

**San José State University**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**POLS177/PSYC177: Political Psychology (4 units)**  
**Fall 2019**

**Instructor:** Dr. Melinda Jackson

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**Office Hours:** Tues/Thurs 10:30-11:30am and By Appointment

**Class Days/Time:** Tues/Thurs 9:00 – 10:15am

**Classroom:** DMH160

**Course Web Page:** CANVAS course page accessible for registered students at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>

**Prerequisites:** POLS1 or POLS15 (or other US2-3 course) and PSYC1, or instructor permission

## **Course description**

**From the course catalog:** Introduction to the interdisciplinary field of political psychology, with a focus on topics including personality and leadership, political cognition, social identity, emotions and attitudes, voting and political behavior, racism and ethnocentrism, ethnic conflict and genocide, nationalism, terrorism, and conflict resolution.

### **Additional course information:**

How do people think about political issues? What motivates political leaders? How much does personality matter in politics? How do emotions affect our political attitudes? Is racism inevitable? Why does genocide happen? Why do groups turn to terrorism? How can we strive for conflict resolution and reconciliation? If you are interested in exploring these questions – and their answers – then political psychology is for you!

Political psychology is an interdisciplinary field that applies theories and insights from psychology, sociology, communication studies, and other disciplines, to the study of politics. This course will provide an introduction to political psychology, with a focus on several topics including personality and leadership, cognition, social identity, emotions and attitudes, the political psychology of groups, voting, racism and ethnocentrism, ethnic conflict and genocide, nationalism, terrorism, international conflict, and conflict resolution.

## **Political Science Program Learning Outcomes**

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

### **PLO1: Breadth**

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

### **PLO2: 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.

### **PLO3: 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.

### **PLO4: 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 this course, students will be able to:

**CLO1.** Describe the major topics in the interdisciplinary field of political psychology.

**CLO2.** Apply psychological theories to the study of political phenomena in both U.S. and international contexts.

**CLO3.** Analyze a particular topic in political psychology based on exploration of the scholarly research literature.

## Required Texts

*Introduction to Political Psychology*, 3rd Edition (2015)

Martha L. Cottam, Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston & Beth Dietz

New York, NY: Psychology Press

ISBN 978-1848726727

Available for purchase in the Spartan Bookstore.

Additional readings will be available through the course CANVAS website.

## CANVAS Course Page

Course materials such as syllabus, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System (login at <http://sjsu.instructure.com>). You are responsible for regularly checking with the Canvas messaging system to learn of any updates (also automatically forwards to your email – make sure your preferred email is listed on MySJSU at <http://my.sjsu.edu>).

## Other technology requirements / equipment

You will need reliable access to the internet to complete readings, upload assignments, and access syllabus, announcements, and course updates on Canvas. Computer access is available in the campus library and in Clark Hall 102, and laptops may be checked out at no cost from Student Computing Services (<https://library.sjsu.edu/scs>).

## Library Liaison

The library liaison for Political Science is available to answer questions and provide one-on-one help learning using the library for research. His name and contact info is:

Paul Kauppila , University Librarian (Political Science)

(408) 808-2042

[Paul.Kauppila@sjsu.edu](mailto:Paul.Kauppila@sjsu.edu)

The Political Science subject guide is also a useful resource for finding library sources relevant to this class: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/politicalscience>

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS**

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 3 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities. Because this is a **four-unit course**, you can expect to spend a minimum of 9 hours per week, in addition to the time spent in class, on readings, assignments, and other course activities. Careful time management will help you keep up with readings and assignments and enable you to be successful in all of your courses. More details about student workload can be found in University Policy S12-3 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

### **1. Quizzes**

There will be a total of 12 online quizzes completed on CANVAS, worth 10 points each. Quizzes will include fact-based questions designed to assess your understanding of the assigned readings and class lectures (CLO1). Your lowest two quiz grades will be dropped, for a total of 100 points (20% of your total grade).

### **2. Online Discussion Boards**

Each week you will post one comment on the course readings on an online discussion board on Canvas (before class on Tuesday), and respond to one other student's comment (by Sunday evening) (CLOs 1-2). Discussion board participation is worth 5 points per week for 12 weeks, for a total of 60 points (12% of your total grade).

### **3. Homework Assignments**

There will be a total of 4 homework assignments designed to assess your understanding of political psychology applications (CLO2), worth 10 points each. Detailed instructions for these assignments will be given in class and posted on the course website. Homework will make up 8% of your total grade.

### **4. Exams**

There will be two exams in this class designed to assess your understanding of political psychology topics and applications (CLO1, CLO2), worth 50 points each. Generally speaking, each exam will cover the material learned in the most recent section of the course. Each exam will make up 10% of your total grade.

### **5. Final Paper**

There will be a final 10 page paper in this class, due at the final exam period, worth 125 points. This paper will allow you to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of a particular topic in political psychology based on an exploration of the scholarly research literature (CLO3). The final paper is worth 25% of your grade.

## 5. Class Participation

Participation – meaning coming to class and engaging in class discussion and activities – will also count for 15% of your total grade. So that you have plenty of opportunities to participate, expect to be “mobilized” (i.e., called on by name) in class.

*NOTE: This course will address a range of political topics that people will have different opinions about. The purpose of the course is to allow you to develop your knowledge of political psychology and to explore the ways in which this relates to current issues, while further developing your written and oral communication skills. With this in mind, please keep your comments both in class and online civil and respectful toward others. Tolerance for different viewpoints is a hallmark of democracy. If you disagree with a comment you see on the online discussion board, or hear in our class discussions, find a way to express your own view in a thoughtful and respectful manner. It is perfectly fine to disagree with someone's opinion, but it is not OK to attack that person individually (e.g., name calling, belittling).*

## GRADING POLICY

Your grade will be calculated as follows. You may keep track of your grade in the class on the CANVAS course website.

	Points	Percentage of total
Quizzes (12 @ 10 points each, lowest dropped)	100	20%
Online Discussion Boards (12 @ 5 points each)	60	12%
Homework (4 @ 10 points each)	40	8%
Exam 1	50	10%
Exam 2	50	10%
Final Paper	125	25%
Class Participation	75	15%
Total	350	100%

Final letter grades for the course will be assigned based on the following scale:

<i>A plus</i>	<i>over 100 percent</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>92 to 100 percent</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 91.9 percent</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>88 to 89.9 percent</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>82 to 87.9 percent</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 81.9 percent</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>78 to 79.9 percent</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>72 to 77.9 percent</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 71.9 percent</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>68 to 69.9 percent</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>62 to 67.9 percent</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 61.9 percent</i>
<i>F</i>	<i>less than 60 percent</i>

## Academic Integrity

Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy 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. The policy on academic integrity can be found at: <http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf>. The website for the Office of [Student Conduct and Ethical Development](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html) is: [http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial\\_affairs/index.html](http://www.sa.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html)

Instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating on exams or plagiarism (presenting the work of another as your own, or the use of another person's ideas without giving proper credit) will result in a failing grade and sanctions by the University. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include in your assignment any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Policy F06-1 requires approval of instructors.

## Classroom Policies and Protocol

Late papers or assignments will be penalized with lower grades.

No late papers will be accepted after the final exam period.

Missed quizzes and exams may not be made up unless students are excused in advance.

Medical and family emergencies must be documented.

LATE ARRIVALS, EARLY DEPARTURES AND DISRUPTIONS OF CLASS IN ANY FORM ARE UNACCEPTABLE. CELL PHONES AND OTHER ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT SHOULD BE TURNED OFF AT ALL TIMES IN THE CLASSROOM.

## Consent for Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material

[University Policy S12-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf), <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-7.pdf>, requires students to obtain instructor's permission to record the course.

- "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."
- Please contact Dr. Jackson in person or by email to request permission *in advance* to make audio or video recordings in this class. 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, 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](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/> Make sure to review these policies and resources.

## **Other Useful Information**

### **SJSU Counseling 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>

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The San José State University Writing Center offers a variety of resources to help students become better writers, and all of our services are free for SJSU students. Our mission is to enhance the writing skills of SJSU students so they can communicate clearly in any setting (informal, academic, or professional). We accomplish this goal through creating original writing resources, offering workshops, and conducting one-on-one and small-group tutoring sessions.

The SJSU Writing Center has two locations: We conduct drop-in tutoring sessions in Clark Hall, Suite 126; we conduct scheduled appointments on the second floor of the MLK Library. All our writing tutors 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 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 the [Writing Center website](#) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.