

Political Science 1: Introduction to American Politics Spring 2022

This course focuses on the major national political institutions (like Congress and the Judiciary) and mass politics in America (like voting behavior). The primary goals 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.

Instructor:

- Professor Ben Highton, bhighton@ucdavis.edu
- Office hours
 - Thursdays 11:00-1:00 (in person or virtual)
 - Whether in-person or virtual, please sign up for a time-slot on Calendly (link [here](#)).
 - For virtual office hours, we will use Zoom (link [here](#)).
 - If you would like to meet outside of office hours, please email me and we will set up a time.

Teaching Assistants & Sections

- Ginger Alonso, galonso@ucdavis.edu, Sections A02 & A03
- Christian Jones, cdjon@ucdavis.edu, Sections A04 & A05
- Rana McReynolds, rmcreynolds@ucdavis.edu, Sections: A01 & A06
- The teaching assistants will post their office hours on Canvas during the first week of class.

Reading

There is one required book for the course: *Why We're Polarized* (by Ezra Klein). Students are also expected to subscribe to and read two daily newsletters on American politics: “The 5-Minute Fix” from the *Washington Post* and “On Politics” from the *New York Times*. There is not a textbook for this course.

Writing

POL1 qualifies as a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) course that fulfills the Writing Experience (WE) core literacy requirement. Students will work on their writing through five short (~500 word) papers. Details and expectations will be discussed in lectures and sections.

Final Exam

The final exam is tentatively scheduled to be in-person on Wednesday, June 8 from 10:30-12:30.

Grades

Final grades will be based on the section participation (10%), writing assignments (50%), and the final exam (40%). The first time a student turns in a late assignment, the maximum grade it will receive is half credit. The second and any subsequent late assignments will receive grades of 0. Please allow for sufficient time to upload your assignments to Canvas. We will offer a five-minute “grace period,” meaning that an assignment will not be treated as late if it is submitted to Canvas within 5 minutes of the due date/time. Grades will be assigned using the following scale:

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

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 OSSJA (the office of Student Support and Judicial Affairs, <https://ossja.ucdavis.edu/>), and especially this [document](#). *Please also note that we will use plagiarism review software that compares what students submit to what other students submit along with what can be found on the internet.* Plagiarism is a serious offense and violates the university's academic code of conduct. We will punish it severely. If you have any questions about plagiarism specifically or what constitutes inappropriate academic behavior in general, please contact SJA, Prof. Highton, or your TA *in advance* of turning something in.

Tentative Schedule

Lectures:

3/29: Introduction	3/31: The Judiciary
4/5: The Judiciary	4/7: Congress
4/12: Congress	4/14: Congress
4/19: The President/Bureaucracy	4/21: The President/Bureaucracy
4/26: Catch-up	4/28: The Constitution
5/3: Civil Liberties	5/5: Civil Rights
5/10: Public Opinion & Voting	5/12: Public Opinion & Voting
5/17: Public Opinion & Voting	5/19: Political Parties
5/24: Political Parties	5/26: Interest Groups
5/31: Interest Groups	6/2: Catch-up & final exam review

Readings, due by:

Mon. 4/4: Klein, Chapter 1	Mon. 4/11: Klein, Chapter 2
Mon. 4/18: Klein, Chapters 3 & 4	Mon. 4/25: Klein, Chapter 5 & Interlude
Mon. 5/2: Klein, Chapter 6	Mon. 5/9: Klein, Chapter 7
Mon. 5/16: Klein, Chapter 8	Mon. 5/23: Klein, Chapters 9 & 10
Mon. 5/30: None	