



SAN JOSÉ STATE
UNIVERSITY

POLS 130: American Public Policy

SPRING 2022

PROFESSOR MARCI HARRIS

San José State University Department of Political Science
POLS 130–1: American Public Policy
SPRING 2022

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Office Hours:	Monday & Wednesdays 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM Use this link to schedule a time to meet: https://calendly.com/marci-harris-sjsu
Class Days / Time:	Monday & Wednesdays 12:00–1:15 PM
Classroom:	Dudley Moorhead Hall 149A
Canvas Link:	https://sjsu.instructure.com/courses/1476703
Zoom Link (for virtual class until Feb 14, 2022)	https://sjsu.zoom.us/j/83805572799?pwd=ZG1GaktUSENzVUs2d1IOSDFTWnQxZz09

*This syllabus is subject to change at the instructor's discretion.
Any changes will be announced in class and on Canvas.
It is the student's responsibility to check Canvas regularly for announcements and updates.*

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Course Description

Treatment of essentials of U.S. and California government. Satisfies the American Institutions (US23) and the GE Area D: Social Sciences requirements.

Satisfies D (formerly GE Area D3) + US23: Social Sciences and US Constitution and California Government.

Course Format

In-person lecture course

Course Goals

Hello and welcome to POLS-130!

My goal in this course is for you to truly understand how ideas become policy in the American system and what role you can play in that process. We will cover all aspects of the public policy world — from elections and advocacy to lawmaking, rule making, judicial review and the role of federal, state and local officials in our system. We will discuss the history and current state of affairs for several high profile policy issues and work together to understand where things go from here and what role citizens, stakeholders, civil servants, and elected officials will play. I want you to come out of this class with the background and tools you need to evaluate policy approaches and contribute to making the changes that you want to see in the world!

MySJSU

Course materials such as syllabus, handouts, notes, assignment instructions, etc. can be found on the Canvas Learning Management System course website. You are responsible for regularly checking with the messaging system through MySJSU to learn of any updates.

Course link:

For help with using Canvas see Canvas Student Resources page

(http://www.sjsu.edu/ecampus/teaching-tools/canvas/student_resources)

Learning Outcomes

“Social Science courses should increase the student’s understanding of human behavior and social interaction in the context of value systems, economic structures, political institutions, social groups, and natural environments.” — SJSU General Education Requirements description of “Area D. Social Sciences”

https://catalog.sjsu.edu/preview_program.php?catoid=12&poid=3623#dsocialsciences

“Courses in American Institutions should expose students to alternative interpretations of the historical events and political processes that have shaped the social, economic, and political systems in which we live.” — SJSU Undergraduate University Graduation Requirements

<https://catalog.sjsu.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=4149#american-institutions-ai->

Political Science Program Learning Outcomes (PSPLO)

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

1. **PSPLO1: Breadth:** Students should possess a broad knowledge of the theory and methods of the various branches of the discipline.
2. **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.
3. **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.
4. **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 (CLO)

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

- **CLO1:** Learn and apply social science theories of public policymaking and use them to explain the behavior, decisions, and outcomes of government policy.
- **CLO2:** Demonstrate the ability to critically think about the politics of the policymaking process in the broader American federalist system.
- **CLO3:** Develop a deeper understanding of substantive policy issues in contemporary national politics.

Required Texts / Readings

Textbook

- Glen Krutz and Sylvie Waskiewicz, **American Government 3e** @ OpenStax, Jul 28, 2021, ISBN-13: 978-1-711493-96-1
<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

Other Readings

- Other readings will be posted in Canvas as assigned

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.

Technical Requirements

Each student must have an email address that they check regularly.

Classwide notifications will be sent through Canvas and it is the student's responsibility to stay up-to-date.

Library Liaison

Liaison for Political Science: Paul Kauppila (Paul.Kauppila@sjsu.edu)

University Librarian (Political Science Liaison) (408) 808-2042

Political Science subject guide: <http://libguides.sjsu.edu/politicalscience>

Political Science Departmental Writing Policy and SJSU Writing Center

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 with it serious sanctions. A tutorial on citations is available at the library website at http://www.sjlibrary.org/services/literacy/info_comp/citing.htm.

For assistance with writing, visit the SJSU Writing Center located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. 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, visit the Writing Center website at <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>.

Political Science Scholarships

“The Political Science Department is fortunate to be able to award more than 10 scholarships to our students each year — this is an extraordinary level of support that surpasses what any other department on campus can offer. The scholarships were created by generous benefactors—often former faculty, students, and friends of the department—who desired to ease the financial burden on our students as they seek to earn their degrees in Political Science. The department encourages all of our students to apply for one or more of these award.” ([SOURCE](#))

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 three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited

to internships, labs, and clinical practica. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus. (University Policy S16-9 <https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>)

Assignments

POLICY MAP (10 related assignments)

You will select a policy area to research and develop throughout the course. Most weekly assignments will relate to the program or policy area you selected in the first week.

Due Sundays at midnight: The prompt will be posted in Canvas on Monday and the assignment will be to write ~ 2 paragraphs (no more than 5 paragraphs) on the prompt and comment on the work of at least two classmates.

STATE OF THE UNION MEMO

Watch the State of the Union Address on March 1, 2022. Select one policy mentioned in the speech and write a policy memo (no more than two pages) on the issue.

MIDTERM EXAM

The midterm will consist of 30 multiple choice questions and two essays.

FINAL POLICY PAPER

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. — [University policy S17-1](#)

All assignments throughout the course will contribute to development of the final paper.

The final paper will be an in-depth analysis of the policy area, with an in-depth description of how it currently works, current issues, proposals for reform or policy changes, description of who supports and opposes these reforms, and your recommendation for future policy, along with an advocacy and implementation plan.

EXTRA CREDIT

Per Academic Senate policy, any extra credit opportunities must be extended to all students in the class; this means that individual appeals for extra credit may not be considered apart from the entire class. Students may not request individual extra assignments for additional credit. (<https://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S09-7.pdf>)

The course provides several opportunities to earn extra credit:

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITY	DUE DATE	POSSIBLE POINTS
Watch and summarize what happened in a Congressional hearing on a policy issue	Anytime before end of course	75
Prepare a substantive comment on a pending rulemaking or request for information (on Regulations.gov)	Anytime before end of course	75
Substantive, thorough, complete class outline	End of course	100

Grading Policy

GRADING FORMULA		
ASSIGNMENT	POSSIBLE POINTS	TOTAL
10 Weekly Assignments	40	400
Midterm Exam	200	200
SOTU Memo	100	100
Final Paper	250	300
Extra Credit	250	

GRADING SCALE	
970–1000	A+

930–969	A
900–929	A-
870–899	B+
830–869	B
800–829	B-
770–799	C+
730–769	C
700–729	C-
630–699	D
600–629	D-
Below 599	F

**This course must be passed with a C- or better as a CSU graduation requirement.

CLASS ATTENDANCE

“Students are expected to attend all meetings for the courses POLS 130 American Public Policy in which they are enrolled as they are responsible for material discussed therein, and active participation is frequently essential to ensure maximum benefit to all class members. In some cases, attendance is fundamental to course objectives; for example, students may be required to interact with others in the class. Attendance is the responsibility of the student.” — [University policy F15-12](#)

MISSED EXAMS AND MISSED WORK

Written assignments turned in past the due date/time will be eligible for half credit. Exceptions will be made for a documented medical emergency if the professor is notified in writing (via email) before the assignment is due.

No make-up, early, or late exams will be administered. If you miss an exam without a demonstrable excuse you will receive a 0. Missed final exams due to demonstrable medical, religious, or university related activities may be made up by prior arrangement only.

Class Protocol

Course Rules

1. Always maintain professional and respectful language — in class, in emails and in your coursework.
2. You are responsible for all information and announcements made in the course. Check Canvas regularly for updates, changes, or new information. Course rules, schedule, and day-to-day are subject to change, please pay close attention to course announcements.
3. Written assignments turned in past the due date/time will be eligible for half credit.

University Policies

Per [University Policy S16-9](#), relevant university policy concerning all courses, such as student responsibilities, academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. and available student services (e.g. learning assistance, counseling, and other resources) are listed on Syllabus Information web page (<https://www.sjsu.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus-info.php>). Make sure to visit this page to review and be aware of these university policies and resources.

Disability Access

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor ASAP. The Accessible Education Center (AEC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The AEC is located at One Washington Square in ADM 110 and can be reached by telephone (voice/408-924-6000, or by email at: aec-info@sjsu.edu or aec-exams@sjsu.edu).

Student disclosures of sexual violence

San Jose State University requires all incoming students to complete **Sexual Assault Prevention for Undergraduates** or **Sexual Assault Prevention for Graduate Students**, mandatory online sexual assault prevention trainings. Title IX requires higher education institutions to take necessary precautions to prevent sexual assault on their campuses, and to respond promptly and effectively when an assault is reported. To fully comply with Title IX, the CSU Chancellor's Office

issued [Executive Order 1095](#) which mandates educational training programs to help prevent sexual violence. For more information and resources, go to: <http://notalone.sjsu.edu>

For more information go to: <http://www.sjsu.edu/wellness/onlinetraining/>

Course Schedule

*This schedule is subject to change with fair notice.
All changes and updates will be posted in Canvas.*

WEEK	Assignment / Activity	Due Date
WEEK 1	Assignment #1 (in Canvas)	Jan 30 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 2	Assignment #2 (in Canvas)	Feb 6 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 3	Assignment #3 (in Canvas)	Feb 13 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 4	State of the Union Project	Feb 20 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 5	Assignment #4 (in Canvas)	Feb 27 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 6	Assignment #5 (in Canvas)	Mar 6 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 7	Assignment #6 (in Canvas)	Mar 13 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 8	No assignment	Mar 20 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 9	MidTerm exam	Mar 23 IN CLASS
MAR 28— MAR 30	SPRING RECESS	
WEEK 10	Assignment #7 (in Canvas)	Apr 10 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 11	Assignment #8 (in Canvas)	Apr 17 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 12	Assignment #9 (in Canvas)	Apr 24 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 13	Assignment #10 (in Canvas)	May 1 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 14	Final Paper Draft	May 8 @ 11:59 PM PT
WEEK 15	No assignment	
WEEK 16	Final Paper Due	May 23