class Assignments**

Writing assignments may include essays in which students summarize and analyze opposing viewpoints, their assumptions and arguments, ideological foundations, and strengths and weaknesses.

## **Demonstration of Critical Thinking**

Objective and subjective quizzes and/or examinations. Exams based on lecture, readings, videos, class discussions, homework, class work. Students participate in class discussions to analyze material covered in lecture and reading. Students turn in writing assignments, homework, and/or class work assignments as necessary to reinforce course material. Students engage in group work as necessary to reinforce course material. Students carefully read and research course texts.

## **Required Writing, Problem Solving, Skills Demonstration**

Writing assignments may include essays in which students summarize and analyze opposing viewpoints, their assumptions and arguments, ideological foundations, and strengths and weaknesses.

## **Eligible Disciplines**

Political science: Master's degree in political science, government, or international relations OR bachelor's degree in any of the above AND master's degree in economics, history, public administration, social science, sociology, any ethnic studies, J.D., or LL.B. OR the equivalent. Master's degree required.

## **Other Resources**

1. Any survey text on current events in American and/or world politics
2. Selected newspapers or periodicals
3. Selected handout materials prepared and distributed by the instructor to include: Homework, class work, articles Videos and documentaries on relevant topics