

**San José State University  
Department of Political Science**

**Pols 15B-13: Essentials of U.S. and California Government,  
Fall 2017**

**Course and Contact Information**

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<b>Office Hours:</b>	M 9-10, W 3-4, F 2-3 and by appointment
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	M W 12:00-1:15
<b>Classroom:</b>	DMH 161
<b>GE/SJSU Studies Category:</b>	AI (US2 & US3); D3

**Course Format**

This class is primarily lecture and in-class discussion, but has out-of-class assignments as well. It does use a Canvas webpage for out-of-class assignments, reserve readings, uploading take-home tests for Turnitin verification and as an archive for class handouts. Students should have access to a computer capable of accessing this page.

**Course Description**

**From the SJSU Catalog:** Treatment of essentials of U.S. and California government. Satisfies the American Institutions requirements in U.S. Constitution (US2) and California Government (US3), and the Core GE requirement in Social Sciences (D3).

**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 principles, 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.

## Department of Political Science Learning Outcomes

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.

### GE Learning Outcomes (GELO)

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

1. **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.
2. **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.
3. **GELO 3 (D3)**: Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.
4. **GELO 4 (D3)**: Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts.
5. **GELO 5 (D3)**: Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues.
6. **GELO 6 (D3)**: Apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national and international levels.

The US2 and US3 requirements will be fulfilled primarily through three two-part exams and a final exam; the D3 requirements will be fulfilled primarily through participation activities and sections of the three two-part exams.

Students are expected to complete the writing equivalent of ~1500 words or more in this class. This will be accomplished through out-of-class participation activities and short-answer questions on take-home tests.

## Required Texts/Readings

### Textbook

The major texts for this course are Neal Ginsberg, Theodore Lowi and Margaret Weir et al.=s We The People, 10<sup>th</sup> Core Edition (W.W. Norton, 2015; ISBN: 9780393937046) <sup>1</sup> and the League of Women Voters of California, Guide to California Government, 16<sup>th</sup> edition (Sacramento, CA: League of Women Voters Education Fund, 2016; ISBN: 978-0-9632465-2-3).<sup>2</sup> Both of these texts are available through Spartan Bookstore.

### Other Readings

Additional readings are also listed in the Schedule. There are some reserve readings on the Canvas webpage for the class under “Files.” *All readings for this course are required readings, unless labeled “recommended” in the Schedule.*

## Course Requirements and Assignments

SJSU classes are designed such 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. More details about student workload can be found in [University Policy S12-3](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

This course includes the following methods to evaluate student performance:

Out-of-Class Participation	5 x 10 points
In-Class Participation	5 x 10 points
Exams 1-4	3 x 80 points
Final Exam	<u>100 points</u>
	440 points

NOTE that [University policy F69-24](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/F69-24.pdf> states that “Students should attend all meetings of their classes, not only because they are responsible for material discussed therein, but because active participation is frequently essential to insure maximum benefit for all members of the class. Attendance per se shall not be used as a criterion for grading.”

Out-of- Class Participation: To enhance preparation for class as well as work more intensively on various topics of the course, students will be required to complete five assignments on Canvas, involving viewing videos, taking a practice test or playing simulation games, with written

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1 . We The People will be listed as WTP in the Schedule for readings.

2 . Guide to California Government will be listed as LWV in the Schedule for readings.

feedback. These assignments must be completed by the date in the Schedule to sync them with the topics of the class; please see Schedule for when you must have these completed, and the prompts on the Canvas page. Your written feedback must be uploaded to the prompts in Assignments; you do not need to turn in your assignments in class. Each of these assignments will be worth up to ten points each for a possible total of 50 points of your course grade.<sup>3</sup>

**In-Class Participation:** Students will also be doing groupwork and discussions at various times in class for an additional 50 points, with up to ten points per assignment. While attendance cannot be used as a basis for grading in this class, please be aware that if you do not attend class, you may miss completing these specific assignments for your course grade.<sup>4</sup>

**Exams:** Exams for this section of Pols 15B will be a combination of in-class multiple-choice questions and a section of take-home short answer questions. See Schedule for dates.

You will receive the short-answer questions (Part I) a week before the due date; there are eight questions, and each question needs to be answered in 4-5 sentences, no more than one paragraph for five points each, totaling 40 points for this section. You need to bring a hard copy of the answers to class on the due date as well as upload the answers to Canvas under “Assignments.” This part of the exam is open-book, and students may work together on answers. But each student must submit a separate set of answers on the due date.

Part II is the multiple-choice section: you will need to bring a Scantron 882-E form to class to answer 20 questions worth two points each, for a total of 40 points. This part of the test will be held in the last 40 minutes of class on the test date (see Schedule). While Part I is open-book, Part II is closed-book and closed-note.

For more on exam format, please see the handout at the end of the syllabus.

**Final Exam:** The final exam is on December 19, 2017 from 9:45-12:00. It is comprehensive for the course and will consist of 50 questions worth two points each for a total of 100. There will be questions from all previously tested sections of the class, as well as the material for interest groups and local government. You will need to bring a Scantron 882-E form to complete this exam. This exam is closed-book and closed-note. The exam will not be given in advance for any reason; please make travel arrangements accordingly. Make-ups are only permitted for emergencies and will be held after the scheduled exam time on the official makeup day.

## **Grading Policy**

This course is based upon a point system, with percentage of points earned on assignments and exams corresponding to the following grades: 97-100% is an A+, 93-96% is an A, 90-92% is an A-, 87-89% is a B+, 83-86% is a B, 80-82% is a B-, etc. Keep track of your points over the course of the semester as noted above, and you should have an idea how you stand in the class.

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

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3. If one of these assignments is not completed due to a verifiable emergency, contact the instructor about a possible makeup.

4. If you miss class due to a verifiable emergency, the lack of the assignment may be excused from your course grade.

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.

### **Classroom Protocol**

This is a course that will consider several controversial issues including diversity and minority rights in American politics, immigration and its effects on American politics and culture and the nature of citizenship. Students are expected to come prepared to class discussions and conduct themselves in a civil and respectful manner, particularly to their fellow students. With that in mind, students should avoid any colloquial language, characterizations, remarks or outright slurs that pertain to groups in the abstract or to their fellow students in particular. Any remarks made in ways that attack a student's personality or physical characteristics that have nothing to do with his or her actual points in a discussion will not be tolerated. Students may be asked to leave if this occurs.

Laptops may be used during class for the purpose of taking notes, but students are expected to stop typing and participate in discussions when they occur. Cell phones and pagers must be turned off for the duration of class. No texting is permitted during class for any reason. If a cell phone rings during class, the instructor reserves the right to answer it; if you are texting, the instructor reserves the right to ask you to leave the classroom.

Recordings of lectures for personal use outside of class is permitted, provided the instructor is consulted and approves such recording. Common courtesy and professional behavior dictate that you notify someone when you are recording him/her. You must obtain the instructor's permission to make audio or video recordings in this class. Such permission allows the recordings to be used for your private, study purposes only. The recordings are the intellectual property of the instructor; you have not been given any rights to reproduce or distribute the material. If you feel you may need to do this, please contact Dr. Pinnell and clear this with her at the start of the course.

### **Policy on Submitting Written Work in this Course**

Students at the college level are expected to submit written work that fits the grammatical, stylistic and citation expectations for college-level work in English. All written assignments in this course are therefore graded in two ways: both in terms of content (information in terms of logic, quality of evidence, etc.) and in terms of writing. If you are at all uncomfortable with writing at the college level, you need to take steps to rectify this. The instructor is willing to preview rough drafts of work in office hours before assignments are due to provide feedback. You may also want to see the instructor after assignments are handed back if comments indicate that there are specific errors in argument or writing.

### **Collaboration and Source Use Policy**

The University has a clear policy on Academic Integrity, but I feel that some issues need to be made more explicit within the body of this syllabus.

The following actions on papers could be considered plagiarism:

- 1) Copying words or passages of text from an in-class (lecture, discussion, slides, text or assigned reading) source without proper quotation and citation;
- 2) Using ideas, definitions or arguments from in-class sources, even if paraphrased or summarized, without proper citation;
- 3) Copying words or passages of text from sources outside of class (including electronic sources) without proper quotation and citation;
- 4) Using ideas, definitions or arguments from sources outside of class, even if paraphrased or summarized, without proper citation.

Per the SJSU Academic Integrity Policy, you may not submit work done in another course, in whole or in part, for evaluation in this course without prior instructor approval. This includes your own writing for another course – that is actually a form of plagiarism as well as cheating.

You are permitted to collaborate with other students on Part I of the three exams for this course. There may be group work on the in-class participation, but there is no collaboration permitted on the outside participation assignments, nor on Part II of the three exams.

Collaboration in preparing for exams such as sharing notes before exams and group study is encouraged, but keep in mind that there may be more than one answer to an exam question.

If there are issues with source use or possible cheating, it is the policy of SJSU for the instructor to have a face-to-face meeting with a student to clarify the issue and particulars before any decisions are made about possible sanctions. Serious infractions must be reported to the University per the Academic Integrity Policy for recording purposes, and possible administrative action.

To sum up – the University is serious about cheating and plagiarism, and so is your instructor. If you are concerned about how to cite and use sources, come to office hours, consult the Library sources on how to deal with these issues (<http://library.sjsu.edu/research-support/research>), or one of the writing centers for assistance.

### **Extra Credit Policy**

Any opportunities for extra credit will be on exams, at the discretion of the instructor. Note that per Academic Senate policy (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S09-7.pdf>), any extra credit opportunities must be extended to all students in the class; this means that individual appeals for extra credit may not be considered apart from the entire class.

### **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/>. Please peruse these policies at the link, which cover academic integrity, religious holidays and recording information in class.

**Disclaimer**

All information in this syllabus, including due dates for evaluation instruments such as exams or papers may be subject to change with fair notice by the instructor, the Department of Political Science or San Jose State University.

## Pols 15B: Course Schedule

### Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
1	8/23	<p><u>Course Introduction</u></p> <p><b>Out-of-class activity #1: USCIS test – See Canvas for module, due 8/30</b></p>
2-4	8/28-9/11	<p><u>Constitution and Federalism</u> WTP, Chs. 2-3 See Canvas for Primer on Source Use (under “Files”)</p> <p><b>In-class activity #1: Source use</b></p> <p><b>September 4<sup>th</sup> is Labor Day – NO CLASS</b></p>
4-5	9/11-9/18	<p><u>Civil Liberties and Rights</u> WTP, Chs. 4-5</p> <p><b>Out-of-class activity #2: Integration into the military and civil rights – See Canvas for module, due 9/13</b></p> <p><b>Exam 1 Part I goes out on 9/18, due 9/25 in class and uploaded to Canvas</b></p>
6	9/25	<b>Exam 1 – Part I due, Part II in class</b>
5-7	9/18-10/2	<p><u>Legislative and Judicial Branches</u> WTP, Chs. 12, 15 LWV, Chs. 4, 6</p> <p><b>In-class activity #2: <u>One Nation Under Law</u> (film), discussion</b></p>
7-10	10/4-10/23	<p><u>Executive Branch, Bureaucracy, Budget Politics (10/4-10/23)</u> WTP, Chs. 13-14 LWV, Chs. 5, 10 (pp. 143-158) Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Policy Basics: Introduction to the Federal Budget Process,” 17 February 2016 (<a href="https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/3-7-03bud.pdf">https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/3-7-03bud.pdf</a>) (reserve reading on Canvas under “Files”).</p> <p><b>Out-of-class activity #3: The U.S. budget process – see Canvas for module, due 10/16</b></p> <p><b>In-class activity #3 -- Bureaucratic decision making</b></p> <p><b>Exam 2 Part I goes out 10/23, due 10/30 in class and uploaded to Canvas</b></p>
11	10/30	<b>Exam 2 Part I due, Part II in class</b>
10-12	10/25-11/6	<p><u>Public Opinion and Media</u> WTP, Chs. 1, 6, 7</p>

Week	Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
		<b>In-class activity #4 -- Media and framing comparison</b>
12-14	11/6-11/20	<u>Elections and Political Parties</u> WTP, Chs. 8-10 LWV, Chs. 1-3  <b>Out-of-class activity #4: Voting Game – see Canvas for module, due 11/8</b>  <b>In-class activity #4: Gerrymandering</b>  Exam 3 Part I goes out 11/15, due 11/27 in class and uploaded to Canvas
14	<b>11/22</b>	<b>NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Holiday</b>
15	<b>11/27</b>	<b>Exam 3 Part I due, Part II in class</b>
15-16	11/27-12/4	<u>Interest Groups, Mobilization and Campaign Finance</u> WTP, Ch. 11  <b>Out-of-class activity #5: “The Cost of Campaigns” – See Canvas for module, due 12/4</b>
16-17	12/4-12/11	<u>Local Government</u> LWV, Chs. 7-9  <b>In-class-activity #5: “Proposition 13: Mad As Hell” (film), discussion</b>
Final Exam	<b>12/19</b>	<b>9:45-12:00 (Please note date and time!)</b>

## **Exams 1-3: Information for Parts I and II**

### Format and Rubric for Part I

Part of the test of your knowledge and ability to apply it in this course is the short answer take-home part of each exam (Part I). This is a set of eight short-answer questions that you will need to answer in 4-5 sentences, no more than a paragraph. Writing must be typewritten, double-spaced and with 1" margins for this assignment. You do not need to do outside research for these answers; lecture and the texts should be sufficient. But given that this is a take-home test, there are some rules for writing your answers.

Each question will be graded out of five points, with one point guaranteed for effort if the answer fits the requirements of length and source use, but is incorrect. A 2-3 point answer is partially correct, but may lack some major part of the information or make an error in information. A 4-5 point answer shows correct information and use of it, with a five granted for excellent knowledge and use of the material.

With regards to writing, you may lose a point per question if there are issues with verb tense or agreement, punctuation, spelling, fragment or run-on sentences, or word choice. Issues with writing that affects the clarity of your answer will be noted in edits and comments on your paper.

Citations are expected for any information in an answer that does not come directly from you. Lectures should be cited as well as written material. If you are citing lecture, you can do an in-text citation such as (Pinnell, Date), a footnote or an endnote. If you are using the textbook, you can do either an in-text citation (Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir et al 2015), a footnote or an endnote. All quotes must be cited, although I strongly recommend avoiding using quotes unless the exact language is needed to make your point. The ability to write in your own words is part of the grade for each question. Any information that is not in quotes, whether it is made up of ideas clearly not your own, paraphrases or summarized information also requires citation.

If source material is used improperly in this part of the test, it may result in a deduction out of the five points for the answer, up to a loss of four points if all of the answer appears to be copied and uncited from a source. (Note: Material that is copied and cited, if this is the entire answer, will still face deductions, since you are not answering in your own words.)

A Works Cited page with the full citations for all sources, including lecture, is required at the end. If you are citing from lecture notes or the Powerpoint slides archived on Canvas, you'll need to mention these here as well. A lack of a Works Cited page will mean a deduction of two points from the overall grade for Part II.

All take-home portions of Exams 1-3 are due as hard copies on the due date and uploaded to Canvas under "Assignments" for a source check, barring verifiable illness or emergency. The instructor may give an extension if requested before or on the due date, at the instructor's discretion. A late hard copy may result in a deduction of one letter grade per day (4 points). Papers not uploaded to Canvas for a source check will not be graded until this happens.

### Can I Work With Others on Part I?

Collaboration on exams is permitted for Part I within the following guidelines:

- 1) Each student must submit a separate set of answers for credit;
- 2) Each student must write his/her answer in his or her own words; you cannot come up with an answer for the group and then copy it down. Use discussion to talk about the question and what material could be used to answer it instead.

- 3) The same policy applies when working with tutors or other forms of assistance.
- 4) You can bring questions to office hours or e-mail, but the instructor's role then is to point you in the right direction on finding an answer, not to answer the question or preview your answers before you submit them.

### Format of Part II

Part II of Exams 1-3 will be a multiple-choice test of 20 questions, worth two points each, for a total of 40 points. This part of the exam will be held at the end of class on the scheduled test day, in a 40-minute period. You will need to bring a Scantron 882-E form (oblong with green type) with you to answer the questions.

This part of the test is closed-book and closed-note. There will be different versions of the test in the test room.

Makeups for this part of Exams 1-3 will require a verifiable emergency, and must be made up within one week of the scheduled test date. Otherwise, the student will earn a grade of zero for this part of the test. If you miss the test day, contact the instructor ASAP to arrange a make-up time to avoid loss of points.

Students will receive both their Scantrons and the test form back when the tests are returned; this will help you review errors as well as help you study for the Final, which may have similar questions on the comprehensive test.

### Study Guides

There will be study guides provided one week before the test date to help you review the concepts that will be "fair game" on Parts I and II. These guides will be distributed with the Part I questions, and both will be uploaded to Canvas under "Files>Handouts" as well. If you are not in class on a day these materials are distributed, see the Canvas page.