

POLI 101: The Presidency

MWF 1:30pm-2:20pm in COB2 175

Instructor: Melissa Baker

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About POLI 101 - Spring 2019

Meeting Times

MWF 1:30pm-2:20pm COB2 175

Course Website

<https://catcourses.ucmerced.edu/courses/12813>

Instructor Melissa Baker

mbaker25@ucmerced.edu

Office Hours: Monday 11:30am-1:30pm or by appointment

Office: COB2 388

Course Description

Powers, constraints, and behavior of the U.S. president and executive branch. Includes specific topics such as legislative-executive interactions, presidential control of the bureaucracy, nomination campaigns and general elections, and public opinion and the presidency.

Course Prerequisites

Open only to standing(s): Sophomore, Junior, Senior. Pass/No Pass option.

Important Academic Year 2018-2019 Dates

<http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/schedules/academic-calendar/academic-calendar-2018-2019>

UC Merced Undergraduate Political Science Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

PLO #1:

An understanding of the processes, theories, and empirical regularities of political institutions and political behavior in the student's chosen emphasis area: American politics, comparative politics, or international relations.

PLO #2:

An ability to employ critical thinking and demonstrate social scientific literacy, including basic quantitative literacy.

PLO #3:

A capacity to utilize contemporary social science research methods to conduct rigorous research on political phenomena.

PLO #4:

Effective written communication skills, especially the ability to convey complex concepts and information in a clear and concise manner.

PLO #5

An ability to apply abstract theory and research methods to understand contemporary political events and public policies.

POLI 101 Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

CLO #1:

Scaffolding the student's knowledge, abilities, and skills related to Powers, constraints, and behavior of the U.S. president and executive branch. Includes specific topics such as legislative-executive interactions, presidential control of the bureaucracy, nomination campaigns and general elections, and public opinion and the presidency.

This CLO advances PLO #1

CLO #2:

Strengthening the student's capability to read political science journal articles by identifying and analyzing the following parts of an article:

- the main point of the article & the question the article seeks to answer
- the puzzle (gap in current knowledge) the article is trying to fill
- the debate (at least two sides) the article is entering in and siding with
- the theory's assumptions, conceptual variables and relationships
- the hypothesis(es) derived from the theory
- the research design, such as the groups, how they are assigned to groups, the main independent variable and dependent variable
- empirical analysis used (qualitative or quantitative)
- contribution to the discipline & directions for future research

This CLO advances PLO #1, PLO #2, and PLO #3

CLO #3:

Increasing the student's capacity to cooperate and work in teams by being a productive member of a journal article analysis team, and/or secretary team.

This CLO advances PLO #5

CLO #4:

Building the student's competency to learn the role and practice the specific responsibilities of a data analyst, geographic information systems analyst, policy (regulatory, legislative, and/or judicial) analyst, communications analyst, or project manager, within a public policy project team, so as to prepare them for employment opportunities in these or related fields.

This CLO advances PLO #2, POL #4, and PLO #5

CLO #5:

Enhancing the student's ability to speak in public by presenting the synthesis of their analysis of political science journal articles, and/or the work of their public policy project teams, and/or participate in a simulation.

This CLO advances PLO #2 and PLO #4

Course Policies

Class Attendance

I believe attendance is important because showing up and being present is integral to our life. As a university student, it is important that you attend course because it strengthens your connection with your peers, the professor, and understanding of the materials. As some material is only presented in class and not drawn from the textbook, it is in your best interest to always attend class in order to do well on quizzes and exams. If attendance is poor or wanes, I reserve the right to take attendance and assign attendance grades.

Electronic Devices

Please turn off cell phones and mute the volume on other electronic devices. No audio, video, or photographic recording of lectures is allowed without prior consent of the instructor.

Laptops

Laptop computers are to be used for note-taking only, unless the professor explicitly says otherwise. Any "off task" use of laptops (i.e. chatting, social networking, emailing) during class will be frowned upon, may result in you being considered "absent" from class, and potentially being banned from using your laptop in future class sessions.

Missing Class

You are responsible for making up for missed classes. Lectures notes should be obtained from your peers. If you miss a presentation day, you will be expected to provide documentation for your absence and you will be responsible for scheduling a makeup presentation.

Changes to the Syllabus

The schedule in this syllabus is largely settled; however, I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule or to other aspects of the course discussed in the syllabus. Any such changes will be announced in class and an updated syllabus noting version number will be uploaded to CatCourses. Each student is responsible for being aware of such changes.

Student Conduct and Academic Honesty Policy

You are responsible for your personal, academic, and professional conduct. Additionally, academic honesty is of critical importance at all institutions of higher education, especially research universities. Visit the UC Merced Student Conduct website and review the UCM Academic Honesty Policy.

Home Student Conduct

UCM Academic Honesty Policy

Student Accessibility Services

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. UC Merced is committed to make our courses accessible to all students, including students with limited mobility, impaired hearing or vision, and learning disabilities. If you believe you have a special need or a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Student Accessibility Services at (209) 228-6996 or Email: disabilityservices@ucmerced.edu. The Disability Services Center is at KL 222. Please also communicate any relevant information to the instructor to make sure appropriate accommodations are made.

<http://disabilityservices.ucmerced.edu/>

Counseling and Psychological Services

The mission of UC Merced Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) is to support the mental health and well-being of our students. It is the intention of all CAPS staff to provide a safe, confidential atmosphere of acceptance and accessibility to professionals in the field of psychology. Services specialize in the unique needs of UC Merced students in an effort to promote their academic, personal and social development.

<https://counseling.ucmerced.edu/>

Writing

The Writing Center is a UC Merced Library and Merritt Writing Program (MWP) initiative to support all stages of the writing and research process. Our goal is to support undergraduates in WRI courses who want to develop as writers. To show that you have made it through this syllabus and understand course policies, please email the instructor your favorite meme featuring any United States President. Alternatively, you can send what your walk-up song would be if you were a MLB player.

<http://library.ucmerced.edu/research/students/writing-center>

Sexual Harassment

UC Merced's policies and codes of conduct spell out the rights and responsibilities of students and employees in ensuring that UC Merced is a safe environment, and how the University addresses reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

<http://dsvp.ucmerced.edu/policies-laws>

Course Drop

The UC Merced Office of the Registrar has a webpage that links to the deadlines for a given semester or academic year. You are responsible for knowing the drop dates for the given semester or academic year. As course instructor, I do not have the power to drop a student.

<http://registrar.ucmerced.edu/schedules/deadlines>

Additional

To show that you have made it through this syllabus and understand course policies, please email the instructor your favorite meme featuring any United States President.

Alternatively, you can send what your walk-up song would be if you were a MLB player.

SONA

Students are encouraged to participate in SONA. For more information, visit <https://ucmerced.sona-systems.com/default.aspx>.

Extra Credit

You may earn extra credit for this course by participating in SONA studies. One (1) SONA credit may be used for this course and will count for one (1) percentage point added to your final grade. You may sign up for any study on SONA that you are qualified to participate in, they do not need to be political science studies. If you wish to earn extra credit but cannot participate in SONA studies for whatever reason, you may write a short paper for extra credit. Please see the instructor for details.

Readings

Required

Han, L. C. and D. J. Heith (2017). Presidents and the American Presidency. New York, NY, Oxford University Press.

Journal article readings will be provided through CatCourses. See course schedule for topics of readings.

Grading

Grade Posting

All grading will be posted to CatCourses in a timely fashion

Final Grades will be uploaded to CatCourses no later than Tuesday, May 21, 2019 (at noon)

Grading Policy

A+: 100% to 98.0%

A: < 98.0% to 94.0%

A-: < 94.0% to 90.0%

B+: < 90.0% to 87.0%

B: < 87.0% to 83.0%

B-: < 83.0% to 80.0%

C+: < 80.0% to 77.0%

C: < 77.0% to 73.0%

C-: < 73.0% to 70.0%

D+: < 70.0% to 67.0%

D: < 67.0% to 63.0%
D-: < 63.0% to 60.0%
F: < 60.0% to 0.0%

Grade Dispute and Resolution

If you have a concern regarding your grade, please contact me directly via email or visit me during office hours so we can discuss your concern and resolve it.

POLI 101 - Spring 2019 - Assignments and Assessments

Cabinet Secretary - 10%

About

Groups will do research on specific cabinet secretaries in the Trump administration and do a presentation. A full assignment document will be distributed on CatCourses as the semester progresses. Each group will be assigned a specific cabinet secretary and this information will be on the schedule posted on CatCourses.

Assessments

Group Write-up
Group Presentation

Grading

Cabinet secretary: Grading expectations will be in the assignment document distributed as the semester progresses.

Journal Article Analysis - 20%

About

Journal Article Analysis Teams are groups of students who read journal articles and analyze them. Teams are responsible for identifying these important parts of a journal article: main point, research question, puzzle and/or debate, theoretical background, hypotheses, research design, empirical analysis, main findings, and contribution to the discipline.

In addition to the journal article presentations, students will complete a short writing assignment about other articles throughout the semester. For this assignment, you are expected to write about one article posted on CatCourses that is ***different than the article assigned for oral presentations***. For this assignment, you should identify each of the nine parts of a journal article listed above. Dates for the individual write-up and group presentation are listed in the schedule on CatCourses.

Assessments

Journal Article Analysis
Journal Article Write-up

Grading

Journal Article: Since journal articles can vastly differ in substance, grading for presentations will be on completeness of presentation based on the information available in the article(s). Each of the nine parts should be discussed with an extra emphasis on the theoretical background, research design, and main findings parts. Students who have training in statistical analyses should use this opportunity to lead the discussion on empirical findings. I expect every group member to contribute to the creation of slides and presentation of slides.

There is no formal page requirement for this assignment, again due to the potential for journal articles to provide vastly different levels of information, so instead of a page requirement you will be required to write enough to explain the article in full. You will receive full credit if you identify each of the important parts of a journal article mentioned above (main point, research question, puzzle and/or debate, theoretical background, hypotheses, research design, empirical analysis, main findings, and contribution to the discipline).

Debate - 10%

About

Each group will be responsible for putting together a discovery packet and participate in a debate about a president. The debate will take place during a class period. For each president, there will be a pro group and anti group with the goal being to better argue the president was good or bad. Some topics could include, but should not be limited to, economic success, foreign policy, approval ratings, policy implementation, and reelection success/margins.

Assessments

Discovery Packet

Debate

Grading

Discovery Packet: Each student will be independently graded on their contribution to the discovery packet. Accordingly, the discovery packet should be labeled with (or include a separate sheet to indicate) who contributed what information. There is no page minimum, but there should be enough topics and information for each topic to fill the entire debate (please see debate rubric on CatCourses).

Debate: The debate grade will be a group grade, everyone in the group will receive the same grade. A grading rubric for the debate will be posted on CatCourses.

In-class Assignments - 10%

About

Throughout the semester, there will be several in-class assignments. These assignments will correspond with the week's topic and will be given in-class.

Assessments

Completion of Assignment

Grading

You will be provided with the assignment at the start of the class period. Expectations will be given for each individual assignment on the day they are to be completed.

Midterm - 20%

About

There will be one midterm exam for this course. The midterm will consist of 25 questions and will be given on the date listed in the schedule below.

Assessments

25 Question Examination

Midterm Exam Preparation

Attending All Meeting Periods

Completing Assigned Reading

Attending Lectures, Taking Notes

Taking Quizzes

Completing Journal Analysis Assignments

Quizzes - 10%

About

Each week of the semester, starting week 2, a quiz will be required. These quizzes will be taken online, **not** during class periods. The quizzes will be timed but you can take the quiz at any point during the week. If you do not attempt to complete the quiz during the designated week, you will not have access to the quiz questions or answers. This means you will not have a tool to help you prepare for the final exam.

Assessments

13 Quizzes which have 5-20 questions

Schedule

Quizzes will be available during the interval starting Sunday, 12:01am and close Saturday, 11:59pm corresponding to the week when Learning Unit occurs.

After Saturday, at 11:59pm, the quiz will close and no longer be available to attempt.

Grading

You will have up to three attempts to earn the highest score possible. Once you open a quiz, you must finish the quiz, otherwise CatCourses will mark it as an attempt and score

whatever you have filled out (even if it is nothing, which will then result as a zero for one attempt).

Final Exam - 20%

About

Final Exams allow me to more objectively assess and you to further display your command of the course materials and achievement of Course Learning Outcomes.

Assessments

100 Question Examination

The Final Exam is scheduled for Week 17 during the designated Final Exam date/time/location. You should anticipate needing the entire 3-hour period to complete the exam.

The Final Exam is proctored in-class. You are not allowed to take the final exam outside of class or during another time, unless you scheduled otherwise with the professor in advance.

Each question is worth 1 point.

Questions will be multiple choice, multiple-response, true-false, and matching.

Questions will be drawn from lectures, the books, and journal articles.

Preparation for Final Exam

Attending All Meeting Periods

Completing Assigned Reading

Attending Lectures, Taking Notes

Taking Quizzes

Completing Journal Analysis Assignments

POLI 101 - Spring 2019 - Course Schedule

W#	Date	POLI 101
1	Wednesday, January 23, 2019	Introductions
1	Friday, January 25, 2019	Introductions
2	Monday, January 28, 2019	Group Introductions and Work
2	Wednesday, January 30, 2019	Group Introductions and Work
2	Friday, February 1, 2019	Example Journal Article Presentation
3	Monday, February 4, 2019	Presidents and the Constitution (H&H Ch1)
3	Wednesday, February 6, 2019	Presidential Selection Process (H&H Ch 2)
3	Friday, February 8, 2019	Presidents and the Legislative Branch (H&H Ch 6)
4	Monday, February 11, 2019	Presidents and the Executive Branch (H&H Ch 8)
4	Wednesday, February 13, 2019	Presidents and the Judicial Branch (H&H Ch 7)
4	Friday, February 15, 2019	Presentation work day
5	Monday, February 18, 2019	Holiday (Presidents Day)

W#	Date	POLI 101
5	Wednesday, February 20, 2019	Debate Prep / Other Group Work
5	Friday, February 22, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 1)
6	Monday, February 25, 2019	Debate #1 (Group 3 vs 4)
6	Wednesday, February 27, 2019	Debate #2 (Group 9 vs 10)
6	Friday, March 1, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 2) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 7)
7	Monday, March 4, 2019	Presidents and Mass Media (H&H Ch 4)
7	Wednesday, March 6, 2019	Presidents and Mass Media (H&H Ch 4)
7	Friday, March 8, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 3) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 8)
8	Monday, March 11, 2019	Presidents and Domestic Policy (H&H Ch 9)
8	Wednesday, March 13, 2019	Presidents and Foreign Policy (H&H Ch 10)
8	Friday, March 15, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 4) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 9)
9	Monday, March 18, 2019	Midterm
9	Wednesday, March 20, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 5) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 10)
9	Friday, March 22, 2019	No class
10	Monday, March 25, 2019	Spring Recess
10	Wednesday, March 27, 2019	Spring Recess
10	Friday, March 29, 2019	Cesar Chavez Holiday
11	Monday, April 1, 2019	Presidents and Public Opinion (H&H Ch 5)
11	Wednesday, April 3, 2019	Presidents and Public Opinion (H&H Ch 5)
11	Friday, April 5, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 6) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 1)
12	Monday, April 8, 2019	Debate Prep / Other Group Work
12	Wednesday, April 10, 2019	Presidents and Campaigns (H&H Ch 3)
12	Friday, April 12, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 7) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 2)
13	Monday, April 15, 2019	Presidents and Voting
13	Wednesday, April 17, 2019	No class
13	Friday, April 19, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 8) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 3)
14	Monday, April 22, 2019	Presidents and Decision Making
14	Wednesday, April 24, 2019	No class
14	Friday, April 26, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 9) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 4)
15	Monday, April 29, 2019	Debate #3 (Group 5 vs 6)
15	Wednesday, May 1, 2019	Debate #4 (Group 1 vs 2)
15	Friday, May 3, 2019	Debate #5 (Group 7 vs 8)
16	Monday, May 6, 2019	Journal Article Presentation (Group 10) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 5) Cabinet Secretary Presentation (Group 6)

W#	Date	POLI 101
16	Wednesday, May 8, 2019	Review
16	Friday, May 10, 2019	No class
17	Saturday, May 11, 2019	POLI 101 FINAL 11:30am-2:30pm