

**SAN JOSE STATE UNIVERSITY – SPRING 2017 – 3 UNITS
POL 1 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT**

Section 5 - M and W 1:30-2:45 PM - Room DMH 149A - Course Code: 27798

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Patricia McKenzie
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Preferred Communication Method:	Canvas class website messaging
University Email:	Patricia.McKenzie@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday 12:15 to 1:15 pm
Class Day & Time:	Section 5 : M/W 1:30-2:45pm

Course Description

This course fulfills the U. S. Government and California portion of the GE American Institutions requirement (F2-3). The course is intended to introduce students to the fundamentals of American Government as well as to California state and local government. The course includes an examination of the historic basis of American political ideas, principles and practices, as a means of acquainting students with the complexities of the American political system. Prevalent themes throughout the course are the concepts of majority rule vs minority rights, the separation of powers, checks and balances, federalism, and individual freedoms.

From the SJSU GE Guidelines (S14-5): In this course, you will be exposed to alternative interpretations of the historical events and political processes that have shaped the social, economic, and political system in which you live. This course will provide a multicultural framework, including both conflict and consensus perspectives, of the choices and options available to individuals and groups in their social, economic, and political relations.

Required Texts

1. American Government FREE on-line textbook: <http://www.thisnation.com/textbook/>
2. Democracy in California: Politics and Government in the Golden State by Brian P. Janiskee and Ken Masgui. Available as an eTextbook or Paperback from Amazon.

General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO)

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

GELO 1 (US2): Explain how political decisions are made, their consequences for individuals and society, and how individuals and groups may affect the decision-making process. Analyze the meaning and content of the democratic process as it has evolved in the United States and California, and describe the foundations of the political system and the evolving institutions of government, the links between the people and government, and the operations of California government. **Assessed by multiple-choice questions on two exams.**

GELO 2 (US3): Identify the tools of political action and collective decision making at the local, state, national, and global level, and articulate the values and assumptions that inform their civic engagement. **Assessed by multiple-choice questions on two exams.**

GELO 3 (D3): Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts. **Assessed by 1500 word Policy Paper assignment and 10 Discussion Board Questions.**

GELO 4 (D3): Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them. **Assessed by 1500 word Policy Paper Assignment and 10 Discussion Board Questions.**

GELO 5 (D3): Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. **Assessed by 1500 word Policy Paper assignment and 10 Discussion Board Questions.**

GELO 6 (D3): Apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels. **Assessed by 1500 word Policy Paper assignment.**

Political Science Program Learning Outcomes (PSPLO)

Upon completion of the Political Science major program, students should be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

PSPLO 1 Breadth: Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.

PSPLO 2 Application: Students should be able to apply a variety of techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.

PSPLO 3 Disciplinary methods: Student should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, have competence in systematic data gathering using library sources, government documents, and data available through electronic sources, should be able to evaluate research studies, and should be able to critically analyze and interpret influential political texts.

PSPLO 4 Communication Skills: Students should master basic competencies in oral and written communication skills and be able to apply these skills in the context of political science. This means communicating effectively about politics and/or public administration, public policy, and law.

PSPLO 5 Citizenship: Students should acquire an understanding of the role of the citizen in local, state, national, and global contexts and appreciate the importance of lifelong participation in political processes.

Syllabus

The Syllabus as well as all assignments, due dates, and exams can be found on Canvas:



Login URL:

URL: <https://sjsu.instructure.com>

Username: SJSU 9-digit ID

It is your responsibility to sign into Canvas regularly and check for any important announcements and updates. It is also your responsibility to **read the Syllabus in its entirety.** You will find a link to the Syllabus on the CANVAS class website. Enrollment in the course means that you consent to follow and abide by all requirements set forth in the Syllabus. If you find anything to be unclear, it is your responsibility to seek clarification. On the Canvas website you will be able to receive an email and/or notification when there are changes to the Syllabus and/or readings, assignments, etc.

Course Workload

SJSU classes are designed so that in order to be successful, it is expected that students will spend a minimum of forty-five hours for each unit of credit (normally three hours per unit per week), including preparing for class, participating in course activities, completing assignments, and so on. Students are expected to spend at least two hours outside of class for every one hour of in-person class time. Because this is a three-unit course, you can expect to spend a minimum of **6 hours per week** completing class-related assignments in addition to the in-person class meetings. Assignments include reading the textbook, reading assigned documents, accessing supplementary material through Canvas, taking exams, and writing papers. These assignments may require work beyond the minimum 6-hours of work outside the classroom. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to succeed in all your classes. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S123](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S123.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S123.pdf>.

Requirements and Assignments

The class will include lectures; videos; reading and writing assignments; in-class discussions; Discussion Board posts; Midterm and Final Exams; and a comprehensive Policy Paper. The in-class discussions and lectures often will not address the same information that is covered in the readings; nonetheless, students are responsible for knowing all materials covered in both the lectures and the readings. The key to passing the class is to **be prepared**. You are expected to read, think, analyze, complete all assigned work in a timely manner, participate in class discussion, and offer your opinions and perspectives in a respectful and appropriate manner.

Practice Exam, Midterm, and Final Exam

Both exams will be given on-line through CANVAS. The exams may contain a combination of essay questions, short written responses, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and/or true-false questions.

To take these exams require use of the **LockDown Browser and LockDown Monitor** software which requires the use of a webcam. The webcam can be one that is built into your computer or it can be the type that plugs in with a USB cable. Watch [this short video](#). To get a basic understanding of LockDown Browser and the webcam feature. A "Practice Exam" is available so that you can be sure that you have properly installed the LockDown Browser and so that you can become familiar with taking an on-line exam prior to taking the Midterm. When you first attempt to take the Practice Exam", you will be prompted to download the install the LockDown Browser. **Note: Do not download a copy of LockDown Browser from any site on the Internet other than the link in the Practice Exam; those versions will not work at our institution.**

To take an online test, start LockDown Browser and navigate to the exam. (You won't be able to access the exam with a standard web browser.) For additional details on using LockDown Browser and LockDown Monitor, review this [Student Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#).

Finally, when taking an online exam, follow these guidelines:

- Ensure you're in a location where you will not be interrupted
- Turn off all mobile devices, phones, etc.
- Clear your desk of all external materials — books, papers, other computers, or devices
- Remain at your desk or workstation for the duration of the test
- Be sure the webcam is plugged in or enabled before starting LockDown Browser
- LockDown Browser will prevent you from accessing other websites or applications; you will be unable to exit the test until all questions are completed and submitted
- You will be recorded during the test to ensure you're using only permitted resources

DO NOT wait until the date of the Midterm to install the LockDown Browser and configure the Lockdown Monitor or you may be unable to take the exam and will not be able to take the exam at a later date.

Each exam will be available from 7am until 11:59 pm on the assigned date of the exam. You are urged not to take any exam on a WIFI connection since it is more likely that you could experience a technical issue that will interfere with your completion of the exam and your WIFI connection may not be reliable or secure. If you do not have a hard wired connection available, you should take your exams at school in the computer lab in Clark Hall. The only excuse for having a “technical” issue while taking an exam will be if there has been a CANVAS system problem which must be verified by the eCampus Technical Staff.

Once you begin taking the exam, the time will continue to run even if you log off or leave your computer and then return. Thus, plan ahead and be prepared to start and finish the exam without a break and within the allotted time.

NOTE: You also MUST log into the exam in ample time to complete the exam and submit it BEFORE the submission time of 11:59 pm.

Claims such as “I forgot,”; “I overslept”, or “I had to work” are not valid excuses for missing an exam or for failing to turn in an assignment on time. All assignments and due dates are in the Syllabus and on CANVAS.

Please be aware that an “Activity Log” is created and saved each time you log into CANVAS. This log provides the instructor with information regarding your online activities. Any log activity that suggests cheating or an attempt to cheat will be thoroughly investigated and appropriate administrative action taken.

Discussion Boards

There are 10 Discussion Board issues worth 20 points each which represents 20% of your overall grade.

³⁵₁₇ Post an initial substantive response to the question posed on EACH ISSUE. Your post should be at least 250 WORDS in length;

³⁵₁₇ Post a substantive reply of at least 250 words to at least TWO classmate's responses to each issue. Reply posts must be more than "I agree" or "I disagree". Replies should discuss **why** you agree or disagree.

³⁵₁₇ To obtain **maximum points** students must do more than the minimum requirements (which represents a "C" grade (15-16 out of 20 points) and must engage in dialog and discussion pertaining to the questions posed for each Issue. Your Discussion Board posts will be based on the QUALITY of your posts using the following scale:

19-20	Excellent
17-18	Good
15-16	Fair
13-14	Poor
1-12	Unacceptable
0	No Post

Each issue will be open for approximately two weeks. Dates that each Discussion Issue will be open are clearly posted on CANVAS. Once the due date is reached, the discussion will be "locked" and no further posts can be made. You will not be able to receive full credit if you fail to submit THREE posts.

The instructor reserves the right to remove any posts that are deemed inappropriate for the classroom environment. Postings that are removed will not receive any grade points.

Political Science Departmental Writing Policy

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at:

http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm.

If you have any concern about your writing ability, you are strongly encouraged to seek help early in the semester from the Writing Center located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center at: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

See also: www.sjsu.edu/polisci/students/WritingAssistanceResources/index.html

Policy Paper

Each student is required to write a 1500-word policy paper on a current local, state, or national issue. No duplicate issues are permitted. There will be a Sign-Up sheet of available policy issues that you can select from on a first-come basis. Sign-Ups must be completed on or before September 15th or they will be assigned by the instructor.

You must explain the issue and its relevance, analyze each major point of view involved in the issue, and evaluate possible actions that can be taken by citizens and appropriate government entities in the future development of this issue.

Your paper must be submitted through Canvas which is automatically integrated with Turnitin.com. Assignments cannot be submitted by way of hard copy or email. **LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.** Your paper is to be the product of your own thinking and writing and **not a collaborative effort.** **This paper is worth 400 points (40% of course grade).**

Class Participation and Civility

Come to class on time and remain in your seat during the class session. Do NOT come and go during the class period. Students who come and go repeatedly may be prohibited from reentering the classroom. Read all assigned materials prior to class and be ready to discuss them, as well as to take part in any class discussions or activities. Questions about the readings and lectures are welcome at any time; there will always be time for questions, comments, and discussion at the beginning and/or end of class as time permits. Be prepared to be called on in class and asked to address concepts from the readings or lectures. Failure to be prepared when called on will negatively affect your participation grade. In addition, disruptive behavior, such as arriving to class late or leaving early; using cell phones; talking to your classmates; and similar behaviors, all constitute negative contributions to class discussion and will adversely affect your participation grade.

Special Note: In this class you will be exposed to controversial issues which arise in the context of government and politics. For example, it is impossible to discuss the U. S. Constitution and the first 10 Amendments without confronting opposing opinions and views relating to such issues as freedom of religion, free speech, the right to bear arms, capital punishment, etc. Over the semester, it is likely that you will hear statements you don't agree with and/or which you find offensive. However, the university has traditionally been a place where all ideas can and should be expressed freely.

So called "Political Correctness" has a chilling effect on free speech. The purpose of discussion is to provide a forum in which students can safely ask questions, present and debate their ideas, receive and interpret new information and perspectives, and develop and clarify their thinking. While you will likely be passionate about some issues discussed in class, it is essential to be **respectful** to others and of their opinions. Remember, a "good argument" does not mean a confrontation or a fight. Rather, a good argument consists of a political contention supported by well-researched evidence, leading to a well-developed conclusion. Offensive remarks or attacks of a personal nature will not be tolerated!

Late Work

Late assignments and exam make-ups will be **allowed only in cases of medical or family emergency for which proper documentation is provided.** If you miss an exam, you must contact Dr. McKenzie immediately to schedule a make-up. Neither the Midterm nor the Final Exam will be given early **under any circumstances** so, plan accordingly.

The Final exam, which will be taken on-line, will be held on the day scheduled by the University and as clearly noted in the Syllabus and on Canvas. Final exam make-up, for which proper documentation must be provided, will be held on the final make-up day, as determined by the University.

Use of Electronic Devices

Research has shown that students who text frequently took lower quality notes, retained less information, and did poorly on tests. Students themselves acknowledged that cell phone usage does not promote learning. In one survey, 80% of students agreed that using a mobile phone in class decreased their ability to pay attention. (Communication Education, Volume 62, Issue 3, 2013) Texting in class was linked to an average drop of half a letter grade. Therefore, **absolutely no use of computers, phones, or any other electronic devices during class except for medical reasons.**

This means you will need to bring a pen and notebook to class for taking notes. Exceptions to this policy will only be made for medical reasons and you will need to bring proper documentation before class if you need an approval to use electronic devices. Violation of this policy may result in dismissal from the class.

Attendance

Attendance, in and of itself, will not be graded. However, regular attendance is crucial to your success in this course. While the lectures will address some themes presented in the course readings, lectures are intended to provide supplemental information **which you will be expected to know** for exams. If you miss class, you are still responsible for the lecture material. It will be difficult to pass the course if you miss one or more classes unless you complete all readings and obtain lecture notes from at least one other student. PowerPoint lectures will be posted on Canvas AFTER the class in which they are presented. However, these PowerPoints are not narrated and therefore will not substitute for actually attending class. Although attendance is not graded, class participation is, and it makes up a significant portion of your grade. If you are not present, you cannot participate.

Messaging and Communications

CANVAS uses a messaging system rather than University Email. Thus, you are requested to communicate with me through the CANVAS class website messaging system. The reason for this that all of our class related communication will be stored within the class website. You can arrange to have messages from CANVAS forwarded to one or more of your email addresses.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo>

Grading Policy

Grading is not based on a "curve". Therefore, you are not in competition with any student other than yourself. As a result, the overall grade distribution in the class is irrelevant and will remain confidential. Your final grade will be based on your personal overall performance across all required work. The total points and weight of each required element of your final grade is indicated below:

Task	Available Points	% of Final Grade
10 Discussion Board Issues 20 Points each	200	20%
Midterm Exam	100	10%
Final Exam	100	10%
Handwritten Summary of U. S. Constitution	100	10%
Policy Paper	300	30%
In Class Discussions	200	20%
Total	1000	100%

Your total points will be summed at the end of the term and a letter grade equivalency will be applied as follows:

Final Grade	Determination
Overall Points	Letter Grade
930-1000	A
900-929	A-
870-899	B+
830-869	B
800-829	B-
770-799	C+
730-769	C
700-729	C-
670-699	D+
630-669	D
600-629	D-
599 and below	F

SPRING 2017
POLS 1 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT – SECTION 5
CLASS CALENDAR, ASSIGNMENTS, AND DUE DATES
 (Subject to change with timely notice)

Date	CLASS SCHEDULE	Assignment Due Dates
<u>WEEK 1</u>		
1/26 to 1/30	SEMESTER BEGINS FIRST CLASS IN THIS COURSE BEGINS WEEK 2	
<u>WEEK 2</u>		
1/30 to 2/5	Introduction & Course Review <i>NOTE: For ALL Reading and other Assignment dates, follow the Learning Modules link on the Canvas Home Page. Then, follow the links for each week's assignments.</i> ³⁵ / ₁₇ World's Smallest Political Quiz ³⁵ / ₁₇ Who Gets What, When and How	READ THE SYLLABUS
<u>WEEK 3</u>		
2/6 to 2/12	The Colonial Experience, Part I	#1 Discussion Board Open: 2/6 to 2/19
<u>WEEK 4</u>		
2/13 to 2/19	The Colonial Experience, Part II	Select Policy Paper Issue by Wednesday
<u>WEEK 5</u>		
2/20 to 2/26	The Declaration of Independence	#2 Discussion Board Open: 2/20 to 3/5
<u>WEEK 6</u>		
2/27 to 3/5	The Constitution	Constitution Summary Assignment Due: IN CLASS 2/27

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POLS 1 AMERICAN GOVERNMENT – SECTION 5
CLASS CALENDAR, ASSIGNMENTS, AND DUE DATES
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WEEK 7

3/6 to 3/12	Federalism	#3 Discussion Board Open: 3/6 to 3/19
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WEEK 8

3/13 to 3/19	Civil Liberties	#4 Discussion Board Open: 3/13 to 3/26
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WEEK 9

3/20 to 3/26	Monday: Civil Rights <p style="text-align: center;">MIDTERM ON WEDNESDAY, MARCH 22ND</p> <p style="text-align: center;">NO CLASS</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TAKE EXAM BETWEEN 7AM AND 7PM ON LINE. INCLUDES EVERYTHING UP TO AND INCLUDING CIVIL LIBERTIES</p>	
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WEEK 10

3/27 to 4/2		
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WEEK 11

4/3 to 4/9	Civil Rights (Continued) The Congress	#5 Discussion Board Open: 4/3 to 4/16
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<u>WEEK 12</u>		
4/10 to 4/16	The Congress The Presidency	#6 Discussion Board Open: 4/10 to 4/23
<u>WEEK 13</u>		
4/17 to 4/23	The Judiciary	#7 Discussion Board Open: 4/17 to 4/30 POLICY PAPER DUE 4/23
<u>WEEK 14</u>		
4/24 to 4/30	The Judiciary (Cont'd) During this week you must watch the movie, "The Star Chamber" which is posted on Canvas. Due to its length, it is uploaded in four parts. Be prepared to discuss this movie and its relevance to the judicial and criminal justice system on the	#8 Discussion Board Open: 4/24 to 5/7
<u>WEEK 15</u>		
5/1 to 5/7	Discussion of "The Star Chamber" Political Ideology & Political Parties	#9 Discussion Board Open: 5/1 to 5/14 Policy Paper Due 5/7
<u>WEEK 16</u>		
5/8 to 5/14	Voting and Opinion Polls	#10 Discussion Board Open: 5/8 to 5/15
<u>WEEK 17</u>		
5/15	LAST DAY OF CLASS - TBA	
<p>ONLINE FINAL EXAM COVERING CIVIL RIGHTS TO VOTING AND OPINION POLLS MONDAY, MAY 22, 2017</p> <p>Available from 7am until 11:59pm</p>		