

San Jose State University

Political Science Department, Spring 2019

Pols 15, Essentials of U.S. and California Government

Section 03, MW 10:30-11:45 a.m.

Contact Information

Instructor:	Larry Sokoloff
Office Location:	Dwight Bentel Hall Room 135. DBH is across from Clark Hall
Telephone:	(408) 924-3243 (I prefer communication by email, and do not always check this voicemail) Cell: (650)520-8006
Email:	Larry.Sokoloff@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	I am on campus Monday through Thursday. Office hours are Tuesday 1 to 1:30 p.m. and 2:45 to 3:15 p.m., and Wed. from 1:45 to 2:45 p.m. We can also meet by appointment. Call my cell number during office hours if you don't see me.
Class Days/Time:	Mon.-Wed. 10:30-11:45 a.m.
Classroom:	WSQ 207
Grading:	Normal Grading Rules
GE:	Satisfies American institutions requirements in American and California government

Faculty Web Page

Course materials such as this syllabus, can be found on my canvas page. You are responsible for regularly checking with your Canvas email to learn any class updates. This syllabus will be found on Canvas. Students are responsible for reading any Canvas notifications about updates to the class schedule or assignments.

Catalog Description

“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: Social Issues(D3), GE Area: D3, and American Institution requirement: US2 and US3.”

Course Format

This class meets in person twice a week. You can learn more about class assignments by coming to class, checking your email, and via Canvas. If you miss a class, be in touch with another student to find out what you missed.

Course Description

Every American and resident of this country should understand how the government works, or doesn't work. The United States is a federal democratic republic, and California has extended democracy further through the referendum and initiative process. There are many layers of government, from the federal system to small local water districts. In this course we will discuss the organization of the United States government, the roles of different roles of government, and how we and others can impact that government. We will also discuss the constitutional basis of our government.

The issues of living in a diverse society are part of this class, and are discussed frequently. We learn from each other, and the expression of opposing viewpoints courteously can be expected all semester, especially as we discuss current controversial events.

Course Expectations

Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hour over the length of the course (normally three hours per unit per week, or nine hours, with three of the hours used for lecture in a three-unit course) for instruction or preparation/studying of course-related activities. That is including, but not limited to small group consultations, meeting attendance, or other practical applications of student learning as described in the syllabus. More details about student workloads can be found in University Policy S12-3 at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S12-3.pdf>.

The tentative course calendar is included at the end of this syllabus, including assignment due dates, dates of student presentations, and expected topics for each class. This is to show you the number and kind of activities that this course will include. Some of this may change during the semester, and except for situations like pop quizzes, students will be notified in advance of any changes.

Methods:

The class will be a combination of reading, writing, personal research, lecture and discussion. Students may be called up by name to address concepts from the readings. Students should read the materials when they are assigned, and be prepared to actively participate in discussion. Regular attendance is expected.

Learning Objectives

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 perspectives, 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.”

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. Assessed by questions on final exam, questions on in-class quizzes, paper on city council visit.
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. Assessed by multiple-choice questions on the final exam, and the questions on in-class quizzes.
3. GELO 3 (D3): Place contemporary developments in cultural, historical, environmental, and spatial contexts. Assessed by paper on visit to art installation and quizzes.
4. GELO 4 (D3): Identify the dynamics of ethnic, cultural, gender/sexual, age-based, class, regional, national, transnational, and global identities and the similarities, differences, linkages, and interactions between them. Assessed by the art installation paper and court paper.
5. GELO 5 (D3): Evaluate social science information, draw on different points of view, and formulate applications appropriate to contemporary social issues. Assessed by library research component of class papers.
6. GELO 6 (D3): Apply multidisciplinary material to a topic relevant to policy and social action at the local, national, and/or international levels. Assessed by paper on art installation and city council meeting.

Required Texts/Readings

California Politics A Primer, by Renee Van Vechten

Global Lyceum American Government, A Digital Site

To access Globalyceum

Engaged citizens and residents also need to stay on top of current events and trends. You should follow the news—in print, broadcast and online. This should involve reading a newspaper or website every day, such as the San Jose Mercury News, the Wall Street Journal or the New York Times. The WSJ has student rates. Being aware of the news will help you do well in this class and understand current politics. Don't be surprised if a pop quiz has a question on who the governor is or asks about a current political event. These are things you will know from following the news.

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 Informationweb page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>"

Dropping and Adding

Students are responsible for understanding the policies and procedures about add/drop, grade forgiveness, etc. Refer to the current semester's [Catalog Policies](http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html) section at <http://info.sjsu.edu/static/catalog/policies.html>. Add/drop deadlines can be found on the current academic year calendars document on the [Academic Calendars webpage](http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/) at http://www.sjsu.edu/provost/services/academic_calendars/. The [Late Drop Policy](http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aars/policies/latedrops/policy/>. Students should be aware of the current deadlines and penalties for dropping classes.

Information about the latest changes and news is available at the [Advising Hub](http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/advising/>.

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.”
- “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.”

Always request permission from any guest speakers to record their remarks. You should also alert the professor if you are recording his class at the beginning of the semester so he doesn't mistake your recording device for a cellphone.

Academic integrity

Your commitment as a student to learning is evidenced by your enrollment at San Jose State University. [The University Academic Integrity Policy S07-2](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S07-2.pdf> 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 [Student Conduct and Ethical Development website](http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/) is available at <http://www.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/>.

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. Don't use Wikipedia—it's unreliable, and not evidence of thorough research. For this class, all assignments are to be completed by the individual student unless otherwise specified. If you would like to include your assignment or any material you have submitted, or plan to submit for another class, please note that SJSU's Academic Integrity Policy S07-2 requires approval of instructors.

I take plagiarism very seriously, and have flunked students for submitting plagiarized papers.

Campus Policy in Compliance with the American Disabilities Act

If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you need to make special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible, or see me during office hours. [Presidential Directive 97-03](http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf) at http://www.sjsu.edu/president/docs/directives/PD_1997-03.pdf requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with the [Accessible Education Center](http://www.sjsu.edu/aec) (AEC) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/aec> to establish a record of their disability.

Accommodation to Students' Religious Holidays

San José State University shall provide accommodation on any graded class work or activities for students wishing to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor, in writing, about such holidays before the add deadline at the start of each semester. If such holidays occur before the add deadline, the student must notify the instructor, in writing, at least three days before the date that he/she will be absent. It is the responsibility of the instructor to make every reasonable effort to honor the student request without penalty, and of the student to make up the work missed. See [University Policy S14-7](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S14-7.pdf>.

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Room 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and 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 center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or learn more, visit their website at <http://www.sjsu.edu.writingcenter>.

Library Liaison

Paul Kauppila

Paul.kauppila@sjsu.edu(408)808-2042

You may want to check out the Library's political science guide. It includes links to helpful databases and resources.

Hang onto your work

Back up and save your work. Email yourself a copy of your paper, both as an attachment and within the text of an email. Then if your printer, computer or any other tech device crashes, you can go to a commercial copy center, such as Fedex/Kinko's, to print out your assignment. You can also print it out at the campus computer center.

Course Requirements and Assignments

I expect your writing to be high quality. We will rely on APA style for some of our papers.

Errors will significantly reduce your grades. The best way to make sure your writing is high quality is to read it aloud before turning it in, or to have another person review it. I usually stop grading a paper and give it a lower grade after three or more errors.

All assignments must be typed and double-spaced. A double-spaced page has 23 to 24 lines on each page and no more than 1 1/4 inch margins on each side. Each page that doesn't comply will be marked down. Handwritten papers are not accepted unless it is an in-class assignment.

Assignments are due at the start of class, and will be marked down a grade if late that day. Please refer to the enclosed class schedule for all assignment due dates.

Missing Quizzes, Midterm and Final

I do not allow make-up of quizzes, which are given to ensure that you are ready for that day's class. There are no early exams, midterms or finals. Do not make travel plans that cause you to miss the midterm or final unless you are willing to get an F on either one. The only time I allow make-up finals or midterms is when you have a doctor's note for a dire illness, a death in your immediate family, or if you are a university athlete who is away for a sporting event.

There are in-class assignments given to be done in class that day. I do not allow make-ups for missing those assignments.

Classroom Protocol (Electronics) and Attendance

YOU MAY NOT USE YOUR CELL PHONE IN CLASS, EXCEPT FOR ACTIVITY QUIZ POLLS. If you need to have it on for family reasons, please turn it on to vibrate and leave it out of sight. If you must make an emergency text, feel free to step out of class. All other texting needs to take place before or after class. Laptops, tablets and other such technology is not allowed in class except on designated dates, such as when you are doing a presentation. If you are given an exception to use your laptop to take notes, please sit in the front row of the class.

Please don't leave any trash behind when leaving class.

I usually have strict attendance policies. Based on how it goes in the first two weeks, I may emphasize them if there are problems. I request that students arrive in the first ten minutes of class. You can be 15 minutes late to the midterm and final.

NOTE that University policy F69-24, “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.”

Assignments are due at the start of class on the due date. LATE ASSIGNMENTS RECEIVE NO CREDIT. If you can't be here to turn something in, give it to a classmate. I have a mailbox in Clark Hall 471, where the Poli Sci office is located. If the assignment is in my mailbox before I go to class, it is turned in on time. If the assignment shows up during or after class time, it's considered late. You can always turn in assignments to my mailbox early.

Parking at SJSU is difficult, so give yourself plenty of time to park and to arrive on time. Driving safely should be your highest priority.

All writing assignments submitted for this class must be original work, written for you for this class (see Academic Dishonesty section in this syllabus). Double space all “hard copy” papers unless otherwise instructed. Use a normal serif font, such as 12-point Times New Roman. Anything you type that is hard to read will be graded down, so use common sense here—no red type, for example.

You are responsible for all material covered during class, whether you attend or not. If you are absent, it is your responsibility to get notes and assignment info from a classmate. Specifics of assignments are discussed in class, not via email.

Check your email, and Canvas regularly. I sometimes change assignments by email or on Canvas.

If you are unable to attend class on a day when a hard-copy assignment is due, please submit it early or send it with a trusted classmate.

Please advise the instructor of any extenuating circumstances that will affect your class performance early in the semester. On my first day questionnaire, I give you a chance to

Grading Philosophy

This course has a similar workload to most GE classes at SJSU. The reading is approximately a book. The writing is a bit less than the GE requirement. Three of those writing assignments will involve visits in the downtown area, which will use several of our class days. The quizzes are about 45 percent of the grade with (1) weekly reading quizzes, (2) many in-class quiz polls, and (3) a final comprehensive exam of my lectures. And there is one extra-credit assignment for Earth Day. My grading rewards those who are persistent, attend class and participate. Here is the course by the numbers.

- Reading = 75,000 words (about a book)
 - Globalyceum readings = 60,000 words
 - California readings = 10,000 words
 - Globalyceum Activities = 5,000 words
- Writing = 1,300 words (a bit less than the SJSU GE requirement)
 - 3 Writing Assignments = 1,300 words
- Quizzes = 450 points
 - 10 reading quizzes (20 points each)
 - One Constitution quiz (20 points)
 - 10 in-class activity quiz polls (5 points each)
 - One final multiple choice exam on lectures (180 points)

Grading

Reading quizzes (10 @ 20 points each)	200 points
Constitution quiz	20 points
Activity quiz polls (10 @ 5 points each)	50 points
Paper on art installations visit (300 words)	150 points
Paper on city council visit (500 words)	200 points
Paper on court visit (500 words)	200 points
Final exam (based on my lectures and reading)	150 points
Participation	30 points
Total	1000 points

Extra Credit Assignments

- A=1000-900 points
- B=899-800
- C=799-700
- D=699-501
- F=500 or below is an F

Note: Plus and minus grades are reserved for the top 20 points and the bottom 20 points of the grade range. For example, a score of 815 would be a B-.

Course Schedule

(GL=Globalyceum (Digital Site) and RVV=Renee Van Vechten (California Reader))

Week	Date	Lecture Topics and Readings	Quizzes and Assignments
1	1/28	Introductions and Class Orientation GL Overview of American Government	
	1/30	The Constitution GL Document: The US Constitution	Constitution Quiz: Due Sunday, 2/3, 11:55 PM
2	2/4	Federalism GL Introduction: The Foundations of Government GL Reading: Federalism	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: Federalism 10

	2/6	The Foundations of Government GL Reading: The Authority of the Constitution GL Reading: The Separation of Powers	Reading Quiz 1: Due Sunday, 2/10, 11:55 PM
3	2/11	Civil Liberties GL Introduction: Federalism, Civil Liberties and Civil Rights GL Reading: Civil Liberties	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: Voter ID Laws
	2/13	Civil Rights GL Reading: Civil Rights	Reading Quiz 2: Due Sunday, 2/17, 11:55 PM:
4	2/18	Library presentation in class by Paul K.	
	2/20	Art Installations Visit and Paper	
5	2/25	The California Legislature RVV Reading: The California Legislature, Chapter 3	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: The Gender Gap in Voting
	2/27	The US Congress GL Introduction: The US Congress GL Reading: Congress and Representation GL Reading: Congress and the Legislative Process	Reading Quiz 3: Due Sunday, 3/3, 11:55 PM
6	3/4	The California Executive Branch and California Local Government RVV Reading: The California Executive Branch, Chapter 5 RVV Reading: California Local Government, Chapter 7	<i>In Class Activity Quiz Poll on Monday, 3/4</i> Art Installation Paper: Due Monday, 3/4 @ 10:30 PM
	3/6	San Jose City Council Meeting Visit See Instructions Below for the City Council Visit	<i>@Home Quiz: Sunday, 3/10, 11:55 PM: Reading Quiz 4</i>
7	3/11	The California Courts RVV Reading: Introduction to Local and State Level Courts, Chapter 6 RVV Reading: California Courts, Chapter 6	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: Original and Evolving Meaning in the US Constitution
	3/13	The Federal Courts GL Introduction: The US Supreme Court and Judiciary GL Reading: Selecting Judges GL Reading: The US Supreme Court and Its Decision-Making	Reading Quiz 5: Due Sunday, 3/17, 11:55 PM:
8	3/18	The Presidency and Domestic Affairs	In Class Activity

		GL Introduction: The US President GL Reading: Presidents and Unilateral Powers over Domestic Policy	Quiz Poll: Impeachment: Nixon and Clinton
	3/20	The Presidency and Congress GL Reading: Presidents and Their Interaction with Congress	Reading Quiz 6: Due Sunday, 3/24 @ 11:55 PM:
9	3/25	The Trump Presidency GL Reading: The Challenges of the Trump Presidency	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: The Presidents' Use of Media
	3/27	The Presidency and Foreign Affairs GL Reading: The Presidency and War Documentary: The Obama Administration and Foreign Policy	Reading Quiz 7: Due Sunday, 3/31 @ 11:55 PM
10	4/1-4/7	Spring Break – No Class	No Quiz
11	4/8	Federal Elections GL Reading: Elections in America GL Reading: How Voters Decide	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: Voter Participation
	4/10	California Elections RVV Reading: California's Direct Democracy	Reading Quiz 8: Due Sunday, 4/14 @ 11:55 PM
12	4/15	Interest Groups and Political Parties GL Introduction: Social Movements, Interest Groups and Political Parties GL Reading: Groups and the Democratic Exercise of Power GL Reading: Political Parties	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: Citizens United
	4/17	Presentations on Environmental Issues for Earth Day See Instructions Below on Presentations on Environmental Issues for Earth Day	Reading Quiz 9: Due Sunday, 4/21 @ 11:55 PM:
13	4/22	Political Socialization GL Introduction: Political Culture and Elections GL Reading: Political Socialization and Values	In Class Activity Quiz Poll: The Big Sort
	4/24	Political Polling GL Reading: Understanding Public Opinion	Reading Quiz 10: Due Sunday, 4/28, 11:55 PM:
14	4/29	Class Visit to Court See Instructions Below on Court Visit	No Class or Quiz
	5/1	See Instructions Below on Court Visit	No Class or Quiz
15	5/6	In-Class Half-Day Discussion of Court Visits Students A-M should arrive at 10:30 AM Students N-Z should arrive at 11:15 AM	No Quiz

	5/8	Domestic Policy Guest Speaker: Domestic Policy	No Quiz
16	5/13	Review and Preparation for Final	Court Paper Due: Monday, 5/12 @ 10:30 a.m.
	5/15	In-class Final, Wednesday @ 9:45	

Instructions

Reading Quizzes and Constitution Quiz

These quizzes are on the Globalyceum site. Taking these quizzes is a very simple process of accessing the quiz on Globalyceum and completing it by the assigned day, usually Sunday at 11:55 PM. Consult the Testing Instructions on Globalyceum under **Students: Start Here!** if you have any confusion.

In-Class Activity Quiz Polls

There are 10 activities using primary sources and data concerning American government and politics today. You need to read the Background and the Source before Monday's class. I will then conduct an in-class quiz poll that goes with the assignment and follow it with a brief discussion.

Art Installations Paper

Instead of meeting class at SJSU on February 20, the class will meet me in the Japanese Internment Memorial in downtown San Jose at 280 S. First Street. Please note that you attend either the first or the second sessions. I will give you some background as to the events of Japanese internment and the reason for the memorial. You will then write a paper of one page, double spaced, 23 lines. It is to be submitted in person. Take note of the instructions on the site for writing a response paper. The due date and time is Monday, March 4 @ 10:30. If you are unable to submit digitally, bring a backup paper copy to class.

City Council Paper

Instead of meeting class on March 6, you will attend a city council meeting either that day of class, or sometime before or after the class day on your own time. You will then write a 500-word paper. Take note of the instructions on the site for writing a response paper.

Court Trial Paper

Instead of meeting class this week at SJSU, we will meet at the San Jose Court House at St. James Square **at 191 N. First Street.** Students A-L will meet me at 10:30 a.m. on Monday, May 6 and N-Z will meet at 11:15 a.m. There are two nearby courthouses, so I will give you more specific details so that we don't overwhelm the courthouse security personnel. You will then write a paper of 500 words to describe what you see. Take note of the instructions for writing a response paper that are included in the digital assignment.

Extra Credit: Environmental Issues for Earth Day

I don't usually give out extra credit. The only exception will be if there is a speaker on or near campus that I would like you to hear. In that case, I may encourage participation by asking you to write a paper about your experience. It will be worth no more than 50 points. For Earth Day, which is April 21, I may offer extra credit to a few students who want to present on environmental topics during the lead up to that day. More details offered in March. This will be instead of another extra credit assignment, not in addition to.

Participation

This is for short, in-class exercises and activities. It is worth 30 points of your grade.

Final Exam

The comprehensive final exam is based solely on your lecture notes. It has 50 multiple choice questions, each worth 3 points for a total of 150 points. I will pass out a study guide for the final exam several weeks before finals and I will review it in class on the last day of class. You must attend the final exam personally at the appointed time.

Grading for the Three Papers

The more specific instructions for writing these response papers are on Globalyceum. The grading rubric for these written assignments is below:

Grading Rubric

Criteria for Grading	Percentage of Grade
Answer specific questions as provided on assignment sheet	35
The paper is written to length	15
The student provides evidence or observations from the visit in support of the assertions.	35
The paper is well written, has complete sentences and is technically clean.	15
Total	100

Communicating with Professor

I have to be at a meeting every Wed. immediately after class, and will not have time to talk to you after class on that day. Thank you for understanding.

Due to the size of the class, please understand if I don't respond to your email immediately. I expect to have a student assistant soon, and that will be another conduit for communication. You are also welcome to visit me in office hours.