POLI 10: Introduction to American Politics [Summer Session I 2015]

The Basics

*Lecture:* T/Th 2:00-4:50pm [Humanities and Social Science Building (HSS) 1128A]

*Instructor:* Mona Vakilifathi [mvakilif@ucsd.edu]

*Office Hours:* T 12:00pm-2:00pm [Social Sciences Building 448]

*TA:* John Kuk [jskuk@ucsd.edu]

Course Goals

The goals of this course are: (1) to provide an overview of American political institutions; (2) to make sense of the behavior of voters, interest groups, and elected officials; and (3) to provide an introduction to political science, including the theoretical perspective and the empirical contributions political scientists produce.

Required Readings

3. Additional academic journal articles and news articles [All journal articles are posted on TED under the “Other Discussion Readings” folder.]

Course Evaluation

*Attendance* [10%] – Students are expected to attend every lecture and participate in class discussion and activities. Attendance will be taken during every lecture in the beginning, middle, or end of each lecture.

*Facilitating discussion* [10%] – Students are expected to lead class discussion twice. As a discussion leader, students are expected to provide a write-up for an assigned reading to share with the class beforehand. [Refer to the “Discussion Article Summaries” section in this syllabus for more information.]

*Group discussion* [5%] On Thursday, July 23, 2015, Kathryn Dove will be leading a guest lecture regarding current issues in American politics. All students are expected to attend this lecture and read the assigned articles (as listed in the “Course Schedule” section.)

*Midterm* [30%] – The midterm exam will be held in class on Tuesday, July 14th 2:00pm-3:30pm. All content covered prior to the day of the midterm exam may be included in the exam. Please bring a bluebook for the midterm exam.

*Final* [45%] – The final exam will be held on Saturday, August 1st 3:00pm-5:59pm [Location TBA]. The final exam will be cumulative. Please bring a bluebook for the final exam.
How to Access and Use TED?

Log in with the same username and password used for UCSD e-mail, click on “POLI 10 – Vakilifathi [S115]” link on home page, check the “Content” section for course documents and the “Announcements” section for important updates.

How to Set Up the UCSD Proxy Server to Access Articles Off-Campus? [Optional]

Follow the directions on the website based on the internet browser you typically use.

Academic Dishonesty

You are expected to complete the assignments and exams on your own without the assistance of others. The midterm and final exams are closed note and closed book. Please refer to the UCSD’s policy on academic integrity: https://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html.

Learning Disabilities

If you have a UCSD-documented learning disability, please inform the instructor and teaching assistant of your academic needs.

Discussion Article Summaries

Please refer to the “Reading Assignments” file on TED to find your two assigned readings for this course.

As a discussion leader, you will be expected to provide a general summary of the assigned reading. Each summary must include: (1) the summary of the reading, (2) the main points of the reading, and (3) how the reading relates to the textbook and other discussion readings assigned for that lecture. Summaries may be written in paragraph form or in bullet points (with complete sentences.) Refer to the example summary of the Olson (1965), which is posted on TED in the “Discussion Article Summaries” folder, when writing your own summaries.

Your reading summary must be posted on the TED by 5pm the day before lecture. Refer to the due date row listed in the “Reading Assignments” file on TED if any clarification on this point is necessary.

Absent for Lecture?

It’s a really bad idea to miss a lecture or two during this condensed summer course. Resist the sunshine and the beach on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons!! However, if you miss class and would like to make up for your attendance grade (1% for each lecture) for one lecture, you can write up a 12-point font, 2 double-spaced page response paper that synthesizes the assigned textbook and discussion readings for that lecture. Please speak with me before pursuing this activity. You can only do this for one lecture. If you attend every lecture, you may complete this assignment for 1% extra credit.
**Course Schedule**

**Required Reading(s):** All students are required to read the assigned textbook chapter, journal article, or news article prior to lecture (e.g. students are expected to have read LAP 3 prior to 7/2/2015.)

**Discussion Reading(s):** Discussion leaders will be assigned to provide a summary for these assigned readings by 5pm the night before lecture (as detailed in the “Reading Assignments” file on TED.) All students are strongly encouraged to read through at least one discussion reading per lecture but are required to read the discussion reading summaries before lecture.

**Optional Reading(s):** Extra LAP chapters discussed in lecture and related journal articles that might interest you when you have time to look through them. Enjoy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic(s)</th>
<th>Required Reading(s)</th>
<th>Discussion Reading(s)</th>
<th>Optional Reading(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Week 1: Introduction to Political Science; American Government Infrastructure</td>
<td>6/30/2015 Introduction Articles of Confederation/ US Constitution</td>
<td>LAP 2</td>
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<td>LAP 1; PAPP 1-1; 2-2; PAPP 2-3</td>
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<td>7/2/2015 US Constitution Federalism</td>
<td>LAP 3</td>
<td>PAPP 3-1; 3-2; 3-3</td>
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<td>Week 2: Political Behavior</td>
<td>7/7/2015 Political Parties Interest Groups</td>
<td>LAP 12</td>
<td>PAPP 12-1; 12-2; 12-3</td>
<td>LAP 13</td>
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<td>7/9/2015 Public Opinion Voting and Elections</td>
<td>LAP 11</td>
<td>PAPP 10-2; 11-1; 14-2; Bartels (2005)</td>
<td>LAP 10</td>
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<td>Week 3: The News Media; The Legislative Branch</td>
<td>7/14/2015 Midterm The News Media</td>
<td>LAP 14</td>
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<td>7/16/2015 Congress</td>
<td>LAP 6</td>
<td>PAPP 6-2; 6-3; 11-2</td>
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<td>Week 4: The Judicial Branch; American Politics Today</td>
<td>7/21/2015 Federal Courts Civil Rights and Liberties</td>
<td>LAP 9</td>
<td>PAPP 9-1; 9-2; 9-3</td>
<td>LAP 4, 5</td>
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<td>Week 5: The Executive Branch; State and Local Politics</td>
<td>7/28/2015 President Bureaucracy</td>
<td>LAP 7, 8</td>
<td>PAPP 7-2; 8-1; 8-2; Beckmann (2008)</td>
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<td>7/30/2015 State and Local Politics Political Reform?</td>
<td>LAP 15</td>
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<td>8/1/2015 Final Exam</td>
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