

San José State University
Department of Political Science
Pols 102: State Politics and Government, Fall 2019

Course and Contact Information

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Office Hours:	Tues 9-10; Wed 12-2 (and by appointment)
Class Days/Time:	Tuesday and Thursday 10:30-11:45
Classroom:	DMH 149A

Faculty Web Page and MYSJSU Messaging

Course materials such as the syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the on Canvas Learning Management System course login website at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU at <http://my.sjsu.edu> to learn of any updates.

By enrolling in this course, you consent to all course requirements listed in this syllabus, published on our Canvas site, and announced in class. You accept responsibility for accessing the Canvas course website to download any required handouts, assignments, or readings. You also accept responsibility for checking the course website regularly for any announcements. You also accept responsibility for receiving any messages sent via the MySJSU email system. Make sure that MySJSU has your current email address. Please contact me within the first week if you cannot access the Canvas website, download and read .pdf files, link to other websites, or send or receive email.

Course Description

From the course catalogue: This course examines the politics and institutions of U.S. state governments. The structure and powers of state legislatures, governors, and court systems are analyzed. The effect of states' racial, ideological, and economic characteristics on public policy is also explored. American Institutions Requirement: US3 Notes: Satisfies American Institutions requirement in California government.

Additional Course Description

This course provides an overview of state government and politics in the U.S. governing system. While often overlooked, especially among national media outlets, state governments have a tremendous impact on citizens' daily lives and welfare. Decisions

about environmental pollution, taxes, the stringency of punishments placed on people charged with criminal violations, the kinds of educational or welfare opportunities available, or the degree of gridlock on state highways (among many other issues) are influenced, to a large degree, by the decisions of state government.

But as U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis said long ago, the U.S. States are “laboratories of democracy.” How states go about solving problems differ dramatically. For example, in especially heinous “capital” criminal cases, a state like Texas issues death sentences (relatively) frequently. Many residents in Texas support the use of the death penalty. Yet there are also many other states that don’t even have the death penalty (Minnesota), and still others (California) that have the death penalty but don’t actually use it. Why is this? What causes a state to use the most extreme form of criminal punishment imaginable (taking someone’s life) while in another state the idea seems barbaric. What’s even more puzzling is that despite people being treated differently by state governments each state’s laws and practices fall under a larger policy we call the United States of America, where states must abide by rules set forth in the U.S. Constitution and citizens are ostensibly treated equal under the law? What

Similar dynamics and questions resonate beyond the narrow (but important) confines of capital punishment. It’s another way of asking why states do what they do more broadly. As we’ll see, answering this requires us to undertake a comparative analysis of state government. State governments and the politics, both within and between states, vary markedly. States come in different sizes, with different racial, cultural, economic, and political histories. They also have different constitutions with different institutional designs and powers. Given this, we will investigate how “state context” shapes intergovernmental relations and policy making in the larger federalist system. We will examine whether state policy outcomes are representative of what the public wants and the role that organized interests and political parties play in state elections and policymaking. Throughout the semester we will take a particularly close look at California government and politics and investigate whether California is a political trendsetter, an aberration, or something else.

Political Science Program Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the Political Science major program, students should be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

PSPLO1: Breadth

Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.

PSPLO2: Application and Disciplinary Methods

Students should be able to formulate research questions, engage in systematic literature searches using primary and secondary sources, evaluate research studies, and critically analyze and interpret influential political texts. Students should be able to apply these

techniques to identify, understand, and analyze domestic and international political issues and organizations.

PSPLO3: 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.

PSPLO4: 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.

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students should be able to:

CLO1 Demonstrate knowledge of social science theories of government and politics and use them to explain the behavior, decisions, and outcomes of state governments in the United States

CLO2 Critically analyze the role and function of state governments in the American federalist system

CLO3 Demonstrate knowledge of the politics, public issues, and governing processes of California’s state government

CLO4 Develop a set of practical skills that facilitate your engagement with, and participation in, state government and politics.

Mapping POLS 105 Course Learning Outcomes to Political Science PLOs	Program Learning Outcomes	Assessment
CLO1: Demonstrate knowledge of social science theories of government and politics and use them to explain the behavior, decisions, and outcomes of state governments in the United States	PLO1, 2	Quizzes 1-6; midterm and final exam, term paper
CLO2: Critically analyze the role and function of state governments in the American federalist system	PLO2, 4,	Quizzes 1-2 midterm exam; final exam; term paper

CLO3: Demonstrate knowledge of the politics, public issues, and governing processes of California's state government	PLO2, 4	Quizzes 4-5; midterm exam; final exam
CLO4: Demonstrate knowledge of the politics, public issues, and governing processes of California's state government	PLO1,2	State Politics Simulation Exercise

Required Texts

- Thomas Dye and Susan Macmanus. *Politics in States and Communities*. 15th edition. Pearson.
- League of Women Voters of California. *Guide to California Government*. 16th edition.

Additional Readings

- "18 of the Biggest Policies and Problems Legislatures Will Confront in 2019" *Governing*, January 2019 (on Canvas)
- "State Politics vs. the Federal Government" *New York Times*, July 2013 (on Canvas)
- Emily Bazelon, "Where the Death Penalty Still Lives" *New York Times Magazine*, August 23, 2016 (on Canvas)
- David Roberts, "How California Became Far More Energy-Efficient than the Rest of the Country (on Canvas)"
- "The Worse Voter Turnout in 72 Years" (on Canvas)
- "Behind the 2018 U.S. Midterm Election Turnout" *United States Census* (on Canvas)
- "State Government Trifectas" Ballotpedia (on Canvas)
- Seth Masket, "Polarization Interrupted? California's Experiment with the Top-Two Primary" (on Canvas)
- Tara Golshan, "How Republicans are Trying to Strip Power from Democratic governors-elect" *Vox.com* (on Canvas)
- Thad Kousser and Justin Philips "The Roots of Executive Power" (on Canvas)
- "One in 100: Behind Bars in America in 2008" *Pew Charitable Trusts* (on Canvas)
- "Cruel and Unusual: A Guide to California's Broken Prisons and the Fight to Fix Them" *Sacramento Bee and ProPublica*. (on Canvas)
- James Yates and Richard Fording, "Politics and State Punitiveness in Black and White" *Journal of Politics*, 67, 4: 1099-1121. (on Canvas)

**I also urge you to read a national newspaper several times a week (the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Los Angeles Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal* are excellent sources for in depth political and policy news. For excellent coverage of California politics be sure to check out calmatters.org or Politico's California politics website <https://www.politico.com/states/california>. This is something you should do anyway, but since we will be discussing a variety of state politics and policy topics during the semester, keeping up with the news of the day will most certainly add to the quality of our discussions in class. Keep yourself informed!

Library Liaison

The library liaison for Political Science is available to answer questions and provide one-on-one help using the library for research. His name and contact info is: Paul Kauppila, Librarian (Political Science Liaison). He can be reached by telephone (408) 808-2042 or by email Paul.Kauppila@sjsu.edu.

Course Requirements and Assignments

1. Course Readings: All assigned readings are required. It is expected students complete the assigned readings before attending class each week. Students may find it necessary to reading all or portions of the assigned readings more than once to comprehend complex material. Students who feel they need additional help with effective reading comprehension strategies should consult with the professor during office hours.

2. Exams: Two in class exams—a midterm and final—are required. Exams will consist of multiple choice, true false, and essay questions covering the assigned readings and lecture/discussion material. A short study guide will be issued on Canvas one week before each exam date.

3. Quizzes: A total of six online quizzes will be required. Quizzes will be taken on Canvas covering material in the assigned readings. Quiz questions will consist of multiple choice, true false, matching, and fill in the blank questions. Please refer to the course schedule for appropriate due dates and times. ****Students who fail to submit a quiz on time will be afforded 1 make-up quiz during the semester for half credit. Beyond that, missed or late quizzes will not earn credit unless covered under the university make-up policy.****

4. Term Paper: A final term paper (9-10 pages) is required which asks students to research and analyze a public policy of their choice with emphasis placed on a policies adopted and implemented at the state level. I will distribute a separate memo with more details about this assignment at the beginning of the fourth week of class. Grading on the assignment will be based on the clarity and strength of your thesis statement, the quality of your research (you will be required to incorporate a mix of academic books and peer reviewed journal articles as well as online news articles), and the overall strength of your analysis. **The term paper is due December 3rd at 11:59pm on Canvas.**

5. State Legislative Politics Simulation: In the final two weeks of the semester, students will be participating in a state politics simulation. A separate memo detailing the requirements of this assignment will be distributed during week 6 of the semester. Simulation roles will be assigned right after the midterm exam.

6. Class Participation: Participation is an important part of the course. Without participation from a broad cross section of students we all (yes, including the professor) don't learn as much. Participation can be earned in a variety of ways: Asking questions or making regular comments in class, actively participating in "pop" in-class group critical thinking exercises, and/or contributing to online discussions on the course Canvas page.

Final Examination

Faculty members are required to have a culminating activity for their courses, which can include a final examination, a final research paper or project, a final creative work or performance, a final portfolio of work, or other appropriate assignment. Our final examination is scheduled for **Friday December 13th from 9:45am-12pm**. The exam will consist of multiple choice and short answer/essay questions covering the in-class material and assigned readings from the second half of class with major themes concepts and lessons from the first half also tested.

Succeeding in a Four-Unit Course

At SJSU, students are expected to spend two hours outside of class for every one hour of class time. Because this is a four-unit class, you can expect to spend a minimum of eight hours per week in addition to time spent in class and on scheduled tutorials or activities. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. In this class, one of the four units is an engagement unit, which consists of online quizzes and community-based assignments. You are expected to spend 45 hours this semester (both to prepare for and to complete the work) to successfully complete this unit. More details about student workload can be found in <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>

Grading Information:

Students' grades will be calculated using the following assignments (with corresponding points and percentages)

Assignment	Points	Percentage of total
Online Quizzes (6 @ 20 points each)	120	15.0%
Midterm Exam	200	25.0%
Final Exam	200	25.0%
Term Paper	160	20.0%
Class Participation	40	5.0%
State Politics Simulation	80	10.0%
Total	800	100%

Your final grade will be calculated by dividing your total points by 800. For example, consider the following: Total points = 720; so $720/800 = .90$ or 90%. Using the scale below, this individual would be assigned an A-. Final letter grades for the course will be assigned based on the following scale:

Course Letter Grades will be assigned using the following scale:

Grade	Percentage
A plus	98 to 100%
A	93 to 97%
A minus	90% to 92%
B plus	87% to 89%
B	83% to 86%
B minus	80% to 82%
C plus	77% to 79%
C	73% to 76%
C minus	70% to 72%
D plus	67% to 69%
D	63% to 66%
D minus	60% to 62%
F	59% or less

Make-Up/Late Policy

Make-up exams and assignments are only given in cases of excused absences in accordance with the university's policy on excused absences. Circumstances that may lead to an excused student absence are subpoenas, jury duty, military duty, religious observances, illness, illness of a dependent, and bereavement for immediate family. If you are seriously ill, you must notify me as soon as possible by email or on my office phone that you will be unable to complete an assignment on time. Except in cases of documented medical emergency, you **MUST** notify me **before** the scheduled assignment. Be certain you schedule all of our assignments right away. If you have a vacation or social obligation, considering taking this course during another session, as these types of events do not fall under the make-up policy. **Also, please do not schedule job interviews or other events on assignment days.** If you are a member of a SJSU varsity intercollegiate athletic team, please provide me with your team schedule during the first week of the class.

Term papers that are turned in late will be penalized a full letter grade for every 24 hours past the original due date. For example, a paper turned in 10 minutes past the scheduled time it was due will be marked down 1 full letter grade. This same penalty will apply to a paper turned in up to 24 hours past the original due date. For every 24 hours after that, a paper will be penalized an additional letter grade and so on until the start value is an 'F'. Please be aware of this policy and be sure to get your term paper turned in on time. As noted above, students may take one missed or late quiz for half credit of whatever final score you earned. For example, if you score a 18/20 on your makeup quiz your grade will be reduced to a 9/20. Missed in-class critical thinking exercises cannot be made up under any circumstances. During the state politics simulation a missed class day that doesn't fall under the university policy on excused absences will be penalized 15 points per missed class.

Classroom Protocol

Proper Use of Technology

At times, we will be using our tablets, smartphones, and laptops to work on assignments and group projects in class. ***Aside from those times, your phones and computers (including tablets) need to be turned off and put away.*** In the classroom environment, texting, social networking, web searching—or any of the myriad things we all can do with our phones—hurts our ability to listen and communicate as effectively as possible. If you absolutely must use your phone, please leave the classroom. Students who violate this policy more than once will be asked to leave.

Email Communication

The easiest way to contact me is via email. Please be aware though that I check and respond to email once in the morning and once in the late afternoon before I leave campus. Please give me at least 24 hours to respond before sending me a follow up. If you need assistance on a particularly urgent matter you can also call my office phone or call the main political science department number (408-924-5552).

Intellectual Property

All instructor-provided materials (e.g., paper prompts, syllabus) remain my intellectual property. They are to be used for private, study purposes only, and cannot be shared publicly or uploaded without my explicit written approval, in advance.

Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](#), requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course and the following items to be included in the syllabus:

- “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.”

- It is suggested that the greensheet include the instructor’s process for granting permission, whether in writing or orally and whether for the whole semester or on a class by class basis.
- In classes where active participation of students or guests may be on the recording, permission of those students or guests should be obtained as well.
- “Course material developed by the instructor is the intellectual property of the instructor and cannot be shared publicly without his/her approval. **You may not publicly share or upload instructor generated material for this course such as exam questions, lecture notes, or homework solutions without instructor consent.**”

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs’ [Syllabus Information web page](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>”

Academic integrity

Your commitment, as a student, to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. The [University Academic Integrity Policy F15-7](#) requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. **Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development.** Visit the [Student Conduct and Ethical Development](#) website for more information.

SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services

The SJSU Counseling and Psychological Services is located on the corner of 7th Street and San Carlos in the new Student Wellness Center, Room 300B. Professional psychologists, social workers, and counselors are available to provide confidential consultations on issues of student mental health, campus climate or psychological and academic issues on an individual, couple, or group basis. To schedule an appointment or learn more information, visit [Counseling and Psychological Services website](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/counseling>

Political Science Department Writing Policy

Students of political science should develop the ability to write in clear, grammatical English. Spelling and grammar count! Students must take care that appropriate citations are used. Direct quotations must be so indicated with quotation marks. Ideas from others must also be referenced. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct, which carries with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/writeandcite>. The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers

workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center visit <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter/>

Additional Class Notes

This is a course that covers a lot of material in a short period of time. I expect every student in class to participate by asking questions and actively participating in group and class discussions. Although attendance in the class is not mandatory it is obviously difficult to participate if you do not attend class. You each have a lot to bring into the class and the course becomes much more rewarding if you frequently participate.

For most class days, I will post on Canvas a PDF copy of Power Point slides that provide brief headings, charts/graphs, and/or outlines of the day’s material. I’ll do my best to post these the evening before each class. Canvas will also be used to take quizzes, read the assigned online articles and academic papers, and when the time comes, check your performance on the graded assignments.

Finally, I am more than happy to help answer any questions you have about the course at any time during the semester. If my office hours don’t fit with your schedule please don’t hesitate to make an appointment with me outside of normal office hours. The best way to contact me to set up an appointment is via email. Of course, you can talk with me right before or right after class as well. This should be a fun and rewarding semester. Work hard and good luck!

Political Science 102: State Government and Politics (Fall 2019) Schedule*

**Schedule is subject to change with fair notice and will be announced via email and/or in-class announcement.*

Week	Date	Topic, Readings, Assignments, and Deadlines
1	8/22	Course Introduction and Overview <u>Readings</u> No Assigned Readings
2	8/27 8/29	Studying State Government: Why do States Matter? <u>Readings</u> Dye and MacManus chapter 1 <u>Readings</u> “18 of the Biggest Policies and Problems Legislatures Will Confront in 2019” (On Canvas)
3	9/3	Federalism <u>Readings</u> Dye and MacManus Chapter 2 <u>Readings</u>

	9/5	“State Politics vs. the Federal Government” (On Canvas) Assignment: Quiz #1 posted on Canvas: due 9/10 at 10:30am
4	9/10	Federalism Continued... <u>Readings</u> “Where the Death Penalty Still Lives” (On Canvas)
	9/12	<u>Readings</u> “How California Became Far More Energy-Efficient than the Rest of the Country (on Canvas)”
5	9/17	State Constitutions and Direct Democracy <u>Readings</u> Dye and MacManus Chapter 3
	9/19	<u>Readings</u> Read Preamble and Declaration of Rights in the U.S. Constitution; Declaration of Rights in California and Iowa Constitutions (on Canvas) Assignment: Quiz #2 posted on Canvas: due 9/24 10:30am
6	9/24	Political Participation <u>Readings</u> Dye and MacManus Chapter 4
	9/26	<u>Readings</u> “The Worse Voter Turnout in 72 Years” (On Canvas) “Behind the 2018 U.S. Midterm Election Turnout” (On Canvas) Assignment: Quiz #3 posted on Canvas: due 10/1 10:30am
7	10/1	Political Parties and Campaigns <u>Readings</u> Dye and MacManus Chapter 5
	10/3	<u>Readings</u> Guide to California Government Chapters 1-2
8	10/8	Catch-Up and Review <u>Readings</u> No assigned readings: review for midterm exam
	10/10	Midterm Exam

9	10/15	State Legislatures <u>Readings</u> Dye and MacManus Chapter 6
	10/17	<u>Readings</u> "State Government Trifectas" (On Canvas)
10	10/22	The Politics of State Legislatures <u>Readings</u> Guide to California Government, Chapter 4 "Polarization Interrupted? California's Experiment with the Top-Two Primary" (On Canvas)
	10/24	<u>Reading</u> "How Republicans are Trying to Strip Power from Democratic governors-elect" (On Canvas) Assignment Quiz #4 posted on Canvas due: 10/29 10:30am
11	10/29	Governors and Executives <u>Readings</u> Dye and MacManus Chapter 7
	10/31	<u>Readings</u> Thad Kousser and Justin Philips "The Roots of Executive Power" (On Canvas) Guide to California Government Chapter 5 Assignment: Quiz #5 posted on Canvas due: 11/5 10:30am
12	11/5	Public Policy in the States Case Study: Courts, Crime, and State Prisons <u>Reading</u> Dye and MacManus Chapter 9 "One in 100" (on Canvas)
	11/7	<u>Reading</u> Jeff Yates and Richard Fording "Punishment in Black and White" (On Canvas)
13	11/12	Public Policy in the States Case Study: Courts, Crime, and State Prisons <u>Reading</u> Guide to California Government Chapter 6
	11/14	<u>Reading</u> "Cruel and Unusual: A Guide to California's Broken Prisons and the Fight to Fix Them" (On Canvas) Assignment: Quiz #6 posted on Canvas due: 11/19 10:30am
		State Politics Simulation (in-class exercise)

14	11/19	<u>Reading</u> Review Relevant Readings in Course to Prepare for your Simulation Role
	11/21	Thanksgiving Break!
15	11/26	State Politics Simulation Continued. <u>Reading</u> No Assigned Reading
	11/28	<u>Reading</u> No Assigned Reading
16	12/3	State Politics Simulation Continued. <u>Reading</u> No Assigned Reading Assignment: Term Paper Due 12/3 11:59pm (on Canvas)
	12/5	<u>Reading</u> No Assigned Reading
16		Final Exam Friday December 13th 9:45-12pm