

Pols 170V. American Politics in Global Perspective

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San Jose State University

Class number: 30159

Section: 3

Spring 2018

Meeting Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 12-1:15 pm, Clark Building 202

My office hours: Thursdays 1:20-2:20, Clark Hall 406J, or 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

Thurs. 1/25—First day of class, post your photo to the Canvas page if you have not already done so

Thurs. 3/8—**Midterm exam**, complete on-line by midnight

Thurs. 4/19—Draft **Constitutional article** due

Thurs. 5/17, 9:45 am-12:00—**Constitutional Convention** (during Final exam meeting) and **paper** due

Thurs. 5/17—**Final exam**, complete on-line by midnight

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.

Assignment	Percentage
Class participation	10
Midterm exam	15
Final exam	15
Compare and contrast paper	20
Constitutional Convention Participation	10
Constitutional Article	10
<u>Constitutional Convention Paper</u>	<u>20</u>
TOTAL	100

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.

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.
- Although attendance is not recorded 20% of your grade is based on participation. Excessive and repeated absences will negatively impact your grade especially during the constitutional convention.

Participation Policy

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 a 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.

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.

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

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

- 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.
- Smith, Raymond (2011) *The American Anomaly: U.S. Politics and Government in Comparative Perspective*, 2nd Edition, Routledge: NY, 2011, ISBN-13: 978-0415879736.
- Optional: Field, Mona (2012) *California Government and Politics Today*, Pearson, NY, 14th edition, 160 pp., ISBN-13: 978-0205251780. (order on-line) You are also encouraged, but not required, to read Field book.

Note: Print and bring a copy of 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.

Other resource: The ABC-CLIO American Government database available through the SJSU library website is a good background resource.

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 will be on-line midterm and final exam due by midnight on the above dates.

Compare and Contrast

Students will pick a recent (last two years) political issue and country of interest to them. Pick a country listed in the Smith book only (also found on the sign up sheet). **Countries should not be duplicated more than once. Topics should not be duplicated. Duplicated countries or topics will receive a grade of 0 and have to be redone.**

Among the issues you may pick are immigration, public or higher education, 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 Katznelson 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.

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 2 x space and 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 500 words not including the 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 research and writing guides 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.

The Writing Center offers many great workshops on different parts of the writing process. Sign up here: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/workshops/>

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.

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, not merely revise the existing 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 during the assigned week.

The class is writing an entirely new constitution for our country not merely revising it. Students should be creative in what they propose be in their article. You can fix, adjust or throw out what is already in the US constitution, adapt parts of other country’s constitutions, or design your own from scratch. Each

group will be responsible for making an argument for why they put something in their article, what problem it addresses, and how it is an advance over our current constitution. If you borrow parts from the US constitution you will be expected to be able to defend why you did so. You will find the constitutions of other countries and detailed analysis of them at <https://www.constituteproject.org/search?lang=en>

You can also find constitutions and other details about Latin American political systems at <http://pdba.georgetown.edu/>

During their assigned days of the constitutional convention, 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 typed copy of the article to each member of the class and me at the final exam meeting. During 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. Absences will significantly impact your participation grade.

The constitutional themes will be the:

1. executive
2. legislative
3. judicial
4. civil and human rights
5. economic rights
6. relationship between the national and local & state governments
7. elections, voting, and amending the constitution

Each student will turn in:

1. **Rough draft** of the **Article**
 1. Each student must write a unique section of the article of the new constitution.
 2. The group should assemble all the clauses into a complete article and turn in a typed copy on the due date for the **rough draft**.
 3. Clearly identify which clause is written by whom and include your full name at the top of the page.
2. **Final copy** of the **Article**
 1. 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.
 2. The final article should incorporate amendments and changes discussed during the initial presentation and my comments on the draft.
 3. This is due at the final exam meeting and should be stapled.
 4. Post a pdf of the final article to the class Canvas page
3. **Analysis paper** including bibliography due during the final exam meeting. The paper should be written as a research paper. It must include a discussion of the following:

- a. the advantages and disadvantages of your article of the proposed constitution relative to the current US constitution
- b. the specific similarities to other constitutional systems studied this semester

Formatting and Organization:

- a. due at the final exam meeting
- b. staple the part of the article you wrote to your paper at the end
- c. in text cites in the body of the paper: (last name of author or title of publication, year published)
- d. type in 2 x space and 12 pt font
- e. include your name, date, name of the assignment at the top of the page
- f. proofread and spell check before turning in
- g. provide at least 4 complete citations (at least 1 of each of the 3 kinds) in APA with in text cites
- h. use a single staple. Unstapled papers will not be accepted
- i. maximum 1,500-2,000 words including bibliography (do not put on separate page if there is space)

Course Outline

Topic	Week	Dates	Katznelson Readings	Smith Readings	Other Readings (See Reading Packet on Canvas or link below)
Democracy	Week 1	1/25	ch. 1, 2 & 5		
	Week 2	1/30			
US Constitution	Week 2	2/1		ch. 1 & 2	Madison , “Federalist Paper #10”; and US Constitution Note: Print out & bring a copy of the entire Constitution with you to class.
	Week 3	2/6 & 2/8			
Federalism	Week 4	2/13 & 2/15	ch. 3	ch. 3 & 4	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	2/20			
Legislative Branch	Week 5	2/22	ch. 7, 9, & 10	ch. 6	
	Week 6	2/27 & 3/1			

Executive Branch	Week 7	3/6 & 3/8	ch. 6 & 11	ch. 5 & 13	
	Week 8	3/13			
Judicial Branch	Week 8	3/15	ch. 8	ch. 7	
	Week 9	3/20			
Rights	Week 9	3/22		ch. 8 & 12	
Economic System	Week 10	4/3			
Parties and Elections	Week 10	4/5	ch. 4	ch. 8, 9, 10 & 11	
Constitutional Convention	Week 11	4/17 & 4/19			
	Week 12	4/24 & 4/26			
	Week 13	5/1 & 5/3			
	Week 14	5/8 & 5/10			
Final Convention	@ Final exam meeting	Thur. 5/17, 9:45 am-12:00			
Final exam		Due on-line Thur. 5/17, midnight by			

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