

# Political Science 103A

## California Politics

Welcome to Political Science 103A: California Politics! I'm your professor, Thad Kousser, and you can always reach me at [tkousser@ucsd.edu](mailto:tkousser@ucsd.edu). You can see who I am at <https://polisci.ucsd.edu/people/faculty/faculty-directory/currently-active-faculty/kousser-profile.html>

**Textbook:** The text for the course in Spring 2020 will be *Governing California: Politics, Government, and Public Policy in the Golden State, Third Edition* (Berkeley Public Policy Press, 2013), edited by Ethan Rarick. [Do not buy an earlier edition of this book, as those are completely different!]

**Assignments:** Your grade for this course will be composed of:

40% Completion of four of the weekly quizzes, worth 10 points each. You will be able to choose four quizzes out of eight choices. You will earn the full 10 points as long as you score a 60% or above on the quiz. The goal here is to ensure that you are keeping on top of the weekly readings, podcasted lectures, and Zoom-recorded discussions.

30% A 5-7 page paper that will be due in Week 7 and returned in Week 9. This will be written in the form of a "vote recommendation memo" to a California legislator, and I will distribute and discuss the prompt in Week 2.

30% A take-home final that you will take for any three-hour period in the 24 hours leading up to 10pm on Wednesday, June 10, which is the scheduled final for this course.

### Lectures and Discussions

I will give an introductory lecture on the Zoom address below on Monday, March 30. That will be the only lecture for Week 1. Beginning in Week 2, and for each week afterward, here's how I will deliver the course lectures:

1. I will post two podcasted lectures, each lasting one hour, that I delivered in a prior version of this class. Each of these will be paired with a set of PowerPoint slides. You can download the slides and listen to the podcasts whenever you like.

2. I will hold Zoom discussions on Monday nights from 8-8:50pm, in which I'll provide some updates on recent changes in California politics, answer your questions, discuss things with you, and bring in guest speakers. You can participate live, or you can watch the discussions once they are posted to Canvas.

To connect live through your computer or phone, use:

Zoom Meeting ID: 411 402 084    <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/411402084>

+12133388477,,411402084# US (Los Angeles)

## Office Hours

I will hold virtual office hours from 1-3pm on Mondays. For the first hour, I can meet individually with you; please send me an email, and I will send you an individual Zoom invitation for a 15-minute meeting during the 1-2pm block. For the second hour, I will hold group office hours through the Zoom meeting below. This is a great opportunity to ask substantive questions about the course -- which other students will also have questions about -- and to talk about potential career options for political science majors.

Zoom Meeting ID: 414 407 813, <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/414407813> or call in at +16692192599,,414407813# US (San Jose)

Our course graders will also be holding office hours. They are:

Faith Conlin, [fconlin@ucsd.edu](mailto:fconlin@ucsd.edu), Mondays from 10-11am, Zoom ID: 368-509-3530 or <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/3685093530>

Yeilim Chong, [yecheong@ucsd.edu](mailto:yecheong@ucsd.edu), Tuesdays 6-7pm, Zoom ID: 356-048-7825 (<https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/3560487825>)

Sergio Guedas Reis, [sguedesr@ucsd.edu](mailto:sguedesr@ucsd.edu), Thursdays from 1-2pm, Zoom ID: 476-768-9595 (link: <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/4767689595>)

## Students with Disabilities

We want to be able to serve you well and welcome your communication. Students requesting accommodations for this course due to a disability must provide a current Authorization for Accommodation (AFA) letter issued by the Office for Students with Disabilities (<https://osd.ucsd.edu/>). Students are required to discuss accommodation arrangements with instructors and OSD liaisons in the department **well in advance** of any exams or assignments. The OSD Liaison for the Department of Political Science is Joanna Peralta; please connect with her via the [Virtual Advising Center](#) as soon as possible.

## Academic Advising

*Students who have questions pertaining to Political Science academic advising are asked to reach out the Department's Undergraduate Advisor, Natalie Icker, who can be reached via the [Virtual Advising](#)*

*Center:* Academic advising questions often include (but not limited to): add/drop deadlines, course enrollment policies, planning major and minor requirements, quarter-by-quarter plans, department petitions and paperwork, and referrals to campus and student support services.

## **Inclusive Classroom Statement**

I am fully committed to creating a learning environment that supports diversity of thought, perspectives, experiences, and identities. We urge each of you to contribute your unique perspectives to discussions of course questions, themes, and materials so that we can learn from them, and from each other. If you should ever feel excluded, or unable to fully participate in class for any reason, please let me know, or you may also submit anonymous written feedback to the Department of Political Science's Undergraduate Advisor, [Natalie Ikker](#), Natalie will bring these anonymous comments to my attention. Additional resources to support equity, diversity, and inclusion in our classroom, and beyond, may be found here: Office of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

858.822.3542 | [diversity@ucsd.edu](mailto:diversity@ucsd.edu) | <https://diversity.ucsd.edu/>  
<https://students.ucsd.edu/student-life/diversity/index.html>  
<https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/governance/policies/4400.html>

**Basic Needs.** Any student who has difficulty accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live, and believes this may affect their performance in this course, is encouraged to contact: [foodpantry@ucsd.edu](mailto:foodpantry@ucsd.edu) or [basicneeds@ucsd.edu](mailto:basicneeds@ucsd.edu).

**Extensions and Late Assignments:** Please reach out to me at [tkousser@ucsd.edu](mailto:tkousser@ucsd.edu) if you have an illness or documented family emergency. We will work out an extension with no penalty. If you do not have a reason, I will accept late papers with a penalty of 5% for the next calendar day, an additional 5% for each business day after that. Students will max out at a 25% reduction. I have never seen a paper improve at a rate greater than the one at which you lose points. Stay in touch and we can work out ways to address your obstacles.

## **Course Outline**

*Part I. Political Institutions in Flux*

Week 1. Course Introduction. <https://ucsd.zoom.us/j/411402084>

Week 2. Direct Democracy in California  
Lecture 2 Initiatives and Referendums

- a. Ken Miller, "Direct Democracy: The Initiative, Referendum, and Recall" *Governing California*

Lecture 3 The Recall

- b. Watch this 7-minute video from ABC on the night of the 2003 recall:  
<https://abcnews.go.com/Archives/video/oct-2003-recall-california-election-9108039>

Week 3. California's State Legislature

Professionalizing the California Legislature.

- c. Thad Kousser, "Partisan Polarization and Government Gridlock," Chapter 11 in *Governing California*.

Term Limits and the Future of the Legislature.

- d. Bruce Cain, Thad Kousser, and Karl Kurtz, "The Legislature: Life Under Term Limits," Chapter 10 in *Governing California*.

Week 4. Governors and Elections in California

Bargaining with Governors

- e. Ethan Rarick, "Governors and the Executive Branch," Chapter 9 in *Governing California*.

Movements and Elections in California.

Week 5. Primaries and Redistricting in California.

- f. Seth Masket, "Polarization Interrupted? California's Experiment with the Top-Two Primary," Chapter 7 in *Governing California*.
- g. Vladimir Kogan and Eric McGhee, "Redistricting: Did Radical Reform Produce Different Results," Chapter 6 in *Governing California*.

*Part II. The Geopolitics of Diversity*

Week 6. The Geopolitics of Diversity

Diversity and Participation.

- h. Jack Citrin, Morris Levy, and Andrea Campbell, "State of Change: Immigration Politics and the New Demography of California," Chapter 2 in *Governing California*.

Political Incorporation of Minority Groups.

Week 7. The Battle of Los Angeles

Incorporation in Urban Politics: The Case of Los Angeles.

The Battle of Los Angeles II: Old and New Rainbows

- i. Raphael J. Sonenshein and Mark H. Drayse, “The Political Geography of Coalitions in an Age of Immigration: The Case of Los Angeles,” *The New Political Geography of California*.

Week 8. Translating Demographics into Governance

Race as a Political Issue: Demographics and Initiatives.

- a. “California’s Political Geography: Coast vs. Inland and Increasingly Blue,” Kenneth P. Miller and Frederick Douzet, Chapter 3 in *Governing California*.

Moving On Up to Sacramento.

*Part III. Perspectives on Policy.*

Week 9: Crime and Punishment

Crime and Punishment I: The System.

- j. David A. Carrillo, “The California Judiciary,” Chapter 12 in *Governing California*.

Crime and Punishment II: Race and Crime.

- k. “A Primer: The Impact of Three Strikes After More Than a Decade,” California Legislative Analyst’s Office,  
[http://www.lao.ca.gov/2005/3\\_Strikes/3\\_strikes\\_102005.pdf](http://www.lao.ca.gov/2005/3_Strikes/3_strikes_102005.pdf)

Week 10: Local Government and Environmental Politics

The Layers of California Government.

- l. Max Nieman, “Local Government: Designing and Financing the Cities and Counties of California,” Chapter 13 in *Governing California*.

Environmental Politics.

- m. Megan Mullin, “Water: A Case Study in Federalism,” Chapter 15 in *Governing California*.