

POLS 201: California State Government and Politics
Occidental College
Updated August 24, 2026

Fall Semester, 2026
Monday and Wednesday, 4:20-5:40 PM
Room: Johnson 301

Instructor: Dr. Isaac Hale
Email: halei@oxy.edu
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, & Friday: 12:15-1:15 PM
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Course Description

This course provides an overview of main themes in the development of California state government and the political institutions, social/demographic trends, and public policies that give shape to its politics. We will focus on political theories that help us understand: 1) the major problems facing California and its communities, 2) the economic, social and political forces that have shaped California's development, 3) the structure and role of government in addressing the state's problems, and 4) the major participants and stakes in California politics.

Participation will be a large portion of your grade, and you cannot expect to succeed without reading all the assigned material and coming to class. We will also be hosting guest speakers who will discuss their experiences working in California state government and politics. Each speaker will give a presentation and take questions. Do not be shy to speak up, even if you are not certain about something. There is no penalty for engaging in debate or questioning what I or a guest speaker is telling you – in fact, both are heavily encouraged!

My goal is that this course be as engaging and accessible as possible. There will be no final or midterm exams for this course. Instead, the course will have short quizzes throughout the semester, a final policy memo, and a final presentation. This assignment structure will help ensure that students face less pressure and that each graded assignment is worth less of their total grade.

One final note – this course should be fun! While the material in this class will take a broad perspective on California politics, our discussions should be extremely relevant to current political events. If there is something happening in the news that is relevant to our class, I will be sure to allocate time to discuss it. Major legislation, elections, scandals, news stories, and policy debates are all fair game!

Course Objectives

The student learning outcomes for this course are as follows:

- Learn about the major problems in contemporary California politics, including inequality, housing, and climate change.
- Explore how California's political institutions have changed over time.

- Determine how California's current institutional arrangements shape policy outcomes and the behavior of elected officials.
- Assess how immigration and increasing diversity have transformed California politics.
- Examine how different interests and coalitions shape state politics.
- Situate the political power of the state government relative to the power of national and local governments.
- Debate whether the design of California's political institutions promote normatively desirable policy outcomes.
- Produce a memo to a California legislator advising them to vote yes or no on a recent important bill that came before the legislature.
- Present and take questions on a strategic policy briefing to the class that synthesizes the arguments in the policy memo.

Required Texts

There is one required text for this course. The first and second editions are out of date, so please make sure you get the third edition. Electronic and paper editions are available for rent and purchase via the bookstore.

- Edited by Ethan Rarick. *Governing California: Politics, Government, and Public Policy in the Golden State*. 3rd ed. Berkeley Public Policy Press, Institute of Governmental Studies, University of California.

You may access all other readings through Canvas portal for this class or via hyperlinks in the syllabus.

Core Program Requirements

POLS 201 fulfills a U.S. Diversity (CPUD) core program requirement.

Class Expectations

Credit Hour Policy

POLS 201 is a 4-unit course. On average, you should expect to spend at least twelve (12) hours a week (including in-class time) on this course.

Lecture Slides

Slides will be used in class on most days. Slides will be posted to Canvas following the class session.

Online Access

All readings and documents for this course (except the textbook) can be accessed through the Canvas website or via hyperlinks in the syllabus schedule. Messages will be sent by me via Canvas, so make sure you have email notifications for Canvas messages activated.

Email

I welcome questions and comments by email. When you email me, you should compose your email as you would any piece of professional correspondence. I typically respond within 24 hours on weekdays.

Laptops and Other Electronics

Laptops are not allowed in class. [Numerous studies confirm that](#) students who take notes by hand retain more information over time and that laptop bans improve student engagement in smaller classes. Typing and visual distraction during a lecture/discussion are also distracting for your classmates. As such, laptops, phones, smart glasses and other electronic devices are not allowed in class.

The exception to this policy is that you may bring an e-reader, tablet, or another “lie-flat” device to access readings in class. It must lie flat on the desk. You may not use it for tasks such as surfing the web or email. You are encouraged to bring *Governing California* and printouts of the other readings to class.

If you have a documented learning disability that requires typing your notes, contact me and I will consider an exception. Any laptops approved for use in-class must not be used for web surfing during class.

Desk Name Tag (yes, this is required)

To facilitate discussion, I ask that you place a name tag on the desk in front of you in class each day. Although attendance will not be taken, showing up to class with your desk name tag will greatly affect your participation grade. I will bring nametag supplies on the first day of class.

Grading

Grading for this course will be calculated as follows:

Quizzes (best 8 out of 10)	48%
Policy Memo	21%
Policy Briefing	21%
<u>Participation</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total:	100%

The final letter grade will be assigned according to the standard table:

93-100: A	87-89: B+	77-79: C+	67-69: D+
90-92: A-	83-86: B	73-76: C	60-66: D
	80-82: B-	70-72: C-	00-59: F

If you are 0.5 points or less from the next letter grade at the end of the course, the grade submitted to the registrar will be rounded up to the next letter grade. You will not be able to see this rounding on Canvas.

All graded items listed above are detailed in the sections that follow.

Quizzes

Ten short answer/multiple choice quizzes will be administered over the course of the semester. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped. Quizzes will take place at the beginning of class on the days indicated on the syllabus. There will never be more than one quiz per week.

Everything is fair game! Quizzes may cover two kinds of information:

- 1) Material from the assigned readings, even if we do not discuss it in class.
- 2) Material discussed in class, even if it is not covered in the readings.

Since you may miss or drop two quizzes, no make-up quizzes will be offered. For the same reason there is no need to inform me if you will miss a quiz. All quizzes will be graded out of 6 points. Each quiz (not including the two dropped quizzes) will be worth 6% of your final grade.

Policy Memo

In lieu of a final exam, you are required to submit a policy memo for this class. You will be advising a member of the California Assembly about whether they should vote Yes or No on a major bill in the 2026 legislative session. I will randomly assign each of you to one of four members of the Assembly.

Make sure to use 12-point font, one-inch margins, **double-spacing**, and proper citation format (see section below). Additionally, please number each page. The memo should be **four-five pages long** (and should certainly not exceed six). This page limit does not include a bibliography, which should be at the end of your paper.

Memos will be graded on content (persuasiveness of evidence provided), analysis (claims drawn about the evidence provided), structure (clarity of argument and logical “flow” of the memo), and mechanics (grammar, punctuation use, sentence and paragraph composition, etc.). A rubric will be posted on Canvas.

A full prompt and list of bills to pick from for the policy memo will be posted on Canvas. The policy memo is due on Friday, November 20th, at midnight (11:59 PM).

Policy Briefing

During either the last day of class or the scheduled final exam session, you will present a **short** briefing about your memo. You will have **five minutes** to brief your Assemblymember in their “office” (our classroom). Convince them to take your recommended position. Be concise, politically savvy, and focused on what matters most to them. I strongly encourage you to practice your presentation to ensure it is polished. A strong oral presentation will not be read directly from a script.

Your presentation should include slides, which must be uploaded to Canvas by Monday, November 30th at noon (11:59 AM). Here is an example of how you might structure your briefing:

1. **The Hook (30 sec):** “[legislator name], on [Bill # and Name], I’m recommending a [Yes/No] vote. This is a [political opportunity / necessary defense] for you heading into 2027.”
2. **Policy Impact (1 min):**
 - Broadly, what major policy impacts will the legislation have?
3. **The Core Political Rationale (3 min):**
 - *District Partisanship:* “Our district is [% Democrat, % Republican], and voted for [Harris/Trump] by a [%] margin in 2024.”
 - *District Demographics/Impact:* “The key voter bloc in our district most affected by this policy is... Here’s the polling/data on how they feel...”
 - *Coalition Management:* “This vote secures our relationship with [Key Donor/Endorsing Group], but we’ll need to manage concerns from [Skeptical Group].”
 - *Electoral Context:* “Given your win margin last time and your focus on [Key Issue], this aligns perfectly/forces a tough choice because...”
4. **The Risks & Mitigation (30 sec):**
 - “The biggest attack line against this vote will be... Here’s our counter-message: ...”

Following your presentation, you will take five minutes of Q&A from the “Assemblymember” and their “policy team” (in other words, your classmates and me!). Strong answers will be concise and reflect knowledge of the policy and its politics in the district.

Your grade on the policy brief will be determined by:

1. The quality of your slides
2. The polish of your oral presentation
3. Your command of the material during the Q&A

Participation

Your participation grade will be based on the overall effort you put into the class, including the effort you put into your assignments, your attendance in class (and having a desk tag!), and your participation in discussions. Come to class, participate in class discussions, earn a good participation grade, and get more out of the class. It’s a win-win. You are also encouraged to bring up news stories, relevant examples, and “dank” politics memes.

Extra Credit Meme

You may earn extra credit by creating and submitting a meme related to course content. The extra credit is worth up to half a point on your final grade (e.g., raising an 89.5% final grade to 90%). In order to receive full credit, the meme must be used correctly (don’t trust AI)! I suggest using <https://knowyourmeme.com> to make sure you are using your meme correctly. You can create memes using meme generators such as <https://imgflip.com/memegenerator>. Your meme will be shared in class, so be creative (and keep it appropriate)! Do not use AI to generate your meme.

- The meme is due Sunday, November 22nd at 11:59 PM

Late Submissions

Do not wait until the night before it is due to begin work on an assignment. Life is complicated and full of unexpected surprises. Plan for uncertainty by managing your time efficiently. Even if your work is not complete because something unexpected interfered, submit what you have accomplished prior to the emergency. After-the-fact extensions will be granted only under extreme circumstances, and at my sole discretion. If you know in advance that you will miss an assignment deadline, you may submit a partially completed assignment early — and then appeal for an extension.

Assignments submitted late will have 10% deducted from their final score for every day they are late. This penalty begins immediately following the day and time the assignment is due and will not be prorated.

Grade Appeals

If you are not satisfied with the grade you receive on an assignment, please take the following steps:

- 1) Review any comments/feedback I have provided. Check your Canvas submission.
- 2) If you still have questions, come to my office hours, or contact me by email.
- 3) If you still believe the grade you received is in error, submit a one-paragraph written request for a regrade by email. If the request is approved, your work will receive a completely new evaluation by me. Your score may increase, decrease, or stay the same.

Disabilities

Occidental College (Oxy) complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 as amended, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended, and other applicable state and federal law prohibiting discrimination against individuals with disabilities.

- All accommodation requests including academic, housing (ESA & Service Animal) and temporary accommodations are managed by the Disability Services Office. It is a student's responsibility to request accommodations via the [Disability Services](#) website. For information about additional accommodations and support services, students can email accessibility@oxy.edu.
- Oxy's Psychological Testing Program: We offer low cost psychological testing for students who qualify. Any student who thinks they may have a learning, or psychological disability may contact Disability Services at accessibility@oxy.edu to learn more about psychological testing.
- Academic Success Coaching: Disability Services offers Academic Success Coaching for all students who struggle with organization, time management, etc. Please contact accessibility@oxy.edu for more information.

Academic Dishonesty

Academic Integrity is a shared community value. It is built around trust and respect between members of the Occidental Community and embodies a commitment to honesty and integrity in every aspect of one's academic life.

All members of the Occidental community are committed to upholding the highest degree of academic integrity. Unless stipulated otherwise, the academic work done for all assignments is expected to be the student's own; students are expected to give proper credit to the ideas and work of others.

Any use of unauthorized technology during quizzes, tests, or presentations will result in a referral for academic dishonesty. This includes wearing smart glasses or headphones during quizzes or tests. If you have prescription smart glasses, you must instead use standard prescription eyewear in class.

In any take-home written assignments, you must cite the person at the end of the sentence in which you use another person's idea. When you use a specific phrase, you must put that phrase in quotation marks and cite the original author at the end of the sentence in which you use the phrase. [Hallucinated citations](#) and other clear AI artifacts constitute academic dishonesty, and your assignment may receive a zero if you include them. If you wish to submit a piece of writing that you have used in another class, you must receive my permission before doing so.

Good writing is good thinking. Figuring out which words best express your ideas is central to the writing process. As such, I do not allow AI to be used in your writing for this class. This includes (but is not limited to) translation sites, ChatGPT, Claude, Grammarly, Deepseek, Gemini, and/or any platform that "generates" language and/or ideas. Any generative AI use for writing assignments in this class is a violation of the College's Academic Integrity Policy. Instead of AI tools, utilize Oxy's writing support services for help with drafts and revisions.

Signing the Academic Integrity Commitment at the beginning of every semester represents a student's affirmation to uphold the shared values of honesty and integrity. When signing the Integrity Commitment

associated with work in a course, students are affirming that they have not cheated, plagiarized, fabricated, or falsified information; nor assisted others in these actions.

Refer to [Student Handbook](#) for the framing of the commitment, definitions of Academic Ethics, and Process for alleged violations of the commitment.

Support Services

A number of services are available here at Occidental College to make sure that you excel academically and socially. There are many opportunities for **academic support**. Please visit the following website at <https://www.oxy.edu/academics/student-success> to see the variety of services offered, including writing support, tutoring, research assistance, language tutoring, and academic coaching. The Emmons Wellness Center provides **medical services and counseling**. Visit their website for information on specific services provided: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/resources-support/emmons-wellness-center>

Accommodations for Reasons of Faith and Conscience

Consistent with Occidental College's commitment to creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that students should be excused from class for reasons of faith and conscience without academic consequence. While it is not feasible to schedule coursework around all days of conviction for a class as a whole, faculty will honor requests from individual students to reschedule coursework, to be absent from classes that conflict with the identified days. Information about this process is available on the ORSL website: <https://www.oxy.edu/student-life/resources-support/orsl/academic-accommodations>

Sexual Harassment and Assault Resources

In the event that you write or speak about having experienced discrimination or harassment on the basis of a protected characteristic or sexual misconduct (including sexual assault, dating/domestic violence, stalking, sexual exploitation or any other form of sexual and/or gender-based harassment), as a designated Responsible Employee, I must inform the Civil Rights & Title IX Office. They will contact you to let you know about resources and support services at Oxy, as well as reporting options both on and off-campus. You have no obligation to respond to the Civil Rights & Title IX Office or to meet with them to discuss support services and reporting options.

If you do not want the Civil Rights & Title IX Office contacted, instead of disclosing this information to your instructor, either through conversation or a class assignment, you can speak confidentially with:

- Oxy's Survivor Advocate, Project SAFE (survivoradvocate@oxy.edu)
- Emmons Counseling (For appointments, call: 323-259-2657)
- Rev. Dr. Susan Young, Office of Religious and Spiritual Life (myoung@oxy.edu)
- Oxy 24/7 Confidential Hotline (323-341-4141)

The College's civil rights policies, along with additional resources, can be found at:

<https://www.oxy.edu/civil-rights-title-ix>. If you would like to contact the Civil Rights & Title IX Office directly, you may email Civil Rights & Title IX Coordinator Alexandra Fulcher at fulcher@oxy.edu or call 323-259-1338.

Weekly Topics & Readings

The list below indicates reading assignments and class topics. All readings are in the textbook, available on Canvas (in the “Files” section), or hyperlinked below. You should do each day’s readings before that day’s class. I will generally keep us on schedule, but topics may carry over from one class to the next.

Part I. Political Institutions in Flux

Date	Topic	Readings Due
Week 1		
Wed, Aug 26	Course Introduction	- Read the syllabus - Read the Introduction of <i>Governing California</i>
Week 2		
Mon, Aug 31	What’s the Matter with California?	<i>The Economist</i>. 2018. “Why one of America’s richest states is also its poorest.” - Ezra Klein. 2021. “California Is Making Liberals Squirm.” <i>The New York Times</i>. - Jenny Jarvie. 2026. “L.A.’s population is falling, could ‘haunt us for decades.’” <i>Los Angeles Times</i>. - Dan Walters. 2026. “Gavin Newsom’s rosy painting of California’s economy leaves out its darker undertones.” <i>CalMatters</i>.
Wed, Sep 2	The Progressive Movement I: Initiatives and Referenda	Quiz day! - Ken Miller. “Direct Democracy: The Initiative, Referendum, and Recall.” Chapter 5 of <i>Governing California</i> - Aarian Marshall. 2020. “With \$200 Million, Uber and Lyft Write Their Own Labor Law.” <i>Wired</i>.
Week 3		
Mon, Sep 7	NO CLASS	Labor Day
Wed, Sep 9	The Progressive Movement II: The Recall	- Laurel Rosenhall. 2021. “Recalling a California governor, explained.” <i>CalMatters</i>. - CANVAS: Walter J. Stone and Monti Narayan Datta. 2004. “Rationalizing the California Recall.” <i>PS: Political Science and Politics</i>

Week 4		
Mon, Sep 14	The California Legislature In-class guest speaker: Hector De La Torre (fmr. California Assemblyman)	• CANVAS: Peverill Squire. 1992. “The Theory of Legislative Institutionalization and the California Assembly,” <i>Journal of Politics</i>, Vol. 54, No. 4, pp. 1026-1054. • CANVAS: <i>Politico Pro</i>. 2019. “The Essential Guide to California Legislation.” • Chris Micheli. 2025. “The legislative process in California: questions and answers.” <i>Capitol Weekly</i>.
Wed, Sep 16	Term Limits and the Future of the Legislature	• Quiz day! • Bruce Cain, Thad Kousser, and Karl Kurtz. “The Legislature: Life Under Term Limits.” Chapter 10 of <i>Governing California</i> • Brian Joseph. 2025. “Spending on lobbying firms topped \$631 million during the 2023-24 legislative cycle.” <i>Capitol Weekly</i>.
Week 5		
Mon, Sep 21	Changing the Rules: Primary and Redistricting Reforms	• Vladimir Kogan and Eric McGhee. “Redistricting: Did Radical Reform Produce Different Results?” Chapter 6 of <i>Governing California</i>. • Seth Masket. “Polarization Interrupted? California’s Experiment with the Top-Two Primary,” Chapter 7 of <i>Governing California</i>.
Wed, Sep 23	Bargaining with Governors	• Quiz day! • Ethan Rarick, “Governors and the Executive Branch,” Chapter 9 of <i>Governing California</i>. • Sameea Kamal. 2024. “Legislators could override nearly every Newsom veto. Why don’t they?” <i>CalMatters</i>.

Week 6		
Mon, Sep 28	Crime and Punishment: California's Public Safety Realignment In-class guest speaker: Brandon Martin (PPIC)	• Magnus Lofstrom and Brandon Martin, Deepak Premkumar, and Vicki Hsieh. 2022. "What California's Next Governor Needs to Know about Criminal Justice." <i>Public Policy Institute of California.</i> • Luciana Susanto and Heather Harris. 2026. "California's Prison Population." <i>Public Policy Institute of California.</i>" • Magnus Lofstrom and Brandon Martin. 2024. "Three Decades of Major Criminal Justice Shifts in California." <i>Public Policy Institute of California.</i> • Heather Harris and Sean Cremin. 2025. "How Does the California Prison Population Compare to Other States?" <i>Public Policy Institute of California.</i>
Wed, Sep 30	Comparative State Politics	• Quiz day! • Sarah Anzia. 2019. "Most research finds little evidence that interest groups influence US politics, but that's because it's focused on the federal government." <i>LSE USAPP</i> blog. • CANVAS: Jake Grumbach. "Protecting Democracy from State Level Threats in the Age of National Parties." In <i>More Than Red and Blue: Political Parties and American Democracy.</i> American Political Science Association and Protect Democracy. • <i>National Conference of State Legislators.</i> 2021. "Full- and Part-Time Legislatures." • RADIO CLIP: <i>KUT News.</i> 2017. "How Powerful is The Texas Governor Compared to Other State Governors?"

Part II. The Politics of Diversity

Week 7		
Mon, Oct 5	Running Campaigns in California: Strategy and Money	• Frederick Douzet and Kenneth P. Miller. "California's Political Geography: Coast vs. Inland and Increasingly Blue." Chapter 3 of <i>Governing California.</i> • Paul Mitchell. "CA120: The digital transition." <i>Capitol Weekly.</i>
Wed, Oct 7	A Diversifying Electorate: Who Participates and Who Doesn't	• Quiz day! • Jack Citrin, Morris Levy, and Andrea Campbell. "State of Change: Immigration Politics and the New Demography of California." Chapter 2 of <i>Governing California.</i> • Charlie Wright. 2025. "California leaders enable gaming monopoly, tribal inequity by legislating for the wealthy few." <i>CalMatters.</i>

Week 8		
Mon, Oct 12	The California Housing Crisis Campus speaker: Stan Oklobdzija (UCR)	- David Byler. 2021. “Why California’s Population Boom Has Stalled.” <i>The Washington Post</i>. ○ Alt. link: https://archive.is/9XnQi - Christian Leonard. 2023. “It’s not just the Bay Area — the number of affordable homes is plummeting across California.” <i>San Francisco Chronicle</i>. ○ Alt. link: https://archive.is/a5UZY - Jeanne Kuang and Ben Christopher. 2025. “Why one union became one of the most pro-housing voices in California.” <i>CalMatters</i>.
Wed, Oct 14	Political Incorporation of Minority Groups I: the Rainbow Coalition & Backlash	Quiz day! - CANVAS: Frederick Douzet. 2008. “The Geopolitical Transition of Oakland.” in <i>The New Political Geography of California</i>. - Azucena Rasilla and Asley McBride. 2025. “Oakland’s political divide between the hills and flatlands is complicated.” <i>The Oaklandside</i>.
Week 9		
Mon, Oct 19	Political Incorporation of Minority Groups II: Backlash and the Question of Representation	- CANVAS: Raphael Sonenshein and Mark H. Drayse. 2008. “The Political Geography of Coalitions in an Age of Immigration: The Case of Los Angeles.” in <i>The New Political Geography of California</i>. - Gustavo Arellano. 2019. “Pete Wilson still defending Prop. 187 and fighting for a better place in history.” <i>Los Angeles Times</i>. - Jessica Ogilvie. 2019. “Proposition 187: Why a Ballot Initiative That Passed 25 Years Ago (And Never Went Into Law) Still Matters.” <i>LAist</i>.
Wed, Oct 21	Political Incorporation of Minority Groups III: Harvey Milk, Substantive Representation, and Descriptive Representation	- Paul Mitchell. 2024. “CA120: Voter reforms increased Latino votes but not Latino voting power.” <i>Capitol Weekly</i>. - John Osborn D'Agostino, Sameea Kamal and Ariel Gans. 2023. “How much does the Legislature look like California?” <i>CalMatters</i>.

Part III. Perspectives on Policy

Week 10		
Mon, Oct 26	The Layers of California Government	• Quiz day! • Max Neiman. “Local Government: Designing and Financing the Cities and Counties of California.” Chapter 13 of <i>Governing California</i>. • Deborah Brennan. 2026. “San Diego guts arts funding to balance budget as California cities make deep spending cuts.” <i>CalMatters</i>.
Wed, Oct 28	Education & Taxation	• David N. Plank and Susanna Loeb. “Education: Back From the Brink.” Chapter 14 of <i>Governing California</i> • Mikhail Zinshteyn. 2025. “Cal State is still in the red despite tuition increase and spending cuts.” <i>CalMatters</i>. • John Fensterwald. 2026. “California’s next governor to face tough choices for education as state budget tightens.” <i>EdSource</i>.
Week 11		
Mon, Nov 2	2026 California Election Preview	• Quiz day! • Iris Kwok and Nicole Nixon. “14 propositions that could remake California taxes, housing, healthcare and elections.” <i>Los Angeles Times</i>. • Additional reading TBA
Wed, Nov 4	The 2026 Election: What Happened and What Comes Next? Campus speakers: Carlos Algara (CGU), Christian Grose (USC), and Jennifer Merolla (UCR)	• Choi Auditorium at 4:30 PM • Please read about the election results (nationally and state of California) ○ Oxy has free access to many news sources: https://libguides.oxy.edu/news/home • You will receive 0.5 points of extra credit for attending • This event will take place <u>instead</u> of normal class

Week 12		
Mon, Nov 9	Infrastructure and Environmental Politics	• Quiz day! • Megan Mullin. “Water in California: A Case Study in Federalism.” Chapter 15 of <i>Governing California</i>. • Lynette Ubois and Mark Baldassare. 2025. “Wildfires Are a Top Concern for Californians.” <i>PPIC</i>. • Dan Walters. 2026. “18 years after California voters approved the bullet train, progress and finances are still stalled.” <i>CalMatters</i>.
Wed, Nov 11	The Money Politics of Water	• Alastair Band. 2025. “Even in wet years, wells are still dry. Why replenishing California’s groundwater is painfully slow.” <i>CalMatters</i>. • Rachel Becker. 2025. “‘Beyond awful’ Colorado River forecasts put water talks under pressure.” <i>CalMatters</i>. • Rachel Becker and Natasha Uzcátegui-Liggett. 2025. “California cities pay a lot for water; some agricultural districts get it for free.” <i>CalMatters</i>.
Week 13		
Mon, Nov 16	Reforming California’s Elections Campus Speaker: Caledon Myers (ProRep Coalition)	• Michael Latner. 2026. “Why Should Anyone Care About Democracy Reform in California?” <i>Democracy’s Cookbook</i>. • Aseem Shukla and Nami Sumida. 2026. “California has six distinct voting groups beyond Democrat and Republican. Which one are you in?” <i>The San Francisco Chronicle</i>.
Wed, Nov 18	Wrapping Up	• Quiz day! • Kat Schuster. 2022. “To Reform the Reforms.” <i>UCLA Blueprint</i>.
Week 14		
Mon, Nov 23	IN CLASS: California Politics Jeopardy & Snacks!	
Wed, Nov 25	NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Break	
Week 15		
Mon, Nov 30	IN CLASS: Policy Briefings	
Date TBA (Dec 3-10)	IN FINAL EXAM SLOT: Policy Briefings	