

San José State University
Department of Political Science
Pols 15. Essentials of US and California Government
Class number: 45053
Section: 2
Fall 2019

Instructor: Robert Ovetz, Ph.D.

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Office hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:00-8:40 am or 12:00-12:30 pm and earlier times by prior appointment, Clark 402D

TA Office Hours: TBD, office location Clark Hall 471D

Class days and time: Tuesday-Thursday, 9:00-10:15 am

Classroom: Washington Square 207

Course Description

Treatment of essentials of U.S. and California government. Satisfies the American institutions requirements in U.S. Constitution US2 and California government US3, GE Area D2, and the Core GE requirement in Social Sciences: Social Issues D3.

SJSU GE Guidelines

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. The focus of the course is the growth of a multicultural society and the interactions, including cooperation and conflict, as these many and varied peoples have dealt with social economic, and political issues.

Workload and Credit Hour Requirements

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities as described in the syllabus.

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 and Disciplinary Methods: Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, evaluate research studies, and critically analyze and interpret influential political texts. Students should be able to apply these techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.

PSPLO 3 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 4 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.

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.

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.

GELO 3 (D3): Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.

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.

GELO 5 (D3): Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.

GELO 6 (D3): Apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels.

Important Dates

Thursday 8/22—First day of class, post your photo to the Canvas page under “Profile”

Thursday 9/26—**Midterm 1**; take on line on Canvas between 12 am and 11:59 pm; class still meets

Tuesday 10/8—**Local Government Observation paper #1** due

Thursday 11/7— No class; take **Midterm 2** on line on Canvas between 12 am and 11:59 pm

Thursday 11/28—Thanksgiving, no class

Thursday 12/5—Last day of class, **Local Government Observation paper #2** due

Monday 12/16—**Final exam** (take on line on Canvas, between 12 am - 11:59 pm)

Grading

Grading will be based on a combination of preparation for class including doing the readings **before** they are scheduled to be discussed, student learning questions, participation in the discussions, mid-term and final exams, and the Local Government Observation assignment.

Grading Scale

A plus	96-100
A	93-95
A minus	90-92
B plus	86-89
B	83-85
B minus	80-82
C plus	76-79
C	73-75
C minus	70-72
D	60-69

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage (100 total points each)</u>
Student Learning	20
Observation paper Part 1	15
Observation paper Part 2	25
Midterm exams (highest of the 2 grades)	15
Final exam	20
<hr/> Total	100

Grade Checks

Due to the large number of requests for grade checks and the large class size I require that all grade checks be submitted on paper **in advance**. Please plan ahead because I cannot complete a signed grade check the same day unless it is during office hours. They can be given to me at the beginning or end of class and during office hours. If you have a form for me to sign be sure to fill it out as **completely** as possible before giving it to me. I will not complete a blank form.

Student Evaluation/Grading Policies

- **No withdrawals (W) will be granted** except for verifiable medical reasons.
- 10 percent will be deducted for each **week** that the paper is turned in late. A period of 7 days or less is consider 1 week. No papers will be accepted after noon on the day of the final exam. All late papers must be turned in **on paper only**. **No emailed papers** will be accepted.
- In class Student Learning questions may only be turned in at the time they are assigned in class. If you a miss class when one was assigned, arrive late after it was turned in, or leave early before it is turned in you will receive no credit. They cannot be turned in early or late, and they cannot be made up or turned in on-line. Only students with a **demonstrable excuse** (see below) will not be penalized for not completing the in class questions.
- The **lowest** of the two midterm grades will be **dropped**. There are no make up, early, or late midterm exams even if you have an excused absence. If you miss a midterm it will be a 0 and be your lowest dropped score if you took the other midterm.
- There are no make up, early, or late midterm exams. If you **miss** without a **demonstrable excuse** (medical, religious, or university related activities only) you will receive a 0. Missed final exams due to demonstrable medical, religious, or university related activities may be made up by prior arrangement only.
- Class does meet on the days of both midterms.
- Grades will be rounded up to the next letter only when the difference is .49 or less.

Classroom Policy

- **Please turn off and put away all electronic devices** (cell phones, audio recorders, headphones, etc). If you need to use your phone please leave the classroom and make your call in the hallway away from the door to the classroom. If you use your phone in any way or have it on your desk or body you will automatically have **10 points deducted** from your final Student Learning grade. Further disruptions, including repeated conversations with classmates, will result in the student being reported to the appropriate campus authority.
- No electronic recordings or photographs of any kind of the class are allowed except as an

accommodation with campus documentation. University Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course.

- The posting of any electronic recordings, tapings or any other type of documentation of any aspect of this course on the internet is not allowed.
- Please keep your bag and purse **on the floor** not on your desk or lap.
- **Laptops are only allowed in class for note taking.** You must sit in the front two rows. Any use of your laptop for any other purpose than note taking will result in the discontinuation of its use and a **deduction of 10 participation points.**
- Please show respect for your classmates and instructor by refraining from interrupting someone who is speaking, engaging in side conversations in class and making disrespectful comments. You will receive only one warning.
- **Any act of plagiarism will result in an automatic "F" for the assignment.**
- Please refrain from engaging in side conversations. If you have a question ask me in class or your neighbor before and after class.
- If you **take time** during class discussions, please **give time** in return to your classmates.
- Please allow your classmates time to speak.
- Please raise your hand if you wish to speak. If I look at you but do not call on you please put your hand down as I am allowing other students to have time to speak.
- Please do not interrupt your classmates.
- Please speak respectfully about one another. It's ok to criticize ideas **but** not people.
- Any student who has special needs that may affect his or her performance in this class is asked to identify his or her needs to Dr. Ovetz in private by the end of the first day of class and provide documentation as soon as possible. Any resulting class performance problems that may arise for those who do not identify their needs will not receive any special grading considerations.
- Please dispose of your trash and recycling in the available campus containers.

Required Readings

Required course readings can be found in the following assigned books and readings. You are expected to complete the readings *before* they are scheduled to be discussed.

The following books are required reading. You may purchase your own print or e-reader (if available) copies at the campus bookstore or on-line.

Katznelson, Ira, Mark Kesselman, and Alan Draper (2013) *The Politics of Power: A Critical Introduction to American Government*, W. W. Norton & Company: NY, 7th edition, 403 pp., ISBN-13: 978-0393919448.

Field, Mona (2012) *California Government and Politics Today*, Pearson,; NY, 14th edition, 160 pp., ISBN-13: 978-0205251780.

You may use newer editions but not older editions of the books.

Note: Print and bring a copy of both the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution to class. They can be found in the Reading Packet folder on the class Canvas page.

You are expected to read the news at least 1-2 times per week as we will be discussing current news events. There will be questions related to pressing current political events covered in class on the exams.

Other resource: The CQ Researcher and ABC-CLIO American Government databases available through the SJSU library website are good reference resources for topics covered in this class.

University Policies

Per University Policy s16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' Syllabus Information Page at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

Course Requirements

The required assignments will test your knowledge and ability to apply and assess principles and concepts of US and California government as models of representative democracy.

The final exam and the Local Government Observation Paper are the culminating activities for this course.

Attendance and Participation Policy

Because the class is large and there is a participation grade it is imperative that you have a photo uploaded to the class page where you are listed as enrolled in the course. This will allow me to keep track of who contributed to class and on-line.

You are **strongly encouraged** to attend every class and to be on time and stay the entire class. You do not need my permission to be absent from class, arrive late or leave early. However, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed from your classmates either in class or by posting an email to the class list serve before you return to class.

You **need to be in class to participate** in the small group and class discussions, make contributions, and ask questions. You are expected to come to class prepared by having **completed all the readings and articles prior to class**. If you have any questions about the readings it is preferable to ask them in class or during office hours. One of the best ways to participate in class—and learn—is to ask questions, and participate in the group and class discussions. Feel free to also use the class discussion list to ask questions.

There is class on the days of both on line midterms.

The university attendance policy can be found at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf>.

Student Learning

This assignment tests for PSPLOs 1, 2, 3 and 4 and GELOs 1 - 6.

I will be asking you to answer a question or questions about subjects we are covering in class on paper, share in a group of two and turn in your answers during that class. There are no set number of these in class assignments, they will not be announced in advance, they cannot be turned in early or late, and they cannot be made up or turned in on-line. You will be given credit or no credit for completing them and a final grade will be assigned at the end of the semester based on how many you complete. For example, if 10 are assigned and you miss one you will receive a 90 for the semester. In short, if you miss class when one was assigned, arrive late after it was turned in, or leave early before it is turned in you will receive no credit.

To complete these in class assignments you will need to write in pen on a blank or lined 8.5 x 11 sized sheet of printer paper. Alternatively, you may also tear out a page from your 8.5 x 11 notebook only if the edge is perforated and can be removed cleanly. Any that are turned in without the broken edge removed or on a

piece of paper smaller than 8.5 x 11 will not receive credit. Be sure to clearly print your full name and date on the top of the page. If your name and the date are missing or not readable you will not receive credit.

Midterm Exams

The midterms test for PSPLO 1 to 5 and GELO 1 to 6.

There will be two mid-terms exams taken on Canvas. Both midterm exams are multiple choice are based on the assigned readings and class lecture and discussion. The midterms must be taken on-line between 12 am and 11:59 pm on the above date and the final must be taken during the two above scheduled days. Be sure not to miss the exams as **there are no make-ups** without an accommodation or documented medical emergency. Once you start taking the exam it cannot be paused.

Before you leave the exam be sure to print out the exam or save it as a pdf so you can have the questions to review later.

The questions will address concepts, terminology, and important events covered in class and the readings. In order to prepare for the exams I strongly encourage you to form study groups, visit me during office hours, and use campus tutoring resources. The lowest of the two midterm grades will be dropped.

The TA will be doing out of class exam reviews prior to each exam. You can also find fellow students or a tutor to do them with. I can help you find the answer to questions that you have tried to answer.

Final Exam

The Final Exam tests for PSPLOs 1, 2 and 3 and GELOs 1 - 5.

There is an all multiple choice final exam taken on Canvas. The final must be taken on-line between 12 am and 11:59 pm on the above date and the final must be taken during the two above scheduled days. Be sure not to miss the exams as **there are no make-ups** without an accommodation or documented medical emergency. Once you start taking the exam it cannot be paused.

Before you leave the exam be sure to print out the exam or save it as a pdf so you can have the questions to review later.

Local Government Observation Paper

This assignment tests for PSPLO 1 to 5 and GELO 1, 2, 5 and 6.

There will be a two part observation paper due. The paper addresses GELO 2 (US3) by teaching how to apply political action and collective decision making in the form of civic engagement.

The assignment is described on the **Local Government Observation Paper Assignment, Parts 1 & 2** assignment sheet found on the Canvas page.

Please attach a copy of the **Grade Sheet** found on the Canvas page to the end of each part of the paper. The Grade Sheet indicates the point values for each part of the paper.

The staff librarian for political science is available for assistance with this project and has additional research and writing guides resources on his webpage: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/politicalscience>

You may also go to SJSU library webpage and databases for political science, <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/az.php?s=47559>

Grammar and Proofreading

You will be graded for grammar, punctuation and style to the extent that it reduces your ability to express your research and analysis clearly. While grammar, punctuation and style are not the most significant part of the grade you will receive, it does affect your ability to communicate your ideas and analysis clearly and effectively. If you have any issues concerning your language skills you wish to discuss with me please visit me during office hours.

I strongly encourage you to use the Lib Guide cited above and the short guides to writing research papers at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/sitemap/>

I do not proofread student papers before they are turned in. I can help you with limited specific selections of text. For help I encourage you to go to the campus writing center for help with your writing and the campus reference librarians for help with research and citations.

Pols 15 Course Outline Fall 2019

*Note: Complete all the readings for each topic before we begin the topic.

*Note: The schedule is subject to change with fair notice in class, by email, or on Canvas.

Week	Dates	Topic	Katznelson Readings	Field book & Other Readings in the Reading Packet
Week 1	8/22	Democracy	ch. 1, 2 & 5	
Week 2	8/27 & 8/29	Democracy		
Week 3	9/3	Declaration of Independence		Print out & bring a copy of the entire Declaration of Independence with you to class.
Week 3	9/5	CA & US Constitutions		Field , ch. 1 & 2; Madison , "Federalist Paper #10". Print out & bring a copy of the Constitution (articles & amendments) with you to class.
Week 4	9/10	CA & US Constitutions		

Week 4	9/12	Federalism	ch. 3	Read “Federal-State Relations Date: 4/27/2018” in the CQ Researcher library database. Then go to https://www.law.cornell.edu/anncon/ and read the annotations for the 10th Amendment: Reserve Clause; Article I, Section 8. Necessary and Proper Clause, Art VI, Section 2: Supremacy Clause; Article IV, Section 1. Full Faith and Credit; and Article IV, Section 2. Privileges and Immunities
Week 5	9/17 & 9/19	Federalism		
Week 6	9/24	Federalism		
Week 6	9/26	Midterm 1 (take on line; covers up through Federalism); class meets		
Week 6	9/26	Congress & CA Legislature	ch. 7, 9 & 10	Field , ch. 8 & 13; “How Congress Stopped Working,” ProPublica/Wash. Post, https://www.propublica.org/article/how-congress-stopped-working?utm_source=pardot&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter
Week 7	10/1 & 10/3	Congress & CA Legislature		
Week 8	10/8 & 10/10	Congress & CA Legislature		
Week 9	10/15 & 10/17	US & CA Executive Branches	ch. 6 & 11	Field , ch. 9
Week 10	10/22 & 10/24	US & CA Executive Branches		
Week 11	10/29 & 10/31	US & CA Executive Branches		
Week 12	11/5	US & CA Judiciary	ch. 8	Field , ch. 11; and Brennan , “Judicial Interpretation”

Week 12	11/7	Midterm 2 (comprehensive up through Executive); no class		
Week 13	11/12 & 11/14	US & CA Judiciary		
Week 14	11/19 & 11/21	US & CA Judiciary		
Week 14	11/26	Elections & Money in Politics	ch. 4	Field , ch. 5
Thanksgiving Break	11/28	No class		
Week 15	12/3 & 12/5	Elections & Money in Politics		
	Monday 12/16	Final exam (comprehensive; take on line on Canvas, between 12 am - 11:59 pm)		

Student Pledge

*Please read, print your name on the blank line, sign and date it at the bottom, and turn in the following pledge sheet by the end of the 2nd week of class.

I, _____, have read this entire syllabus outside of class, understand what is expected of me this semester in this class, and will abide by the classroom policies. If I have any questions about what is contained in this syllabus I promise that I will first refer to this syllabus to find the answer, and if I am unable to find it, will either ask a question at the beginning of class, post my questions to the class discussion list, or visit Dr. Ovetz during office hours to discuss it.

Signature

Date