

Political Science 102
State Government and Politics
Fall 2017
T, Th, 9:00-10:15
DMH 149A

Professor Gerston
Clark Hall 404M 924-5580
Hours: T, Th, 7:30-8:45

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SCOPE OF THE COURSE

States are the forgotten components of American politics and government. Removed from the national limelight yet more distant than local power sources, states often are lost in the policy making shuffle. Yet, they are critical to the understanding and operation of the American political process and key players in the current movement to decentralize government power.

The materials for this course are divided into three components. Much like the blocks that build a pyramid, these components depend upon and gain strength from one another.

The first part examines the connection between the states and national politics, a relationship broadly described as "federalism." We will treat this topic both from historical and contemporary perspectives. This topic is particularly important, given the different approaches to federalism by former President Barack Obama and current President Donald Trump.

The second portion of the course chronicles similarities and differences of state political institutions, political values, and selected areas of public policy. This component will serve as a backdrop for the attention we pay to California.

In the third segment of the course, the knowledge of federalism and comparative state arrangements will be applied to the case study of California. By blending theory with reality, we will gain insight whether the "Golden State" is an aberration, trendsetter or just a typical American state.

REQUIRED READINGS

Gerston, *American Federalism: A Concise Introduction*, 2007

Bowman and Kearney, *State and Local Government*, **Tenth Edition, 2017**

Gerston and Christensen, *California Politics and Government*, **Fourteenth Edition, 2017**

Gerston, *Not So Golden After All: The Rise and Fall of California*, 2012.

ATTENDANCE

Attendance is not required, but strongly encouraged inasmuch as the exams test materials from the texts **and** lectures.

CELL PHONES, COMPUTERS AND OTHER ELECTRONIC DEVICES

As a courtesy to other students and the professor, please make sure that cell phones, computers and other electronic devices are turned OFF. If your phone rings during class, you will be asked to leave. If you text during class, you will be asked to leave.

If you leave during class, please take your materials with you and do not return for the rest of the lecture. (The only exception will be for those with medical conditions who must leave occasionally. Please provide notice to me in advance if this is the case.)

I AM VERY SERIOUS ABOUT THIS ISSUE.

EXAMINATIONS AND EVALUATION

There are three examinations in this course. Exam I will cover materials from the first third of the course; Exam II will cover materials from the second third of the course. Exam III will cover the last third of the course.

Essay and short answer formats will be used for all three examinations. For each examination, you will be required to bring **LARGE NEW GREEN BOOKS (or other colors)** and **PENS**. **Only medical problems (with physician's note) are accepted reasons for missing an exam.**

Class performance is evaluated as follows:

Exam I	30%
Exam II	30
Exam III	30
Participation	<u>10</u>
Total:	100%

Those receiving 90% or more of the total will earn an "A," 80-89% a "B," 70-79% a "C," 60-69% a "D." Averages of less than 60% will result in an "F."

Success is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of forty-five 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. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.

SPECIAL EVENING LECTURE

There may be a special lecture during the semester as part of the Don Edwards Lecture Series. Edwards served in the U.S. Congress for more than 25 years as a representative from the San Jose area. The lecture will take place at 7:00 p.m. at a campus location and date to be determined. **Attendance will be mandatory**; in exchange for attending this lecture, there will be no class at a time determined by the professor. **Note:** the lecture is videotaped for those with schedule conflicts.

ACCOMMODATIONS

If you need particular accommodations because of a disability, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible. Presidential Directive 97-03 also requires that students with disabilities register with DRC to establish a record of their disability to use available services.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at SJ SU, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Note that faculty members are required to report **all infractions** to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The policy on academic integrity can be found at: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>. In other words, plagiarism and cheating on exams, papers, or assignments are serious offenses that may result in grades of F or expulsion from the university. Don't do it!

LEARNING ASSISTANCE

The SJSU **Learning Assistance Resource Center (LARC)** provides tutoring assistance on a weekly or drop-in basis. The LARC is located in the Student Services Center, Room 600 (between 9th and 10th Street on San Fernando). Hours: M-R 9-6, F 9-3. Phone: 408-924-2587. All services are offered to registered SJSU students free of charge.

READING ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAM SCHEDULE (tentative)

August 24	Introduction; general remarks
August 25-September 4	Gerston/Fed, Chapters 1, 2, 3

September 5-11	Gerston/Fed, Chapters 4, 5, 6
September 12-18	Gerston, Chapters 7, 8, 9
September 19	Exam 1 Review
September 21-28	No Class
October 3	Exam I
October 4-11	Bowman/Kearney, Chapters 1, 2, 3
October 12-19	Bowman/Kearney, Chapters 4, 5
October 20-29	Bowman/Kearney, Chapters 6, 7, 8
October 30-Nov 6	Bowman/Kearney, Chapters 9, 12
November 7	Exam II Review
November 9	Exam II
November 10-19	Gerston/Golden, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4
November 20-29	Gerston/Golden, Chapters 5, 6, 7, 8
November 22-24	Thanksgiving—No Class
November 30-Dec 5	Gerston/Golden, Chapters 9, 10, 11
December 6	Exam III Review
December 8	Exam III in class at the regular time