

# **Pols 170V. American Politics in Global Perspective**

Robert Ovetz, Ph.D.

San Jose State University

Class number: 47314

Fall Semester 2017

Meeting Time: Tuesday and Thursday, 12-1:15, Dudley Moorhead Hall 149A

My office hours: Thursday, 9:45-10:15, Clark Hall 406J and earlier or Tuesdays by prior appointment

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## **Course Description**

A survey of U.S. and California political institutions and culture in comparison with political institutions

and cultures outside the U.S. GE Area: V, as well as American Institutions Requirement: US2 and US3

Prerequisites: Completion of Core GE, satisfaction of writing skills test and upper division standing.

## **About the Course**

This course gives students knowledge about American political institutions and politics to familiarize them with the politics of the U.S., as well as the roles they do and could play in its political system. This course will do so in a comparative fashion by comparing American institutions and politics with those of other countries to provide a broader perspective about concepts of politics and the place of people within it. At the conclusion of this class, you should not only be able to describe how American government and politics work but be able to make comparisons with other countries' systems of government and politics.

## **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.

## **Department of Political Science Learning Outcomes (PSPLO)**

The Political Science Department has the following objectives for its students:

1. Breadth: Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.
2. Application: Students should be able to apply a variety of techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.
3. Disciplinary methods: Students 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.
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.
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.

## **General Education Learning Outcomes (GELO)**

This class fulfills the American Institutions (US2 and US3) General Education requirements, along with the SJSU Studies V General Education Requirement. In order to achieve the objectives of these requirements, upon successful completion of this course, students will:

LO1: 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.

LO2: 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.

LO3: articulate the values and assumptions that inform their civic engagement.

LO4: 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.

LO5: identify the historical context or ideas and cultural traditions outside the U.S. and how they have influenced American culture.

LO6: explain how a culture outside the U.S. has changed in response to internal and external pressures.

## **Important Dates**

Thursday, 8/24—First day of class, post your photo to the Canvas page if you have not already done so

Thursday 10/12—**Midterm** due

Tuesday, 11/9—**Constitutional clause** due

Thursday, 12/7—Last day of class

Wednesday, 12/13, 9:45-12—**Final exam** due

Wednesday, 12/13, 9:45-12—**Constitutional article** due

Wednesday, 12/13, 9:45-12—**Constitutional analysis paper** due

Wednesday, 12/13, 9:45-12—**Constitutional Convention** (during Final exam meeting)

## **Grading**

Grading will be based on a combination of preparation for class including doing the readings **before** they are scheduled to be discussed, participation in the discussions, compare and contrasts, exams, and the constitutional convention project. The grade for participation includes participation in class.

Because this class includes a substantial writing component students will be expected to write about

4,500-5,000 words. Writing takes time, preparation, research, and detailed proofreading. Writing assignments that do not follow the directions below, have many grammatical and spelling mistakes, or do not satisfy the assignment will not receive passing grades. If you need assistance with your writing please visit the campus writing center and find classmates who can help proofread and give you feedback on your work. While I do not proofread entire papers I am happy to assist you with specific issues concerning your assignments at office hours.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Class participation	10
Midterm essay exam	15
Final essay exam	15
Compare and contrast paper	10
Constitutional Convention Participation	10
Constitutional clause (individual)	10
Constitutional article (group)	10
Constitutional Convention Paper	20

#### Grading Scale

A+	96-100
A	93-95
A-	90-92
B+	86-89
B	83-85
B-	80-82
C+	76-79
C	73-75
C-	70-72
D	60-69
F	0-59

#### **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. If you do not have a form print out either the on-line grade sheet or the “Grading Table” on the following page and fill it in with all the grades you have received so far in the class. Follow the directions in the next section “How to Calculate Your Grades” and complete calculations, **including** what your estimated grades for all future assignments need to be. I will look at your grading table and return it to you.

Because this is a large class I require anyone who wants to check their grade with me to print and fill out the grade sheet below in its **entirety** and bring it with you when we meet. Please follow the directions below.

I will keep your grades on the class page grade sheet. Students who ask that I complete a grade check

form must bring me the form **at least one class in advance** with a print out of their on-line grade sheet so please plan ahead. I will not have access to my grade sheet with me on campus and will not have time before or after class to provide a grade check. If you need a grade sheet signed you need to print out and complete the grade sheet below and include it with the form for me to sign if you do not have a copy of your on-line grade sheet.

### How to Calculate Your Grades

To calculate your grade at any point after that add up all of your grades for each category above, divide by the number of assignments, multiply by the percentage (eg, 15% is .15), and then add each category together. Remember that you need to put in an estimated grade for any assignments not yet completed to figure out what your final grade might be. For example, start with 100 points for your highest possible grade and adjust it downward to see what grades you need to earn your ideal final grade. That will be your grade at that point in time.

If you have any questions about your grade after you have done this calculation feel free to come see me during office hours. I cannot do grade checks in class. Please fill in the following table as completely as possible before coming to check on your grade.

### Grading Table

Assignment	Grade	Grade %	Grade decimal	Points
Class participation		10%	0.10	
Compare and contrast paper		10%	0.10	
Constitutional Convention Participation		10%	0.10	
Constitutional clause (individual)		10%	0.10	
Constitutional article (group)		10%	0.10	
Constitutional analysis paper		20%	0.20	
Midterm exam		15%	0.15	
Final exam		15%	0.15	
<b>TOTAL GRADE</b>				

### Student Evaluation/Grading Policies

- **No withdrawals (W) will be granted** except for verifiable medical reasons.
- 10 percent will be deducted for each week that an assignment is turned in late. A period of 7 days or less is consider 1 week.

## **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.

To earn full participation points you need to make at least 4 substantial contributions to class discussions. I will keep track of your contributions so it is essential that you have a photo on the class Canvas page. You may also ask a question or participate in group meetings. A “substantial contribution” is defined as doing more than just asking me to repeat something, making a random guess, making a comment clearly unrelated to the immediate line of discussion, or otherwise just taking up airtime to get your points. For example, making a connection to something being discussed, offering another perspective, questioning an assumption, making a connection to something in the readings, referencing a related item in history or the news, etc. will be considered a “substantial contribution.” To be sure you receive credit be sure to say your name after I call on you. **At the end of the semester i will ask you to type a paragraph explaining what participation grade you have earned and to give examples of how you contributed in class and small group discussions, and if you visited me or the TA.**

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 article or chapter worksheet 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.

If you disrupt class by allowing your cell phone to ring, send text messages and carry on conversations with classmates **you will be requested to stop. Each time** you are asked to put away your phone you will automatically have **10 points deducted** from your final participation points. On the second request you may be asked to leave the class and report to the appropriate campus authority to discuss your disruptive behavior.

## **Classroom Policy**

- **Please turn off and put away all electronic devices** (cell phones, laptops, audio recorders, headphones, etc). I will give only one warning and then **I will ask you to leave the class**. 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. **After one warning** if you continue using your devices you will be asked to report to the appropriate campus authority and you will **lose 10 points**. University Policy S12-7, <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor’s permission to record the course.
- **No electronic recordings or photographs** of any kind of the class are allowed except as an accommodation with campus documentation.
- 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.
- Please allow your classmates time to speak.
- **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 raise your hand if you wish 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 written proof 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 recycle your containers and paper rather than throwing them in the trash.

### **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 copy. Any edition published in the past 10 years is acceptable.

- Katzenbach, 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.
- Smith, Raymond (2011) *The American Anomaly: U.S. Politics and Government in Comparative Perspective*, 2nd Edition, Routledge: NY, 2011, ISBN-13: 978-0415879736.

You are also encouraged, but not required, to read Field's *California Government and Politics Today*. Files of each chapter of the book can be found on the class Canvas page.

Note: Print and bring a copy of both the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution to class. The links to both are below.

You are expected to read the news at least 1-2 times per week as we will be discussing current news events.

### **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/>

## **Exams**

There are two take home essay exams in this class. Students will receive the exam in class. It must be typed and turned in on the due date.

## **Compare and Contrast**

Students will pick a recent (last two years) political issue and country of interest to them. Countries should not be duplicated. Among the issues they may pick are immigration, the environment, health care, civil rights and liberties, war, social movements, information, and issues pertaining to the powers of any branch of government. Each class students will be called upon to briefly compare and contrast how the US and one country covered in the Katzenbach and Smith books addresses the issue. Focus your comparison to one concept in the readings or my lectures for that topic of the class listed in the Course Outline of the syllabus.

Students will sign up for the class to briefly (under 10 minutes) summarize what they have learned and tell us what sources they used. Students should use at least two of the three types of sources described below. Students should sign up to present at least twice during the semester. One presentation and compare and contrast should be done before the mid term and the second before the constitutional convention.

Your verbal and written compare and contrast will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- briefly provide background on the issue
- briefly explain how the issue was addressed in your country of choice. Be specific about which branch of government addressed the issue and the outcome.
- contrast to how the issue has been addressed in the US. Be specific about which branch of government addressed the issue and the outcome.
- what did you learn about how that country's system functions differently than the US
- provide an explanation for the different outcomes
- provide as many specific details as possible
- give the two references (in APA)

Details about your compare and contrast papers:

- at least two references to each book
- at least two full citations any two of the 3 kinds of citations (popular, academic, and trade/government) in APA
- in text cites in the body of the paper: (last name of author or title of publication, year published)
- type in 1.5 or 2 x space and 11 or 12 pt font
- include your name, date, name of the assignment at the top of the page
- proofread and spell check before turning in
- unstapled papers will not be accepted
- maximum 1 page (500 words) including bibliography (do not put on separate page if there is space)
- if the typed compare and contrast is not ready to be turned in the student may make the verbal summary and turn in the typed compare and contrast late

## **About Sources and References**

Sources used for your paper should include credible and reliable academic, popular, trade, and government sources. Do not cite wikis, personal web pages, commercial non-news sources, student papers, and blogs. The textbooks may be cited in your paper but do not count towards your required

number of citations. Do not use Wikipedia as a source. Please use the free library databases that you will learn about in our visit to the library. Any one of the primary styles for citing works used is acceptable.

For help writing your citations go to SJSU library webpage and databases for political science, <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/az.php?s=47559>

The staff librarian for political science also has additional resources on his webpage: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/politicalscience>

### **About References and Bibliography**

Use either in text citations and a list of references or footnotes.

If a list of references is used at the end of the paper be sure to provide clear indications as to where each reference appears in the body of the text by including an in text citation: (last name, year).

If footnotes are used use the “insert footnote” function in your word processing program. Please do not insert them manually. Be sure to provide the complete reference the first time each reference appears in the footnotes. If you use a bibliography put your full citations in alphabetical order—do not number your sources.

Use the APA citation style only.

### **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/>

### **Constitutional Convention Final Project**

During the last three weeks of the semester and the final exam meeting the class will hold a constitutional convention and write a new US constitution based on what they have learned by comparing the US constitutional system to others. Students will sign up to collaborate as a group focused on a different constitutional article to present their proposed part of the new constitution during the convention. The groups will need to work together during the course of the semester and begin as soon as possible. Each group is responsible for designing part of the new constitution. Each student should write their own clause but the clauses must fit together into a coherent article so the group should work on the entirety of the article by the time we begin discussions on Week 13.

Students should be creative in what they propose be in their article. You can fix, add or throw out what is already in the US constitution, adapt parts of other country’s constitutions, or design your own from scratch. You will find the constitutions of other countries and detailed analysis of them at <http://comparativeconstitutionsproject.org/>

Each group will sign up to give a 20-25 minute presentation and answer questions about and proposed amendments to their proposal on their assigned day during the last 3 weeks of the semester. At the end of each presentation the class will debate the proposed article and propose and vote on amendments.

Each group will use the comments and amendments to prepare a final version of the article. Each group will distribute a type copy of the article to each member of the class and me at the final exam meeting. Each group will make a short 5-10 minutes presentation of their final article and answer any questions. At the conclusion we will vote on whether to ratify the articles as a new constitution.

Participation in the constitutional convention is required.

The constitutional themes will be the:

6. executive
7. legislative
8. judicial
9. civil and human rights
10. economic rights
11. amending the constitution
12. relationship between the national and local & state governments

Each students will turn in:

1. a typed copy of their clause of the article of the constitution. Each student must write a unique section of the article. This is due on the day your group presents.
2. a typed final copy of their group's article to be distributed to each member of the class and me during the final exam meeting. This is due at the final exam meeting.
3. analysis paper including bibliography. The paper should discuss the following:
  - a. the advantages and disadvantages of your clause and article of the proposed constitution relative to the current US constitution
  - b. the similarities to other constitutional system studied this semester
  - c. due at the final exam meeting
  - d. in text cites in the body of the paper: (last name of author or title of publication, year published)
  - e. type in 1.5 or 2 x space and 11 or 12 pt font
  - f. include your name, date, name of the assignment at the top of the page
  - g. proofread and spell check before turning in
  - h. provide at least 4 complete citations (at least 1 of each of the 3 kinds) in APA with in text cites
  - i. use a single staple to attach a copy of 1 and 2 above to the end of your paper
  - j. unstapled papers will not be accepted
  - k. maximum 3-4 pages (1,500-2,000 words) including bibliography (do not put on separate page if there is space)

## Course Outline

Topic	Week	Dates	Katzenbach Readings	Smith Readings	Other Readings
<b>Democracy</b>	Week 1	8/24	ch. 1, 2, & 5		
<b>US Constitution</b>	Week 2	8/29 & 8/31		ch. 1 & 2	<b>Madison</b> , “Federalist Paper #10”; and US Constitution <b>Note:</b> Print out & bring a copy of the entire Declaration of Independence & Constitution with you to class.
<b>Federalism</b>	Week 3	9/5 & 9/7	ch. 3	ch. 3 & 4	Go to <a href="https://www.law.cornell.edu/anncon/">https://www.law.cornell.edu/anncon/</a> 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
<b>Legislative Branch</b>	Week 4	9/12 & 9/14	ch. 7, 9, & 10	ch. 6	
	Week 5	9/19 & 9/21			
<b>Executive Branch</b>	Week 6	9/26 & 9/28	ch. 6 & 11	ch. 5 & 13	
	Week 7	10/3 & 10/5			
<b>Midterm exam</b>	Week 7	Due 10/12			
<b>Judicial Branch</b>	Week 8	10/10 & 10/12	ch. 8	ch. 7	
	Week 9	10/17 & 10/19			
<b>Rights</b>	Week 10	10/24 & 10/26		ch. 8 & 12	
<b>Economic System</b>	Week 11	10/31 & 11/2			
<b>Parties and Elections</b>	Week 12	11/7 & 11/9	ch. 4	ch. 8, 9, 10 & 11	
<b>Constitutional Convention</b>	Week 13	11/14 & 11/16			

	Week 14	11/21; no class 11/23			
	Week 15	11/28 & 11/30			
	Week 16	12/5 & 12/7			
<b>Final exam</b>	Final exam meeting	Due Wed., 12/13, 9:45-12			
<b>Constitutional Convention</b>	Final exam meeting	Wed., 12/13, 9:45-12			

## **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.

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Signature

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Date