

COURSE SYLLABUS

Political Science 1 Spring Quarter, 2014 University of California, Davis

Professor Walt Stone
Office: 668 Kerr Hall
Lectures: 3 Kleiber Hall, Tuesday and Thursday 4:40-6:00
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Please consult the course website on smartsite@ucdavis.edu regularly. On the day of each lecture (by early afternoon) I will post an outline of the day's lecture, along with any figures or other materials I will display in class. All documents, including the course syllabus, overheads, and lecture outlines will be posted under "resources" on the site.

Office Hours: Mondays, 3:30-5:30 PM, and by appointment.

This course introduces you to the systematic and rigorous study of American politics. We develop an understanding of the forces that influence the behavior of individuals and institutions in and around national government. The question motivating the course is: How well does the American political system live up to the ideals of a representative democracy? Answering this question means that we need to know something about how it is supposed to work, where it fails to measure up, and why. We develop a framework that will enable us to assess different conceptions of what the ideals of democracy should be and how to evaluate the American system. This will put us in a position to evaluate proposals for reforming the system, as well as defenses of the status quo.

Careful analysis of the political system in which we live is difficult. We must overcome partisan predispositions and other biases we may hold. The systematic study of politics is also clouded at times by powerful myths that can color our perceptions and assessments. This course gives students the tools they need to assess political behaviors, practices, and institutions based on theory and evidence.

Welcome to the class. I hope you enjoy the quarter.

Texts

Ken Kollman, *The American Political System: Core Edition* (W.W. Norton, 2012) (referred to as "Text.")

Ken Kollman, *Readings in American Politics: Analysis and Perspectives* (Norton 2012, second edition) ("Reader")

Course Requirements

You are responsible for doing the scheduled reading prior to the lecture for which the readings are assigned. Readings and lectures will not always be on the same topics, nor will readings necessarily be covered in lecture. Some of the readings are difficult; some days have more reading than others. Keep up with the assigned reading and you won't have a problem. You are required to complete the readings for the lecture immediately preceding your recitation meeting unless your TA requires otherwise.

- Attendance: lecture and recitation attendance is mandatory. Recitation is important as a place where you can explore the ideas in the course in depth. Your TA will announce the policy for the section grade.
- Students may not use laptops, tablets, or smart phones during class.
- Exams: Examinations will be approximately 75% short and long essay. Examinations from previous years will be posted on SmartSite. The final examination will be cumulative. If you miss the midterm, my makeup policy is that you must arrange a makeup at the end of the quarter through your TA.

Makeup examinations will consist of a single essay written during a one-hour period. I don't recommend taking a makeup unless you cannot avoid it. All students are required to take the final exam at the scheduled time. If your plans do not permit you to be at the exam, please drop the course.

- Group quizzes and research participation: There will be six unannounced group quizzes in randomly selected lectures. Your responses to these quizzes will be graded pass/fail. The format for the quizzes will be a question posed on the screen in the front of the lecture hall; a few minutes to meet in small groups and discuss your answer; a minute to write down a brief answer; turn in the quiz with your name and your TA's name. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in a political science research project. Details will be explained in class; your participation will be scheduled according to your preferences (out of class time) and will take no more than a half hour. Participation in the project will constitute passing for this requirement, and will be the equivalent of two group quizzes in weight.

The breakdown of the course grade is as follows:

Section grade: 15%

Midterm examination: 30%

Group quizzes and research project participation 10%

Final exam: 45%

Exam dates:

Midterm examination: Tuesday, May 6th

Final examination: Thursday, June 12th.

Midterm exam date subject to change with advance notice.

NOTE: Academic dishonesty is a serious breach of ethics in the university community, and it will not be tolerated in this class. You are required to be familiar with and conform to the University's Code of Academic Conduct (<http://sja.ucdavis.edu/cac.html>). We will report violators to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action.

Schedule of Readings and Lectures

I. Theoretical and Constitutional Foundations: We use James Madison's "Republic" as the fundamental theory that justifies the American Constitution. This theory is based on *Federalist 10* and *51*. Throughout the course, we critically examine Madison's theory in light of how the American system actually works. Pay close attention to the argument Madison makes about human nature, about how people behave in political life, and what the consequences are for the well-constituted government. Do you accept these arguments? Is Madison's Republic a democratic system? How well does it describe the American system as it exists today?

1. April 1. Course overview, administrative details, key concepts.
 - Text, Chapter 1.
2. April 3. Self Interest as the Problem.
 - Text, Chapter 2, pp. 31-44.
 - James Madison, *Federalist* #10, Text, pp. 547-53.
 - John Locke, "Second Treatise" 1.1 in Reader
3. April 8. Self Interest as the Solution; Madison's Republic as Theory.
 - Re-read *Federalist 10*.
 - Text, Chapter 2, pp. 44-65
 - *Federalist 51*, Text, pp. 553-56.
 - *Constitution of the United States*, Text, pp.525-47.

II. Citizen Participation: Who participates in politics, who doesn't, and so what? What difference does it make that many do not vote? How can it be in the citizen's self-interest not to be self-interested? What are the possible implications of that paradox for a political theory built on self-interest?

1. April 10. Citizen participation
 - Text, Chapter 10.
 - Steven Rosenstone and John Mark Hansen, "Mobilization, Participation, and American Democracy," Reader 10.1.
2. April 15. Citizen participation and public opinion
 - Text, Chapter 9.
 - Arthur Lupia and Mathew D. McCubbins, "The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What they Need to Know?" Reader 9.1.
 - John Zaller, "Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion" Reader 9.2.

III. Elections and Voting Choice. Elections are supposed to promote representative government. Do they? Can they? How important is a well-informed, interested electorate in producing electoral democracy?

1. April 17. Voting choice with limited information.
 - Angus Campbell et al., "The American Voter" Reader 12.2
2. April 22. Electoral context and voting choice.
 - Text, Chapter 13.

IV. Political Parties and Party Theory: Political parties, despite their tarnished popular image, form the basis of some people's conception of representative democracy and how to make it work better. Watch for the places where party theory most severely challenges Madison's Republic. What's right and wrong with party polarization?

1. April 24. The party theory alternative.
 - Text, Chapter 12.
2. April 29. Causes and implications of the two-party system.
 - John H. Aldrich, "Why Parties? The Origin and Transformation of Party Politics in American Politics," Reader 12.1.
 - Marty Cohen et al., "The Parties Decide: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform" Reader 12.3.
3. May 1. Catch-up; Review.

******* Midterm Examination Tuesday, May 6*******

V. Factions Revisited: Faction, special interests, pressure groups, and lobbying are all dirty words in American politics, but they form the core of yet another version of representative democracy. How does the pluralist theory differ from Madison's Republic and from party theory? Where do the theories agree with one another?

1. May 8. Interest groups and pluralist theory.
 - Re-re-read *Federalist 10*.
 - Text, Chapter 11.
2. May 13. Critique of pluralist theory.
 - Mancur Olson Jr., "The Logic of Collective Action" Reader 1.2.
 - Martin Gilens, "Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America" Reader 11.1

VI. Congressional Representation: Congress is a pivotal institution in our analysis. It is supposed to provide representation. Does it? How? Watch not only for the twists and turns of self-interest in the institution, but also for how conflict is managed. The major themes of the Republic – self-interest, representation, and conflict – all come together, though not always in ways anticipated by the theory.

1. May 15. A model of Congress and the policy process.
 - Re-read *Federalist 51*.
 - Charles M. Cameron, “Bargaining and Presidential Power” Reader 6.2.
2. May 20. Getting Reelected, Constituency Representation, and Polarization.
 - Text, Chapter 5, pp. 137-53.
 - David R. Mayhew, “Congress: The Electoral Connection” Reader 5.1.
 - Richard F. Fenno, “Home Style” Reader 5.2
 - Laurel Harbridge and Neil Malhotra, “Electoral Incentives and Partisan Conflict in Congress: Evidence from Survey Experiments” Reader 5.3.
3. May 22. Congressional organization and the problem of collective responsibility.
 - Text, pp. 153-83.
 - D. Roderick Kiewiet and Mathew McCubbins, “The Logic of Delegation” Reader 1.4, pp. 38-42
 - Gary W. Cox and Mathew D. McCubbins, “Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the US House” Reader 5.4.

VII. Presidential Leadership, Executive and Judicial Politics: We expect presidents to be “statesmen,” bureaucrats to be, well, bureaucrats, and judges to be above it all. Where do concepts like “self interest” and “representation” fit in to the executive and judicial institutions of national government?

1. May 27. The Office of the Presidency
 - Text, Chapter 6.
 - William G. Howell, “Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action” Reader 6.4.
2. May 29. Presidential Leadership and Representation
 - Samuel Kernell, “Going Public” Reader 6.5.
3. June 3. Politics in the Executive Branch and Judiciary.
 - Text, Chapter 7, 8
4. June 5. Catch-up; review: How Democratic is the US?
 - Nolan McCarty, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal, “Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches” Reader 13.3.
 - Larry M. Bartels, “Unequal Democracy: The Political Economy of the New Gilded Age” Reader 16.2.

*******Final Exam: Thursday, June 12, 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM, 3 Kleiber Hall*******