

San José State University
Political Science Department
POLS 170V, American Politics in Global Perspective, Section 04, Fall 2022

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Jeremy Abrams
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Office Hours:	In office: Tuesdays 3:00pm-4pm, in Clark 402F Online via Zoom: Tuesdays and Thursdays 8:45 – 9:15am, link in Canvas And by appointment
Class Days/Time:	Tuesdays, 4:30 – 5:45pm
Classroom:	HGH 116
GE/SJSU Studies Category:	US2, US3, V

Course Format

This is a hybrid in-person class with one regularly scheduled class meeting time per week. You will have further videos to watch to supplement your in-class activities. In addition, you will regularly take quizzes and turn in assignments via SJSU's Canvas Website, which you may find at <https://sjsu.instructure.com>. On Canvas you will find a copy of this syllabus, additional reading materials and the various methods of assessment. If you are not already familiar with Canvas, you should log on and familiarize yourself with it. You can find helpful information about Canvas at <http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/index.html> and at http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources/index.html.

Course Description

From the SJSU Catalog: A survey of U.S. and California political institutions and culture in comparison with political institutions and cultures outside the U.S., as well as American Institutions Requirement: US2 and US3.

Satisfies SJSU Studies V + US23: Culture, Civilization & Global Understanding + US Constitution and California Government.

Prerequisite(s): Passage of the Writing Skills Test (WST) or ENGL 100A / LLD 100A with a C or better (C- not accepted), completion of Core General Education and upper division standing are prerequisites to all SJSU studies courses. Completion of, or co-registration in, 100W is strongly recommended.

This course is an introduction to United States national government. The course is designed to introduce students to the constitutional basis, institutions, politics and processes of United States government. The primary focus of this course is on modern United States government. However, students will be introduced to this subject by way of comparison. Throughout the course students will examine how the American government functions by comparing it to how politics functions in other countries.

GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

This class fulfills the American Institutions (US2 and US3) General Education requirements, as well as the SJSU Studies V General Education Requirement. Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. LO1 (Assessed by quizzes, and Discussions): study how political decisions are made, their consequences for individuals and society, and how individual groups may affect the decision-making process. As students study the meaning and content of the democratic process as it has evolved in the United States and California, at a minimum, they should recognize:
 - the foundations of the political system, including the evolution of the philosophies of the U.S. and California constitutions, political culture, separation of powers, bureaucracy, federalism, and relations among various levels of government. Students should also analyze the evolving institutions of government, including a study of the power of the President, Congress, and the Judiciary;
 - the links between the people and government, including participation and voting, political parties, interest groups, and public opinion and socialization. Students should also analyze the rights and obligations of citizens, the tension between various freedoms of expression and due process and the maintenance of order, and the efforts to end racial and gender discrimination in both the public and private sectors of society; and
 - the operations of California government, including the similarities and differences between the California and U.S. Constitutions, the relationship between state and local government in California, the basic issues of California politics, and a careful assessment of the impact of demographic changes on the history and politics of the state and the nation.
2. LO2 (Assessed by quizzes): in terms of California government, show an understanding of tools of political action and collective decision-making at the local, state, national or global level.
3. LO3 (Assessed by Discussions): articulate the values and assumptions that inform their civic engagement.
4. LO4 (Assessed by paper assignment): compare systematically the ideas, values, images, cultural artifacts, economic structures, technological developments, and/or attitudes of people from more than one culture outside the U.S.
5. LO5 (Assessed by paper assignment, and Discussions): identify the historical context or ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture.

6. LO6 (Assessed by Discussions): explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.

Contacting Me

I will be available through a number of different channels. The best method will be through Canvas Inbox or via email at jeremy.abrams@sjsu.edu. I will always do my best to respond promptly. During the week I will usually respond within 24 hours, though often much quicker than that. **When you send me an email, please put your class section information (eg. 'US Gov Sec. #4 12:00pm') in the Subject: field.** I teach several classes with many students and I need to know to which class you are referring. You may also leave me a voice mail at the number listed above, though I check it less frequently than email.

Required Texts/Readings

Textbooks

[We The People: An Introduction to American Government](#) 14th Edition by Thomas E. Patterson: McGraw-Hill Education, 2022. ISBN-13: 9781260242928

Please note: You should **NOT** purchase the 'Connect' online password that the SJSU bookstore packages with this text. We will not be using Connect for this class. All online material will be available via Canvas.

[California Politics: A Primer](#), 6th edition, by Renee B. Van Vechten: CQ Press, 2021. ISBN: 978-1544388670

[The American Anomaly](#), 4th edition, by Raymond A. Smith: Routledge, 2019. ISBN: 978-1138490673

Other Readings

There will be additional handouts provided by the instructor during the course of the semester which will be available on Canvas.

You may also want to subscribe to one of several email newsletters focused on California politics and news. Two of the better ones are the L.A. Times' Newsletter: Essential California at <http://www.latimes.com/newsletters/la-newsletter-essential-california-signup-page-htm1story.html> and the New York Times' California Today at <http://www.nytimes.com/newsletters/california-today> . KQED's The California Report is also worth consulting at <https://ww2.kqed.org/news/programs/the-california-report/> .

Wireless laptop/tablet/smart phone is required in class

You will need access to the internet outside classroom to complete readings from Canvas, complete online homework assignments, upload assignments, and access syllabus, announcements, and course updates on Canvas. Computer access is available in the campus library and in Clark Hall 102.

You will need access to a wireless device such as a phone or laptop for the class participation component of your grade. If you don't own a laptop or tablet, you can rent one at no cost from Student Computing Services (<https://library.sjsu.edu/scs>).

You will also need to create an iClicker account for use during the class as part of your participation. You may find instructions on how to do this at <http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/docs/iClicker%20Account%20-%20Setup%20Guide%20-%20Student.pdf> and at <http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/docs/iClicker%20-%20Add%20Your%20Course%20-%20Setup%20Guide%20-%20Student.pdf>.

Course Requirements and Assignments

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 including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

Please review the following policies and resources:

- [SJSU's Syllabus Policy S16-9](#)
- [SJSU's Syllabus Information web page](#)

Course Requirements: Your grade will be determined by (1) 8 (of 9) quizzes, each worth 25 points, (2) four on-line discussion board assignments, worth 50 points each, (3) an outline worth 30 points; (4) one paper, worth 150 points; and (5) attendance measured through iClicker, worth 20 points.

The quizzes are designed to measure your understanding of basic concepts and Course Learning Outcomes related to American government and political science as listed above. As such, the exams will draw on materials from the books as well as class discussions and additional readings available on Canvas. The writing assignments will delve deeper into key concepts that require more thoughtful treatment and reflection on the part of the student to understand some of the core problems the founders faced when the Constitution was written. Taken together they will help you, at the completion of the course, to better understand how political decisions are made and major obstacles to policy development. The deadlines for these assignments are listed in the course schedule below.

Course materials such as assignments and instructions, syllabus, handouts, notes, etc. can be found on the Canvas learning management system course website. You will need to be familiar with a computer, web navigation, e-mail and the Canvas system since your assignments and a number of readings are online. Your assignments will be submitted to me through Canvas. **Do not e-mail me your assignments as an attachment.** Due to the potential for computer viruses, I will not open nor accept any assignments sent via e-mail. They will be deleted. Please save your files in Word or PDF format and upload it to Canvas. You are responsible for knowing how to submit assignments through Canvas. You are responsible for regularly checking your email and with the messaging system through MySJSU on [Spartan App Portal](#) to learn of any updates.

NOTE that University policy F15-12 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F15-12.pdf> states that "Students are expected to attend all meetings for the courses in which they are enrolled as they are responsible for material discussed therein, and active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit to all class members. In some cases, attendance is fundamental to course objectives; for example, students may be required to interact with others in the class. Attendance is the responsibility of the student." You may find

form information at the [University's Syllabus Information](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) web page at <https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>

In a course that examines American politics and government discussions are very important. You will be better able to learn from these discussions by having a command of current events. Please keep up-to-date with national and world events by reading daily newspapers and listening to the news.

Final Examination or Evaluation

Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for each course. This can include a final examination, research paper or project, or other comprehensive assignment. For this class you will submit a final paper of about 1200 - 1500 words, which is about four to five pages. **The due date will be the Thursday, December 8 by 11:59pm. Details will be discussed in class.**

Grading Information and Policy

There is a possible total of 600 points. Your final grade will be determined by your total accumulation of points as follows:

Total Points	Percentage	Grade
582-600	97-100	A plus
558-581	93-96.9	A
540-557	90-92.9	A minus
522-539	87-89.9	B plus
498-521	83-86.9	B
480-497	80-82.9	B minus
462-479	77-79.9	C plus
438-461	73-76.9	C
420-437	70-72.9	C minus
402-419	67-69.9	D plus
378-401	63-66.9	D
360-377	60-62.9	D minus

Below 360 points is a failing grade. There will be no extra credit available. Please note that you must take all quizzes and turn in all assignments to pass the course. In addition, I will not give make ups for any of the quizzes except in the most extreme of cases (e.g. verifiable medical emergencies, etc.).. It is your responsibility to make sure you are available to take the quizzes. Late papers will be penalized one point per calendar day. **Please retain ALL of your exams, papers, and other assessments until after you have completed the course and received your grade.**

Note that "All students have the right, within a reasonable time, to know their academic scores, to review their grade-dependent work, and to be provided with explanations for the determination of their course grades." See [University Policy F13-1](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F13-1.pdf> for more details.

Course Protocol

E-mail: Each student must have an e-mail address which they check regularly. Please make sure you have updated your records in MySJSU. You must monitor your account on a regular basis. When I send out classwide messages it will be through Canvas to this account. Failure to monitor this account may result in you missing important messages such as class cancellations, change of exam dates, and requests for timely information.

Attendance: Attendance itself will not be graded. iClicker will be used in class to determine participation. Further, the lectures will address some themes presented in the course readings, as well as additional information that you will not find in the readings but which you will be expected to know for exams. It is your responsibility as a student to be in class on time. Further, it is common sense that by not attending regularly, you will miss important lectures, clarifications, handouts, scintillating discussions and brilliant insights from your instructor and fellow students.

Quizzes and Exams: There will be a quiz following each chapter. You will take each quiz on the Canvas website. There will be a total of 9 quizzes, **of which I will drop the lowest score.** As we proceed through the course, each quiz will be open and available for two days as listed in the schedule below. In order to make sure that you are making progress and not putting materials off, you can only take the quizzes once, and only during the window that it is open. If you fail to take a chapter quiz for any reason it will become a zero in your grades. I urge you to take the quizzes and final from a computer that is wired into the internet. **Losing a wi-fi connection during a quiz or the final is no more an excuse than running out of ink or forgetting a scantron during a paper-based exam.** You are responsible for having a reliable internet connection while taking the quizzes. **Because I will drop the lowest quiz score, there will be makeup quizzes only under extraordinary and verifiable circumstances.** On Canvas you can find the quizzes by clicking the 'Modules' link on the left side of the page.

Discussion Boards, Outline and Papers: I will discuss these in class and post information on this on the Canvas Website and send e-mails during class giving the details of these assignments.

Academic Freedom: Each student is strongly encouraged to participate in class discussions. In any classroom situation that includes discussion and critical writing, particularly about political ideas, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. Students may not only disagree with each other at times, but the students and the professor may also find that they have conflicting views on sensitive and volatile topics. It is my hope that these differences will enhance class discussion and create an atmosphere in which students and professor alike will be encouraged to think and learn. Therefore, be assured that students' grades will not be adversely affected by any beliefs or ideas expressed in class or in assignments. Rather, we will all respect the views of others when expressed in classroom discussions.

Electronics: I allow the use of computers for taking notes, though it is not the best way to take notes <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/> . Other electronic devices are not allowed and must be put away when not being used for class purposes. Serious students often complain of the distraction caused by their fellow students' web browsing, texting or who are otherwise preoccupied by electronics in class. We have a limited amount of time together during the semester and we should maximize the utility of that time. Please respect the class and your classmates and do not use these devices during class.

Students are not allowed to record without instructor permission Students are prohibited from recording class activities (including class lectures, office hours, advising sessions, etc.), distributing class recordings, or

posting class recordings. Materials created by the instructor for the course (syllabi, lectures and lecture notes, presentations, etc.) are copyrighted by the instructor. This university policy (S12-7) is in place to protect the privacy of students in the course, as well as to maintain academic integrity through reducing the instances of cheating. Students who record, distribute, or post these materials will be referred to the Student Conduct and Ethical Development office. Unauthorized recording may violate university and state law. It is the responsibility of students that require special accommodations or assistive technology due to a disability to notify the instructor.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf) (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on [Syllabus Information web page](https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php) (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion. Any changes will be announced in class and on Canvas. It is your responsibility to sign into Canvas regularly and check for any important announcements and updates.

Other Useful Information

[Voter Registration](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/frequently-asked-questions/) (From <http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections/frequently-asked-questions/>)

Who can register to vote?

To register to vote in California, you must be:

- A United States citizen,
- A resident of California,
- 18 years of age or older on Election Day,
- Not currently imprisoned or on parole for the conviction of a felony, and
- Not currently found to be mentally incompetent by a court of law.

California Statewide Election: November 8, 2022

“The deadline to register to vote is 15 days prior to Election Day, often called E-15. You must submit the voter registration application by midnight on the registration deadline day. A timestamp will be attached to your online voter registration application. If you register to vote using a paper application, it must be postmarked or hand-delivered to your county elections office by E-15. After the registration deadline, in most elections any individual may conditionally register to vote and cast a provisional ballot by visiting their county elections official.”

You may find more information and register to vote at <https://registertovote.ca.gov/>

Political Science Scholarships – see <http://www.sjsu.edu/polisci/scholarships/> for info. From the website:

“The Political Science Department is fortunate to be able to award more than 10 scholarships to our students each year—this is an extraordinary level of support that surpasses what any other department on campus can offer. The scholarships were created by generous benefactors—often former faculty, students, and friends of the department—who desired to ease the financial burden on our students as they seek to earn their degrees in Political Science. The department encourages all of our students to apply for one or more of these awards.”

Library information:

liaison for Political Science: Essy Barroso-Ramirez
University Librarian (Political Science Liaison)
(408) 808-2041
essy.barroso-ramirez@sjsu.edu

Political Science subject guide: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/politicalscience>

POLS 170V: American Politics in Global Perspective, Fall 2022, Course Schedule

Course Schedule

Week	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines	Quiz Dates	WTP	Calif	AA
1	Syllabus, Introduction				1
2	Constitutional Democracy		2		2
3	Federalism & Unitary Governments OUTLINE DUE	Tuesday, September 6 Thursday, September 8	3		3
4	Civil Liberties	Tuesday, September 13	4		12
5	DISCUSSION BOARD 1 Equal Rights: Freedom v. Equality	September 21 – 28 Tuesday, September 20	5		12
6	Legislature		11	4	6
7	Congress / The Presidency	Tuesday, October 4	11/12	4/5	6/5
8	DISCUSSION BOARD 2 Executive Branch	October 10 – 17 Tuesday, October 11	12	5	5
9	Paper Consultations				
10	Judicial Systems	Tuesday, October 25	14	6	7
11	Voting & Participation	Tuesday, November 1	7	3	9
12	ELECTION DAY Voting DISCUSSION BOARD 3	Tuesday, November 8 November 7 – 14	7	3	9
13	Political Parties	Tuesday, November 15	8	9	10
14	Political Parties	Tuesday, November 22			
15	DISCUSSION BOARD 4	November 28 – December 6			
16	Wrap Up PAPER DUE	Tuesday, December 6 Thursday, December 8			