

Political Science 1: Introduction to American Politics Spring 2018

Instructor

Professor Ben Highton, bhighton@ucdavis.edu, 564 Kerr Hall
Office hours: T/R 11:00-12:00, and by appt.

Teaching Assistants

Alison Gushue, agushue@ucdavis.edu, 677 Kerr, Tuesdays 11:30-1:30, and by appt.

Isaac Hale, idhale@ucdavis.edu, 666 Kerr, Mondays 2:45-4:45, and by appt.

Joel Landis, jelandis@ucdavis.edu, 575 Kerr, Thursdays 3:15-5:15, and by appt.

Daniel Simmons, dansimmons@ucdavis.edu, 677 Kerr, Tuesday/Thursday 12:00-1:00, and by appt.

Course Description

This course provides a wide-ranging introduction to American national government and politics. After studying some foundational topics, we will analyze the four major national political institutions. Then we will focus on mass politics in America. The primary goals of the course are to learn about key issues in the study of the U.S. political system and to prepare students to take upper division courses on American politics.

Lecture & Sections

Lectures are T/R 1:40-3:00 in Haring 2205. There are 8 sections for the course. Students must enroll in the lecture and one of the sections:

A01	M	12:10-1:00	OLSON 223	[TA: Isaac Hale]
A02	M	5:10-6:00	SOCSCI 90	[TA: Isaac Hale]
A03	W	6:10-7:00	OLSON 205	[TA: Joel Landis]
A04	W	6:10-7:00	CRUESS 107	[TA: Daniel Simmons]
A05	F	8:00-8:50	HART 1116	[TA: Alison Gushue]
A06	F	2:10-3:00	WELLMN 105	[TA: Alison Gushue]
A07	W	8:00-8:50	GROVE 1283	[TA: Daniel Simmons]
A08	M	8:00-8:50	HART 1116	[TA: Joel Landis]

Textbook and Readings

The textbook for the course is *The Logic of American Politics*, 8th edition, by Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck. It is available for purchase in the bookstore and the usual places on-line (including for rent on Amazon). A less expensive E-book version will also be made available through the bookstore. Details TBD. There is enough overlap between the 7th and 8th editions of the textbook that you if you find it cheaper, you may use the 7th edition. In addition to the textbook, there are a small number of readings, all of which are available on Canvas.

Important Dates

Thursday, May 10: Midterm exam
Wednesday, June 13: Final exam (6:00-8:00 p.m.)

The only acceptable excuse for missing an exam is a significant medical condition, which requires verifiable documentation from a doctor.

General Expectations

Students are expected to attend lectures and sections. The lecture topics and corresponding textbook chapters are listed later in the syllabus. Most weeks, there will be an additional assigned reading for section. Students are expected to read the assignments in advance of section and to participate in section discussions. The section schedule is listed later in the syllabus.

Graded Work

- **Short Papers:** Students will write four papers based on the non-textbook readings assigned for section. These papers should be approximately 400 words and respond to the prompts to be distributed. Details and expectations will be discussed in class and section. Students may choose the section readings for weeks 3, 4, 5, 7, and 8 for their papers. (In other words you may choose to take one of these weeks off and write a paper the other four weeks). For the weeks you write your papers, they are due on Monday morning by 8:00 a.m., regardless of what day/time your section meets. For example, if you decide to write a paper for Week 3 (reading on *Roe v. Wade*), your paper is due Monday morning on April 16 by 8:00 a.m. even if you are in a Friday discussion section. **Late papers will not be accepted.**
- **Midterm Exam:** There will be an in-class midterm exam on Thursday, May 10. The format and expectations will be discussed in class.
- **Final Exam:** There will be an in-class final exam on Wednesday, June 13 (6:00-8:00 p.m.). The format and expectations will be discussed in class.

Grades

Final grades will be based on the following: short papers (20%), midterm exam (30%), and final exam (50%). Final grades will be based on the following scale:

<u>Grade</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
A+	97	100
A	93	96.9
A-	90	92.9
B+	87	89.9
B	83	86.9
B-	80	82.9
C+	77	79.9
C	73	76.9
C-	70	72.9
D+	67	69.9
D	63	66.9
D-	60	62.9
F	0	59.9

To give all students the benefit of close calls on grading, we will add 0.5 to all students' final grades. For example, a student whose overall grade is an 89.5 and who would otherwise receive a B+ will get bumped up to 90 ($89.5 + 0.5 = 90.0$) and receive an A-. (Of course there need to be cutoffs somewhere. A student with an 89.4 would get bumped to an 89.9 and still receive a B+.)

Students with Disabilities

We will be happy to accommodate students with special needs provided that they work through the process developed by the Student Disability Center on campus (<http://sdc.ucdavis.edu>). This process involves requesting accommodation before or at the beginning of the quarter. If you have any questions about this, please contact the instructor or your TA during the first week of the quarter.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is important. Dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you are unfamiliar with the university's academic code of conduct, please consult the SJA (the office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs, <http://sja.ucdavis.edu>), and especially <http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac>. If you have any questions about what constitutes inappropriate academic behavior or other concerns, please contact SJA or the instructor.

Section Schedule

Week 1 (4/2-4/6)

- No assignment
- No sections on Monday 4/2.
- Students with Monday sections meet very briefly with TAs after class on Tuesday, 4/3

Week 2 (4/9-4/13)

- Read *Anti-Federalist* #3
- Read *Federalist* #51

Week 3 (4/16-4/20):

- Read excerpts from *Roe v. Wade* (1973)

Week 4 (4/23-4/27):

- Read chapter 7 of *A Different Democracy*, "Legislative Power"

Week 5 (4/30-5/4):

- Read chapter 8 of *A Different Democracy*, "Executive Power"

Week 6 (5/7-5/11)

- Midterm review
- Friday sections to be rescheduled

Week 7 (5/14-5/18):

- Read chapter 9 of *A Different Democracy*, "Judicial Power"

Week 8 (5/21-5/25):

- Read "Under the Influence," by Martin Gilens

Week 9 (5/28-6/1)

- All sections cancelled

Week 10 (6/4-6/8)

- Final review

Lecture Schedule

1. April 3: Course Introduction
2. April 5: Class cancelled
3. April 10: The Constitution (text, chapter 2)
4. April 12: Federalism (text, chapter 3)
5. April 17: Civil Rights (text, chapter 4)
6. April 19: Civil Liberties (text, chapter 5)
7. April 24: Congress (text, chapter 6)
8. April 26: Congress (text, chapter 6)
9. May 1: Presidency (text, chapter 7)
10. May 3: Presidency (text, chapter 7)
11. May 8: Midterm review
12. May 10: Midterm
13. May 15: Bureaucracy (text, chapter 8)
14. May 17: Judiciary (text, chapter 9)
15. May 22: Public Opinion (text, chapter 10)
16. May 24: Voting and Elections (text, chapter 11)
17. May 29: Political Parties (text, chapter 12)
18. May 31: Interest Groups (text, chapter 13)
19. June 5: The Media (text, chapter 14)
20. June 7: Final review