



California Politics and Government: A Practical Approach

By Larry N. Gerston, Terry Christensen

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Employing a unique nuts-and-bolts approach, CALIFORNIA POLITICS AND GOVERNMENT gives insight into real-life politics as it vividly illustrates the complex principles at work in state government. Current examples and clear explanations give readers a solid understanding of the ins and outs of California government. Thoroughly updated, the thirteenth edition addresses many complex economic, social, education, and immigration issues and their impact on state politics. It includes discussion of new court cases, the state's new spending plan, the 2014 elections, changes in government regulations, and more. In addition, public policy coverage is thoroughly integrated throughout the book, helping readers make connections and see firsthand the impact and practical applications of government and legislation in their own lives.

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Editorial Review

Review

"Gerston and Christensen. . . both have a keen sense of community, the diversity of California residents, community standards, and the issues and problems at hand-and they present all of this information in a clear, understandable, and succinct manner that is important for the many students of different backgrounds that take the American/California Government courses with me."

"This book is far superior to most of its competitors in the U.S. Government market. It covers more material, flows better, and is well written."

About the Author

Larry N. Gerston, professor emeritus of political science at San Jose State University, interacts with the political process as both an author and an observer. As an author, he has written 11 academic books in addition to California Politics and Government: A Practical Approach, including Making Public Policy: From Conflict to Resolution (1983); Politics in the Golden State (with Terry Christensen, 1984); The Deregulated Society (with Cynthia Fraleigh and Robert Schwab, 1988); American Government: Politics, Process and Policies (1993); Public Policy: Process and Principles (1987); Public Policymaking in a Democratic Society: A Guide to Civic Engagement (2002); Recall! California's Political Earthquake (with Terry Christensen, 2004); American Federalism: A Concise Introduction (2007); Confronting Reality: Ten Issues Threatening to Implode American Society and How We Can Fix It (2009); Not So Golden After All: The Rise and Fall of California (2012); and Reviving Citizen Engagement: Policies to Renew National Community (2015). Gerston serves as the political analyst for NBC11, a San Francisco Bay Area television station, where he appears on a regular basis. He has written more than 140 op-ed pieces for newspapers throughout the nation and speaks often on issues such as civic engagement and political empowerment.

Terry Christensen is a San Jose State University Professor Emeritus of Political Science. Among his many awards for scholarship and service to the university, he was named Outstanding Professor in 1998. He is the author or co-author of nine books. In addition to those co-authored with Larry Gerston, his works include Projecting Politics: Political Messages in American Films (with Elizabeth Haas and Peter Haas, 2015), and Local Politics: A Practical Guide to Governing at the Grassroots (with Tom Hogen-Esch, 2006). Local and national media regularly call on him for analysis of politics in California and Silicon Valley and he is the host of Valley Politics, a television show on local politics in Silicon Valley. Christensen is experienced in practical politics at the local level as an advocate of policy proposals, an adviser to grassroots groups, and an adviser and mentor to candidates for local office -- many of whom are his former students. He has served on numerous civic committees and commissions. He was the founding executive director of CommUniverCity San Jose (www.cucsjsj.org), a partnership between the City of San Jose, San Jose State University, and adjacent neighborhoods. Through CommUniverCity, hundreds of students are learning about life and politics in their community through service projects selected by neighborhood residents and supported by the city.

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