1. COURSE ID: PLSC 310  
   TITLE: California State and Local Government  
   Units: 3.0 units  
   Hours/Semester: 48.0-54.0 Lecture hours  
   Method of Grading: Grade Option (Letter Grade or P/NP)  
   Recommended Preparation:  
      Eligibility for ENGL 100 or ENGL 105, and completion of, or concurrent enrollment in, any READ  
      400-level course.

2. COURSE DESIGNATION:  
   Degree Credit  
   Transfer credit: CSU; UC  
   AA/AS Degree Requirements:  
      CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E1. Option 2-Group 2: California State and local  
      Government  
      CSM - GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS: E5b. Social Science  
   CSU GE:  
      CSU GE Area D: SOCIAL SCIENCES: DSI - Social Institutions  
      CSU GE Area D: SOCIAL SCIENCES: US 3  
   IGETC:  
      IGETC Area 4: SOCIAL AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES: Social and Behavioral Sciences

3. COURSE DESCRIPTIONS:  
   Catalog Description:  
      The study of the institutions and problems of state and local government in California; California in the  
      federal system. (Satisfies the California State and Local Government requirement.)

4. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOME(S) (SLO'S):  
   Upon successful completion of this course, a student will meet the following outcomes:  
   1. Explain and discuss the historical evolution of California political institutions.  
   2. Identify and discuss the role of interest groups, mass media, political parties, campaigns and elections in  
      California politics.  
   3. Identify and discuss California’s various public policies regarding budgetary process, environment and  
      social welfare programs.  
   4. Explain and discuss institutional power relationships between the state government and the various units of  
      local government such as the counties cities and special districts.

5. SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES:  
   Upon successful completion of this course, a student will be able to:  
   1. Explain and discuss the historical evolution of California political institutions.  
   2. Identify and discuss the role of interest groups, mass media, political parties, campaigns and elections in  
      California politics.  
   3. Identify and discuss California’s various public policies regarding budgetary process, environment and  
      social welfare programs.  
   4. Explain and discuss institutional power relationships between the state government and the various units of  
      local government such as the counties cities and special districts.

6. COURSE CONTENT:  
   Lecture Content:  
      1. Geography, natural resources, climate, economic and social characteristics.  
      2. Cultural and constitutional history of California.  
         A. Procedures and politics of constitutional change.  
         B. Legal and practical relationships of federalism.  
      3. Political parties, interest groups, and elections.  
         A. Impact of Progressive era reforms.  
         B. Weak party system.  
         C. Public relations, interest groups and the mass media in the electoral process.  
         D. Personality politics.
4. Direct democracy: The I. R. R.
   A. Initiative, referendum, and recall: theory, practice & results.
   B. Advantages and disadvantages of "direct democracy."
   C. Use and abuse of the initiative process.

5. Legislature.
   A. Representation, organization, and functions.
   B. Features of the California legislature: centralization of leadership, legislative staffing, benefits, sessions, legislative procedures.
   C. Lobbyist pressures and party practices in the legislative process.
   D. Executive and legislative conflict and effect on legislature's potential.

6. Executive Branch.
   A. "Strong" chief executive.
   B. Powers of the governor: item veto, executive budget, appointive powers, legislative leadership, etc.
   C. Limitations on the governor's power.
   D. Other elected state officers.
      a. Partisan offices: Secretary of state, comptroller, attorney-general, lieutenant-governor, treasurer.
      c. Competition with governor's role.
   E. State bureaucracy.
      a. Structure and function of the major departments.
      b. Role of the civil service: rights & responsibilities of state employees.
      c. Planning, personnel practices, budgeting, "housekeeping" agencies.

   A. Organization and jurisdiction of the state's system of courts.
   B. Selection and removal of judges.
      a. Executive appointment.
      b. Voter accountability.
   C. Grand juries and trial juries.
      a. Role of lawyers, district attorneys, prosecutors.
      b. Role of law-enforcement officers.
   D. Rehabilitation.
      a. "Hardened" criminals.
      b. Juvenile offenders.
   E. Problems in the administration of justice.
      a. Delays in processing cases.
      c. Equality before the law.

8. Finances.
   A. Development of fair and efficient tax system.
   B. Budgeting, revenue, and fiscal control.
   C. Individual taxes and tax collecting (Franchise Tax Board)
   D. Problem of fiscal reform.
   E. Impact of Proposition 13 and other initiatives.

9. Local government.
   A. County.
      a. Charter and "general law" counties.
      b. Functions, offices, and problems of counties.
      c. Change and modernization in the county.
   B. City.
      a. Incorporation, annexation, and legal powers.
      b. Alternative forms of city organization: charter and "general law" municipalities.
      c. Perplexing problems of the city: transportation, traffic congestion, crime, inequality of opportunity; air, water, and noise pollution.
   C. Special districts and metropolitan government.
      a. Specialized functions and complexity.
      b. Problems: overlapping jurisdictions, lack of accountability, and waste.
      c. Advantages of special districts.
         i. B.A.R.T.
         ii. Golden Gate Bridge District.
iii. water and air pollution control districts.
d. Trend to multiple function special districts.
e. Problems of representation and reluctance of counties and cities to relinquish responsibilities.

10. Challenges to government in California.
   A. Protecting the state's natural resources against rapid population growth.
   B. Reconciling demands for social justice and public order.
   C. Maintaining and improving the quality of education.
   D. Playing a meaningful role in a post-industrial economy.
   E. Integrating and reforming governmental activities and operations.
   F. Maintaining credibility and hope in the political process.

7. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:
   Typical methods of instruction may include:
   A. Lecture
   B. Discussion
   C. Other (Specify): Lecture/discussion. Reading assignments in texts and source collections; also articles and political commentaries in periodicals such as the San Francisco Chronicle, Sacramento Bee, Capitol Weekly News, San Jose Mercury-News. Use of media: film, DVD, online access, videotapes, CDs, slides. Guest speakers (elected or appointed officials at the state and local level or from public interest groups such as League of Women Voters) on state and community topics or candidates for elected office on an equal-time basis. Group discussion/work. Attendance at public meetings, such as city councils, school boards, commissions, or county board of supervisors, and reports on such meetings.

8. REPRESENTATIVE ASSIGNMENTS
   Representative assignments in this course may include, but are not limited to the following:

9. REPRESENTATIVE METHODS OF EVALUATION
   Representative methods of evaluation may include:
   A. Quizzes
   B. Evaluation includes objective examinations/quizzes and essay examinations to assess student progress in the mastery of course objectives. Likewise, with the same objectives, oral or written reports on research projects or public meetings; written or oral book and article reviews.

10. REPRESENTATIVE TEXT(S):
    Possible textbooks include:

   **Origination Date:** August 2010
   **Curriculum Committee Approval Date:** December 2011
   **Effective Term:** Fall 2016
   **Course Originator:** Frank Damon