Course Overview: Society is full of groups with competing interests based on occupation, class, religion, race, gender, sexuality, ideology, etc. Competing theories exist on how well these interests are represented in the American political system. Pluralists argue that competing interests mean that no one group dominates the political process. Others maintain that some groups have greater influence in the political system than others. This course is intended to provide students with an introduction to interest groups, social movements, and political parties. As students engage the course materials each week, they should consider the following themes: What are the similarities and differences between types of organized interests? How do organized interests influence the policy process? Are some interests better represented than others? Are some types of organized interests more influential in the political process than others? What, if any, efforts are necessary to protect against “special” or dominate interests?

By course’s end, students should have a comprehensive introduction to organized interests in American politics. They should also be able to engage in central debates concerning the influence of interest groups, social movements, and political parties on policy formation and implementation using evidence grounded in fact and scientific research methods. Finally, students should develop the analytical skills necessary to process and critically evaluate political information, behavior, and opinions.

Required Materials
Students are required to purchase:


I will upload to the TritonEd course website any readings that are not easily accessible online. You are expected to complete the readings before coming to class.

Course Evaluation
Grades will be calculated as follows:

- Think Pieces (5 total, at least 2 submitted before Midterm) 10%
- Discussion Questions (5 total for 1% each) 5%
- Participation 20%
- Midterm Exam 30%
- Final Paper 35%
Assignments

• **Think Pieces** – You are required to submit 5 short papers (250-500) during the quarter. You may only submit one think piece per week and at least 2 must be submitted before the midterm exam. These short assignments should not be a summary of the readings but it should be clear from the paper that the course materials were read. Each 250-500 word short paper should: (1) include a thesis statement in the first paragraph, (2) analyze the argument, evidence, methods or implications of at least one reading that has yet to be discussed in class, and (3) connect the reading with at least one other reading, a current event, or political phenomenon. I recommend that you write these think pieces to help you prepare for the final paper. The think pieces are due to TritonEd by midnight before the reading is discussed during class.

• **Discussion Questions** – On weeks that you do not submit a think piece, you must submit a question to TritonEd. The question can be a clarification question or it can be a discussion question regarding a topic you would like to be addressed during class. The questions must be submitted by midnight before class.

• **Participation** – Participation by every student is integral for the success of the course. We will learn not only from the course material, but also from our diverse perspectives and experiences. Throughout the course, I will give you in-class assignments that will contribute to your participation grade. Missing class frequently will hurt your participation grade.

• **Midterm Exam** – The midterm will assess your understanding of course concepts. Questions for the exam will be drawn from the readings and information presented during class. The midterm will consist of multiple choice, short answer, and identification questions. It is intended to gauge your understanding of all material from lectures, discussions, and readings.

• **Final Paper** – Use the readings from this course to write an 8-10 page paper on organized interests in the United States. The thesis should answer whether certain organized interests have greater influence in the political system than others and whether efforts to guard against dominate interests have been successful. To guide the paper, think about an issue that is important to you. Discuss how at least two interest groups, social movements, or political parties represent your interest (i.e., any combination of at least two organized interest groups). Are some organized interests better than others in advocating for your interest? How do organized interest groups support or impede each other’s efforts to advocate for your interest? In the conclusion discuss efforts that exist or should exist to protect against undue influence. The final paper is due to TritonEd by 2:30pm on December 12, 2017.

**Late Assignments and Make-Up Exams:** Think pieces and questions will not receive credit if late. There are three days most weeks to submit these assignments. So, plan accordingly. A make-up exam will only be granted under extraordinary circumstances and only with proper written documentation (e.g., doctors note). Please contact me as soon as possible so that we can make arrangements. Your grade will be deducted 10% for each day that the final paper is late. It is late if not submitted by 2:30pm on December 12.

**Grade Grievances:** Any requests for a grade change must be submitted to me within 72 hours of your receiving the graded assignment. The written request must be typed and no longer than one
Your request for grade reconsideration should include a detailed explanation with evidence from course materials. I will review the entire assignment to determine whether the grade should be increased, decreased, or remain the same.

**Academic Integrity:** Any violation of UCSD’s academic integrity policy will result in failing this class. The policy can be consulted here: [http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2](http://senate.ucsd.edu/Operating-Procedures/Senate-Manual/Appendices/2).

**Sexual Misconduct/Title IX Statement:** UC San Diego prohibits sexual violence and sexual harassment and will respond promptly to reports of misconduct. If you wish to speak confidentially about an incident of sexual misconduct, please contact CARE at the Sexual Assault Resources Center at (858) 534-5793. Students should be aware that faculty members are considered responsible employees and are not a confidential resource; as such, if you disclose an incident of sexual misconduct to a faculty member, they have an obligation to report it to UC San Diego’s Title IX office, the Office for the Prevention of Harassment & Discrimination (OPHD). To learn more about sexual misconduct, visit: [https://students.ucsd.edu/sponsor/sarc/index.html](https://students.ucsd.edu/sponsor/sarc/index.html). To report an incident to the University, please contact OPHD at ophd@ucsd.edu

**Course Readings**

**Part I: Foundations and Perspectives**

Fri, Sept 29 – Course Introduction

Mon, Oct 2 – Foundations of Organized Interests
- Fri, Oct 6 Madison, James. 1787. “Federalist 10.” [https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10](https://www.congress.gov/resources/display/content/The+Federalist+Papers#TheFederalistPapers-10)

Wed, Oct 4 – Definitions and Perspectives
- Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 1

Friday, Oct 6 – Pluralism
- Truman, David B. 1951. Excerpt from The Governmental Process

Monday, Oct 9 – Elistism/Transactions Theory
Wed, Oct 11 – Neopluralism
- Baumgartner, Frank and Bryan Jones. Excerpt from Agendas and Instability in American Politics pp. 517-528

Part II: Interest Groups and Social Movements
Friday, Oct 13 – Defining Interest Groups and Social Movements
- Review Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 1

Mon, Oct 16 – Interest Organization Mobilization
- Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 2 (pp 29-48)

Wed, Oct 18 – The Who and Why of Participation
- Excerpt from Rosenstone and Hansen (American Politics Reader pp. 351-368)

Fri, Oct 20 – Who participates in social movements?

Mon, Oct 23 – Organized Interest Community

Wed, Oct 25 – Organization Maintenance
- Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 2 (pp 49-65)

Fri, Oct 27 – Subsidizing and Funding Movements and IGs
Mon, Oct 30 – Interest Community Bias Part I
- Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 3 (skim 70-90, read 90-103)

Wed, Nov 1 – Interest Community Bias Part II

Fri, Nov 3 – Midterm

Mon, Nov 6 – Organized Interests and the Public
- Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 4 (pp. 108-118)

Wed, Nov 8 – Inside and Outside Lobbying
- Kollman, Ken, Excerpt from Outside Lobbying pp. 404-418

Fri, Nov 10 – Veteran’s Day Holiday

Part III: Political Parties
Mon, Nov 13 – Interest Organizations and Political Parties
- Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 4 (pp. 118-142)

Wed, Nov 15 – Political Parties and Interest Organizations

Fri, Nov 17 – What is a Political Party? Part I

Mon, Nov 20 – What is a Political Party? Part II

Wed, Nov 22 – No Class

Mon, Nov 27 – Sources of Economic Biases in Political Parties
• McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal, excerpt from *Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Rights*, pp. 474-490


Wed, Nov 29 – Interest Organizations and The Legislature
• Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 5

Fri, Dec 1 – Interest Organization Influence


Mon, Dec 4 – Social Movements and Political Parties


Wed, Dec 6 – Reforms Pt I
• Lowery and Brasher, Chapter 8

Fri, Dec 8 – Reforms Pt II
• Walsh, Katherine Cramer. “Talking about Race: Community Dialogues and the Politics of Difference” pp. 419-424

• Citizens United

Tues, December 12 (11:30am-2:30pm) – Final Paper due by 2:30pm