

San José State University
Department of Political Science
Women and Politics
POLS 109, Section 1, SJSU Catalog Code 48047
Fall 2020

Instructor: Donna Crane
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Office hours: Mondays 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. or by appointment
Class days/time: Tuesday/Thursday 12 to 1:15 p.m.

“The truth will set you free, but first, it will piss you off.” ~ Gloria Steinem

“The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don’t have any.” ~ Alice Walker

“Hair matters.” ~Hillary Clinton

Course Format:

The class will meet at its regularly scheduled times on Zoom. We will have a combination of lecture, active discussion and debate, student presentations, group activities, writing, and reading/watching/listening assignments. Students are expected to have completed the class-preparation assignments *in advance* of class meetings.

Course Description:

“Examines social movement strategies and theories of gender and power employed by differently situated women. Includes critical examination of the relationship between sex and gender, and intersections of race, class, gender, law and nation.”

In this course we will learn about women as voters, policymakers, candidates, political donors, and political activists. We will study women and key events in U.S. politics and explore major contemporary policy issues that affect women. We will also dissect the dynamics of power in politics and learn about the ways in which gender influences policy and elections in America today.

Political Science Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

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

PSPLO 1: Breadth: Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.

PSPLO 2: 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.

PSPLO 3: 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.

PSPLO 4: 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 Objectives (CLOs):

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

CLO 1: Describe the ways in which women participate in the U.S. political system - as voters, donors, policymakers, and activists - and in which women seek (and obtain or are denied) political power.

CLO 2: Analyze major public-policy issues that significantly affect women in America.

CLO 3: Critically evaluate the interplay between gender, race, and class in U.S. government and politics.

CLO 4: Describe the history of women's participation in U.S. politics through major historical events and influential individuals.

CLO 5: Write and make oral presentations at the upper-division level about women, power, and politics.

Students' achievement of these learning outcomes will be assessed as follows:

Mapping POLS 109 Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) to Political Science Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)	Program Learning Outcomes	Assessment
CLO 1: Describe the ways in which women participate in the U.S. political system - as voters, donors, policymakers, and activists - and in which women seek (and obtain or are denied) political power.	PLO 1, 4	Midterm and final exams, execution of panel discussion, completion of multiple written (homework) assignments
CLO 2: Analyze major public-policy issues that significantly affect women in America.	PLO 2, 3	Midterm and final exams, execution of group issue briefing
CLO 3: Critically evaluate the interplay between gender, race, and class in U.S. government and politics.	PLO 2	Midterm and final exams, completion of multiple written (homework) assignments
CLO 4: Describe the history of women's participation in U.S. politics through major historical events and influential individuals.	PLO 2	Midterm and final exams, execution of panel discussion, and completion of multiple written (homework) assignments
CLO 5: Write and make oral presentations at the upper-division level about women, power, and politics.	PLO 3	Midterm and final exams, execution of group issue briefing and panel discussion, and completion of multiple written (homework) assignments

Required Textbook:

Please purchase the following, which should be available from the SJSU bookstore:

- *Women, Men & US Politics: 10 Big Questions* (First Edition), Jennifer Lawless and Richard Fox

Other readings and listening/watching assignments are required throughout the course; links are below and also will be provided via Canvas.

Library Liaison:

The library liaison for Political Science is available to answer questions and provide one-on-one help learning using the library's online resources for research:

Paul Kauppila
University Librarian (Political Science Liaison)
408.808.2042
Paul.Kauppila@sjsu.edu

The [Political Science subject guide](#) is also a useful resource for finding library sources relevant to this class.

Course Requirements and Assignments/Succeeding in a Four-Unit Course:

At SJSU, students are expected to spend two hours outside of class for every hour of class time. Because this is a four-unit course, you can expect to spend a minimum of eight hours per week on this course, in addition to time spent in class. The reading/watching/listening assignments and workload for this course reflect this expectation. More information about SJSU student workload can be found [here](#).

Here are the main requirements for this course:

Required Reading/Watching/Listening:

Reading/watching/listening assignments listed in the course schedule below are required. Please complete them *before* the week noted, as we will be discussing this material in class on those dates. In order to stay current with news events, additional (usually brief) reading/watching/listening assignments may be announced in class and on Canvas.

Panel Discussion:

Midway through the semester, we will hold three panel discussions about noteworthy women in U.S. politics. In advance, each student will be randomly assigned the name of an influential woman in politics; students will need to learn about their assigned individuals and, on the scheduled date, participate in a panel discussion moderated by me with the class as our audience. More details will be provided when assignments are given. Maximum points possible: 100.

Group Issue Briefing:

About two-thirds of the way through the semester, we will hold four issue briefings on public-policy topics that significantly affect women. At the beginning of the semester, each student will draw a topic, effectively dividing the class randomly into four groups. The assignment is for each of the four groups to provide an organized issue briefing to the class on the scheduled date. Half of the grade will be earned by the group as a whole; half will be awarded based on individual performance. More details will be provided when assignments are given. Maximum points possible: 100.

Homework Assignments:

Over the course of the semester, I will give an estimated 6-8 homework assignments, to be announced in class and on Canvas. These will vary in format, topic, point values, and deadlines (from three days to a week or so). Homework assignments will give you the opportunity to work with the material we discuss in class and to develop and hone your analytical, political, and writing skills. Maximum points possible: 100.

Class Preparation & Participation:

Throughout the course, I will post in-class pop questions and discussion boards on Canvas that are based on class-preparation activities and key points of previous class lectures/discussion. The questions are intended to encourage students to keep current with the reading and participate actively in class discussions, which are critical to success in the course. Point values will vary but will be low-stakes - and I will offer more opportunities than the maximum points possible so an occasional class (or question) can be missed over the course of the semester without penalty. Maximum points possible: 100.

Midterm Exam:

The midterm exam, to be administered on Canvas, will test students on the material covered in the first half of the course. On the honor system, no notes or outside resources are allowed. Maximum points possible: 100.

Final Exam:

Here is SJSU's policy on [final exams](#). Our final exam will take place on Thursday, December 10 from 9:45 a.m. to noon. The final exam, to be administered on Canvas, will test students on the

material covered in the second half of the course. On the honor system, no notes or outside resources are allowed. Maximum points possible: 100.

Grading Information:

Following are the course assignments, with associated point values. See below for further detail about each item:

Assignment	Point value
Panel discussion	100
Group issue briefing	100
Homework assignments	100
Class preparation & participation	100
Midterm	100
Final exam	100
Total	600

Determination of Grades:

Grades will be assigned as follows:

A plus	97 to 100 percent	579 to 600 points
A	92 to 96 percent	549 to 578 points
A minus	90 to 91 percent	537 to 548 points
B plus	87 to 90 percent	519 to 536 points
B	82 to 86 percent	489 to 518 points
B minus	80 to 81 percent	477 to 488 points
C plus	77 to 80 percent	459 to 476 points
C	72 to 76 percent	429 to 458 points

C minus	70 to 71 percent	417 to 428 points
D plus	67 to 70 percent	399 to 416 points
D	62 to 66 percent	369 to 398 points
D minus	60 to 61 percent	357 to 368 points

Late Work and Make-Up Policies:

In an effort to be fair to all students, late work and exam absences will be handled as follows:

- In order for *panel discussions* and *group issue briefings* to work, all participants need to be present. Therefore, a student's absence from class on the date of his/her assigned panel discussion or group issue briefing cannot be made up and will incur a deduction of at least 50 points (half the assignment's total value). For this reason, please check the dates of your assigned panel discussion and group issue briefing as soon as you receive them, and alert me immediately if you anticipate a scheduling problem. The only excuse for missing a panel discussion or group issue briefing is a documented medical emergency.
- *Homework assignments* are due on the dates and times announced. A late assignment will be deducted points in accordance with the assignment's value (which will vary).
- *Class preparation & participation* points cannot be made up or turned in late. As noted above, I will offer more than 100 points possible so an occasional absence or low score can be excused without harm to your grade.
- *Exams*: Students with a compelling reason requiring their absence on the date of the midterm or final exam must discuss this with me in advance and have the absence pre-approved - in which case we will agree on an alternate test date. Reasons that would merit a pre-approved absence are: a serious medical condition, religious holiday, pre-approved university-sanctioned event or activity, military orders, or family emergency. The only excuse for missing an exam without pre-approval is a documented medical emergency. With only these exceptions, a missed exam cannot be made up and will result in zero points. Therefore, please plan accordingly.

Questions, concerns, or have a situation not addressed above? Please ask!

Classroom Protocol:

Although Zoom attendance per se cannot be a grading factor, students who prioritize attendance in this course will be at an advantage, because material covered in class will subsequently be tested in exams. Moreover, as noted above, I will post pop questions and discussion boards on Canvas - often during class time - in order to encourage students to stay current in the course reading and lectures/discussion, so those not present will be unlikely to earn those points.

I do not share my classroom slides but I will post a study guide for each main topic we discuss in class on Canvas. Students report that these are valuable study tools for exam prep and I hope you will agree.

Recording of Class and Public Sharing of Instructor Material:

Recording in this class is allowed only with my written permission, and will be granted only on a class-by-class basis if the student justifies the need to record the lectures. Students must obtain a written permission of any guest speaker and every class member in order to record presentations or class discussions. "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."

Political Science Departmental 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 and a specific reference to the page in the source from which it was taken. Failure to cite your sources constitutes academic misconduct, which carries serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website [here](#). For assistance with writing, please see me or contact the [Writing Center](#).

University Policies:

As a reminder, SJSU has policies on [many important topics](#) including [attendance](#) and [academic integrity](#). If you have questions about any of this material, please ask.

Course Schedule:

Dates	Discussion topics	Reading/watching/listening assignments (please complete <i>before</i> the
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		scheduled class dates)
August 20	Introduction to the course	Read the syllabus.
August 25, 27	Women, feminism, and public opinion Women and political power (day 1)	Read Lawless & Fox, chapter 1. Read this .
September 1, 3	Women and political power (day 2) Four turning points for women in U.S. politics: 1. Colonial America	Read chapters 2, 7. Watch hours one and two of the new documentary, The Vote .
September 8, 10	Four turning points for women in U.S. politics: 2. Suffrage 3. Modern women's movement	Watch hours three and four of The Vote . Read this and this .
September 15, 17	Four turning points for women in U.S. politics: 4. Clarence Thomas nomination Intersections: Gender, race, and class	Listen to this (can stop at minute 18:42). Watch this and this . Read chapter 7, <i>Women, Race & Class</i> (to be provided via Canvas) Watch this (stop at minute 12:08). Listen to this . Read this and this .
September 22, 24	Panel discussions: Noteworthy women in U.S. politics: 1. Women at the table 2. Women pushing from outside	Read chapter 1, <i>Sisters in Law</i> , (to be provided via Canvas). Read this and this . Read this and this .
September 29	Panel discussion: Noteworthy women in U.S. politics:	Read this and this .

October 1	3. Women with informal power Women as voters/donors	Read chapters 5, 6.
October 6, 8	Women as candidates Midterm prep	Read chapters 3, 4.
October 13, 15	OCTOBER 13: MIDTERM Women and political parties	Skim the Democratic party platform , with special attention to sections on women's rights (page 17), reproductive rights (page 33), violence against women (page 34), gun violence (page 35), women and girls and LGBT persons (page 41). Skim the Republican party platform , with special attention to sections on the Second Amendment (pages 12-13), protecting human life (pages 13-14), marriage, family, and society (pages 31-32), Title IX (page 35), conscience in health care (page 37).
October 20, 22	Women and the politics of law and order Conservative women in politics	Read this . Read chapter 4, <i>Divided We Stand</i> (to be provided on Canvas). Read this .
October 27, 29	Group issue briefings: 1. Reproductive rights 2. Equal pay	To be announced (groups will give assignments for reading, listening, watching).
November 3, 5	Group issue briefings: 3. Child care 4. Title IX	To be announced (groups will give assignments for reading, listening, watching).
November 10, 12	A woman in the White House	Re-read pages 12-16 of our textbook. Read this and this . Listen to this podcast (start at minute

		2:20 and end at 46:35).
November 17, 19	Case studies of women and political power: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Brett Kavanaugh nomination 2. The rape test kit 	Read this . Watch this and this . Read this .
November 24	Case studies of women and political power: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Politics of the social-safety net NOVEMBER 26: NO CLASS	Read this .
December 1, 3	Where do we go from here? Lessons for the future observer of women and politics Final exam prep	Read chapter 10.
December 10, 9:45 a.m. to noon	FINAL EXAM	

Note: This schedule is subject to change with reasonable notice provided through Canvas and/or classroom announcement.