Interest Groups are in some respects the orphans (I’m being kind here) of Political Science. They are not institutionally defined (as are the executive, legislative and judicial branches of government), nor are they as “simple” to study as political parties (we mainly have only two). Yet they are involved with every institutional and party operation in the country. They are not new—James Madison worried about these “factions” over two centuries ago—yet their number and influence have grown dramatically ever since Mr. Madison expressed his concerns.

The purpose of this class is to examine what interest groups are, where they fit in our Constitutional order, how they differ from political parties (a distinction that is becoming increasingly hard to make), how they attract and maintain their memberships, and how they attempt to influence public policy. A substantial portion of the last item will deal with the politics of financing election campaigns. We will (as you will see below) accomplish this as a class.
REQUIREMENTS:

A. Attendance--in both body and mind.

B. Readings--should be completed before class discussion (a prerequisite for the second condition in A). A tentative schedule of readings begins on the back of this handout. I’ll mention the readings required each week as the lectures progress. I reserve the right to add/ subtract readings as needed (e.g., a great new essay comes out).

One book is required for this class and is available at the bookstore or elsewhere.


Several essays of various lengths will also be required and will be available online through the UCSD library server (access on campus or at home through a campus VPN). Instructions can be found at:


C. Midterm Exams (40-50%) – We will discuss this in class. These will be administered during the class on two separate days, January 30 and March 4, and will be comprised of fairly short, very specific essays. Preparation guides will be distributed one week before each.

(Please note: any requests to review exam grades must be made in writing (typed) with a full and detailed justification for the request.)

D. Research Paper (50-60%) – Each of you will write an 8-12 page paper discussing one of two topics:

1. How a particular interest group is organized and how it pursues its policy interests (preferred)
2. How interest groups have generally influenced/ try to influence a particular policy issue

Rules for selection: You *cannot* choose an interest group nor an issue with which you are directly involved (this includes a group that is in direct opposition to one to which you belong). This may seem unreasonable, but it places everyone on a level playing field, and helps to prevent individual biases from creeping into the analysis. You may also not choose the NRA nor the AARP (as I will use these extensively as examples in class).
**Timeline:** submissions must be made on the following days and times. Unlike STOP signs for most Californians, due dates are not "suggestions." You will be docked 1% of the total class grade for every day that any of these submissions is late ("next day" clock begins 10 minutes after due date/time). Further instructions will be posted for each submission. We hope that this forces you to get to work early on your papers.

1. **January 20:** Choice of topic—one paragraph only, submitted through TurnItIn by 10PM
2. **February 20:** An outline of your paper and intended readings—no more than two pages, submitted
3. **March 18:** Final paper—no later than 11:30 am through TurnItIn.
4. **Presentation**—I will ask for 10 volunteers to present their research to the class (15-20 minute presentations) during the last two weeks of the quarter. Your presentation can help your overall paper grade, but it will not hurt it. You will also be able to get feedback from me and your grader before the final product is submitted. 
   You must volunteer no later than **February 20** through a TritonEd link. 
   If two or more students are working with the same interest group/policy, I will either choose the first volunteer or ask that the students work as a team (in their presentation only).
CLASS WEB PAGE:

Changes to this syllabus, as well as any review guides, assignments, informational messages, or date changes will be posted on the class web page (TritonEd). Please check it on a daily basis. Go to ted.ucsd.edu. Your classes should be listed. If you are having trouble getting into TritonEd (students visiting from other campuses are especially vulnerable to this problem), please let one of us know as soon as possible.

POLICY ON CHEATING:

Failure—no exceptions. “Cheating” includes copying from another during or bringing notes to the midterms, as well as collaborating on the final paper. You can help each other with general questions about basic concepts, facts, readings, lectures, citation style, etc. In fact, I strongly suggest you do so on a regular basis.

If you are not sure about the distinction, please ask me to clarify. Further information on violations of university academic integrity codes can be found at:

http://academicintegrity.ucsd.edu/excel-integrity/define-cheating/index.html

PLAGIARISM:

Plagiarism is the intentional use of another’s words (by direct transcription) or ideas (by paraphrasing) without attribution. University prohibitions against plagiarism are rather clear. Again, if you are not sure about the meaning of plagiarism, please ask me to clarify or go to the link above.

INCOMPLETES

The university grants me precious little discretion here. In order to qualify for an incomplete, I must demonstrate that you have been doing passable work (so you have to have taken the first midterm and passed it) and you must demonstrate a reason for requesting an incomplete that conforms to university guidelines (documented illness, death or emergency in the family, unexpected military deployment, etc.). Again, the university makes this decision—not me nor the graders.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES:

Any requests for special class or examination accommodations must be cleared through The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD) at UC San Diego. I am more than happy to follow whatever they suggest but, again, the decision is not mine.
TENTATIVE OUTLINE OF READINGS

Please let me know if you have trouble with the urls as they sometimes change.

I. Weeks 0-1:
   Introduction— the Study of Interest Groups and Their Place in the U.S. Constitutional Order
   Nownes, Chapters 1-2

Browse through Chapters 12-24 of Guide to Interest Groups in order to get a sense of the types of groups out there:


II. Week 2:
   Interest Groups as Representative Surrogates
   Nownes, Chapter 9
   http://www.jstor.org/stable/4092399

III. Weeks 3-4:
   How Interest Groups are Organized
   Nownes, Chapters 3-4
   Recommended: Guide to Interest Groups, Chapter 4

MIDTERM 1: January 30
IV. How Interest Groups Attempt to Influence the Policy Process  

Weeks 5-6  
Nownes, Chapters 5, 7  
Recommended: Guide to Interest Groups, Chapters 26-28  

Weeks 6-7  
Nownes, 6, 8  
[https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/AE4B5D8AB9C2487BB78C2A51BB53E03F/S0003055406062010a.pdf](https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/AE4B5D8AB9C2487BB78C2A51BB53E03F/S0003055406062010a.pdf)  
One or two extra essays on California propositions  

V. Weeks 7-8  
Interest Groups and Campaigns  
Nownes, Chapters 6, 8  
Recommended: *Guide to Interest Groups*, Chapters 30-32  
Essay(s) to be added on the 2016 election  

**MIDTERM 2: March 4**  

VI. Weeks 9-10 Presentations—more information about format will follow