

**American Political Systems**  
**Political Science 1150**  
**Spring 2017**

**Steven Rogers**  
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**Class time: MWF 1:10 – 2:00pm**  
**Classroom: McGannon Hall 121**  
**Office Hours: Mondays 3 – 4pm or by appointment**

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### **Course Description**

This class is a survey course of the political science American Politics subfield. By the end of this course, you should have a familiarity with some of the fundamental debates and works within American political science research. The first half of this class focuses on political institutions. Here, we will study how political elites act within the American political system to achieve their goals. The second half of the class focuses on political behavior. Here, we will focus on how voters develop and act upon their political opinions. Theories of politics and political behavior can help us interpret and explain contemporary politics, so throughout the course, we will keep a collective eye on events in Washington.

### **Learning Objectives**

1. To understand the theoretical underpinnings of research focusing on institutional aspects of the United States government, with a focus on legislative, executive and judicial institutions.
2. To understand the theoretical underpinnings of research focusing on political behavior, with a focus on public opinion, partisanship, and elections.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **Tests:**

This course will have a midterm and a final exam. The midterm exam is on **March 8**, and you will be notified by February 24 of the Course Topics you will be responsible for on the exam. The final exam will be cumulative and take place on **May 15**. Questions on the exams will be multiple choice, short answer, and essay based. If scheduling permits, there will be an in-class review session prior to the midterm and final exams.

#### **Papers:**

There will be two main written assignments in this course. They will require you to review and critique debates in American political science research. The first paper focuses on presidential power, and the second paper focuses on presidential elections. The first paper will be 4 – 5 pages and due on **February 24**, and the second paper will be 6 – 7 pages and due on **April 19**. You will receive more details about the assignments at least three weeks before the papers are due.

#### **Assignments and Quizzes:**

To review material from readings and lecture, there will be quizzes and homework assignments throughout the semester. Most quizzes will be on Blackboard reviewing Topics from class and readings. For homework assignments, all answers should be typed and emailed to Professor Rogers in MS Word (preferred) or PDF format by the 1:10pm on the due date.

### **Class Participation:**

You are expected to complete the readings and contribute to class discussion in addition to attending class. If you must miss a class for a legitimate reason, such as illness, family emergency, or University-sponsored activity, you should contact the professor as soon as possible.

You are permitted three unexcused absences from class. For each additional unexcused absence, your final course grade will be reduced by 0.25%. An absence is excused only if explicitly stated by Professor Rogers by email (therefore if you speak to Professor Rogers – be sure to send a follow up email to confirm excuse).

### **Grades & Key Dates**

Your grade for this course will consist of the following components and relative weights:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Overall Course Grade Weight</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Assignments and Quizzes	15%	Throughout Semester
Participation	10%	Throughout Semester
Midterm	15%	March 8
Final Exam	27.5%	May 15
Paper 1	12.5%	February 24
Paper 2	20%	April 19

There will be no make-up tests or deadline extensions given in this course. Exemptions will only be made with written (e.g. email) prior consent for planned events such as sponsored SLU activities or religious observances or under unusual circumstances such as a documented medical emergency. It is the student's responsibility to request and obtain this consent. Late papers will be marked down 10% for each day, and there will be no extensions for Blackboard Quizzes. There will be no assignments designated purely as "extra credit."

When determining the final grade, the following grading scale will be used. I will round final grades. Depending on the distribution of grades, I reserve the right to impose curves to assignments and final grades.

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	93% - 100%	B	83% - 86%	C	73% - 76%
A-	90% - 92%	B-	80% - 82%	C-	70% - 72%
B+	87% - 89%	C+	77% - 79%	D	60% - 69%
				F	below 60%

### **Course Evaluations**

Students are requested to fill out a course evaluation at the end of the course.

### **Academic Honesty**

The University is a community of learning, whose effectiveness requires an environment of mutual trust and integrity. Academic integrity is violated by any dishonesty such as soliciting, receiving, or providing any unauthorized assistance in the completion of work submitted toward academic credit. While not all forms of academic dishonesty can be listed here, examples include copying from another student, copying from a book or class notes during a closed book exam, submitting materials authored by or revised by another person as the student's own work, copying a passage or text directly from a published source without appropriately citing or recognizing that source, taking a test or doing an assignment or other academic work for another student, securing or supplying in advance a copy of an examination or quiz without the knowledge or consent of the instructor, sharing or receiving the questions from an on-line quiz with another student, taking an on-

line quiz with the help of another student, and colluding with another student or students to engage in academic dishonesty.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy was adopted in Spring 2015, and can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at: [http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic\\_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%20%206-26-15.pdf](http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic_affairs/University-wide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%20%206-26-15.pdf)

All clear violations of academic integrity will be met with appropriate sanctions. In this course, academic dishonesty on an assignment will result in an automatic grade of 0 for that assignment and a report of academic dishonesty sent to the Academic Honesty Committee of the College of Arts and Sciences. In the case of Class B violations, the Academic Honesty Committee may impose a larger sanction including, but not limited to, assigning a failing grade in the course, disciplinary probation, suspension, and dismissal from the University.

Students should refer to the following SLU website for more information about Class A and B violations and the procedures following a report of academic dishonesty: <http://www.slu.edu/x12657.xml>

### **Students with Special Needs-Disability Services**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. Students who think they might benefit from these resources can find out more about:

- Course-level support (e.g., faculty member, departmental resources, etc.) by asking your course instructor.
- University-level support (e.g., tutoring/writing services, Disability Services) by visiting the Student Success Center (BSC 331) or by going to [www.slu.edu/success](http://www.slu.edu/success).

Students who believe that, due to a disability, they could benefit from academic accommodations are encouraged to contact Disability Services at [314-977-8885](tel:314-977-8885) or visit the Student Success Center. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Course instructors support student accommodation requests when an approved letter from Disability Services has been received and when students discuss these accommodations with the instructor after receipt of the approved letter.

### **Required Texts**

The following texts should be available from the University Bookstore or online retailers, such as Amazon.com. Other readings will be made available via Blackboard.

Kollman, Ken. 2014. *Readings in American Politics: Analysis and Perspectives*. New York, NY. W.W. Norton Company. ISBN: 9780393936742

Neustadt, Richard. 1991. *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan*. New York, NY. The Free Press. ISBN: 9780029227961

Sides, John & Lynn Vavreck. 2013. *The Gamble: Choice and Chance in the 2012 Presidential Election*. Princeton, NJ. Princeton University Press. ISBN: 9780691156880

This class will briefly review some of the formal procedures of how American government works (e.g. steps in how a bill becomes a law). It is assumed students have a basic understanding of these processes from POLS 1100, AP American Government, or a strong high school civics class. If you are less familiar with how the American government works, the following book (or earlier editions) provides excellent explanations of many key concepts in the course. The course outline specifies suggested Chapters or sections to read for each topic.

Kernell, Samuel, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, and Lynn Vavreck. *The Logic of American Politics*. 7<sup>th</sup> Edition. ISBN: 9781483319841

## Course Outline

The following listing of topics outlines the subjects we will cover in class and the reading assignments for each of the topics. This is a tentative outline intended to give you an overview of the course. I will notify you throughout the semester of when you will be responsible for certain readings in class and on the Blackboard calendar. I reserve the right to make change to the syllabus as the semester progresses. You are responsible for any of the changes to the assigned readings. All of the articles and readings on the syllabus will be available on Blackboard. If you have any trouble accessing any of the on-line pieces or the Blackboard calendar is not updated, **please let Professor Rogers know as soon as possible.**

Within each Topic below are “Questions to consider while reading” to help guide your reading.

### Topic 1: The Constitution

- Kollman 2.1, 2.2, & 3.1: Madison, James. Federalist 10, 51, & 39
- Kollman 2.3: Brutus. “The Anti-Federalist”
- The U.S. Constitution
- Kollman 2.4: Dahl, Robert. “How Democratic is the American Constitution?”
- Stein, Jeff. “This study shows American Federalism is a total joke.”
- **Suggested Reading**
  - Kollman 3.2: Riker, William. “Federalism: Origin, Operation, Significance.”
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - How are the arguments presented in the Federalist papers a response to the colonists’ experiences under monarchical and aristocratic rule?
  - Does Madison advocate for a more “democratic” or “republican” form of government? Why?
  - How powerful are states under the U.S. Constitution?
  - Does policymaking appear to matter for state lawmakers’ elections?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 2 (Focus on pages 53 – 64; 69 -76)
  - Chapter 3 (Focus on pages 85 – 92)

### Topic 2: Introduction to Lineland

- Smith, Steven. “The American Congress.” Appendix.
- **Suggested Reading**
  - Stewart, Charles. “Analyzing Congress.” Chapter 1. 2001.

### Topic 3: Congress

- Fenno, Richard. *Congressmen in Committees* pp. Prologue & Ch. 1. (1973).
- Kollman 5.1: Mayhew, David. “The Electoral Connection”
- Kollman 12.1: Aldrich, John. “Why Parties? A Second Look”
- Binder, Sarah. “The Politics of Legislative Stalemate.” In Kernell (Section 6.2)
- **Suggested Reading:**
  - Kollman 5.4: Cox, Gary. And Mathew D. McCubbins. “Setting the Agenda: Responsible Party Government in the U.S. House of Representatives”
  - Aldrich, John H. and David Rhode. “Congressional Committees in a Continuing Partisan Era.” in Kernell (Section 6.3)
  - Kollman 1.2: Olson, Mancur: “The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups”
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What are the goals of Members’ of Congress?
  - What is a collective action problem?
  - How do political parties help Members of Congress achieve their goals and overcome collective action problems?
  - How do the Conditional Party Government and Cartel Theory explanations for party influence differ? ~ *The suggested Cox & McCubbins and Aldrich & Rhode readings will be helpful for this question*
  - For what reasons does “deadlock” increase in Congress?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 1 (Focus on p. 9 – 30 , particularly on what a collective action problem is and the section on agenda control)
  - Chapter 6 (Focus on p. 234 – 250; 255 – 269)
  - Chapter 12 (Focus on p. 485 – 489)

### Topic 4: The Presidency

- Kollman 6.1: Neustadt, Richard. “Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents: The Politics of Leadership from Roosevelt to Reagan.”
- Kollman 6.2: Cameron, Charles. “Veto Bargaining: President and the Politics of Negative Power.”
- McCarty, Nolan “Where do vetoes come from?” *The Monkey Cage*. (2015)
- Kollman 6.4: Howell, William G. “Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action.”
- Skowronek, Stephen. “Presidential Leadership in Political Time.” In Nelson
- **Suggested Reading**
  - Cameron, Charles. “The Presidential Veto”
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What are the formal and informal sources of Presidential power?
  - Why would a President veto a bill he prefers to the status quo (the current policy)?
  - Why would Congress pass a bill they know will be vetoed?
  - How is Presidential leadership a struggle between the individual and the system?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 7 (focus on the powers of the presidency)

## Topic 5: Representation

- Burke, Edmund. "Speech to the Electors of Bristol." in Canon (Section 21).
- Kollman 5.2: Fenno, Richard F. "Home Style: House Members in Their Districts."
- Carnes, Nicholas. "Millionaires run our government. Here's why it matters." *The Monkey Cage* (2014)
- Miller, Warren E. and Donald Stokes. "Constituency Influence in Congress." *The American Political Science Review*. 1963.
- Barber, Michael, and Nolan McCarty "Causes and Consequences of Polarization" (2012). p. 19 – 30.
- **Suggested Reading:**
  - Matthews, Dylan. "One study explains why it's tough to pass liberal laws."
  - Kollman 13.3: McCarty, Nolan, Keith T. Poole, and Howard Rosenthal. "Polarized America: The Dance of Ideology and Unequal Riches."
  - Swers, Michele L. and Stella Rouse "Descriptive Representation: Understanding the Impact of Identity on Substantive Representation of Group Interests"
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What does it mean for a representative to be a delegate? What does it mean to be a trustee?
  - What evidence do we have the Members of Congress are delegates or trustees?
  - How do Fenno's constituencies differ? What are the implications of different constituencies for the delegate model of representation?
  - What reasons do Barber and McCarty rule out as causes for Congressional polarization?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 6 (Focus on p. 219 – 225; 231 – 234)

## Topic 6: The Bureaucracy & Interest Groups

- Moe, Terry. "The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure" in Kernell (Section 8.1)
- Rudalevige, Andrew. "The Cabinet was the easy part. Staffing (and steering) the bureaucracy takes much more work." *The Monkey Cage*. (2016)
- Kollman 7.2: McCubbins, Matthew and Thomas Schwartz. "Congressional Oversight Overlooked: Police Patrols versus Fire Alarms."
- Kollman 11.1: Gilens, Martin. "Affluence and Influence: Economic Inequality and Political Power in America."
- Sides, John. "A new experiment shows how money buys access to Congress." *The Monkey Cage*
- **Suggested Readings:**
  - Kollman 7.3: Carpenter, Daniel. "The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy: Reputations, Networks, and Policy Innovation in Executive Agencies, 1862-1928."
  - Hall, Richard and Frank Wayman. "Moneyed Interests and the Mobilization of Bias in Congressional Committees." *The American Political Science Review*. 1990.
  - Lewis, David. "The Politics of Presidential Appointments" in Kernell (Section 8.2)
  - Kollman 11.2: Kollman, Ken: "Outside Lobbying: Public Opinion and Interest Group Strategies"
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - How does uncertainty influence how Congress and the President design the bureaucracy?
  - What is the difference between "police patrol" and "fire alarm" oversight?
  - How well does the common citizen appear to be represented by interest groups or have access to their Member of Congress?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 8 (Focus on p. 338 – 353)
  - Chapter 13 (Focus on p. 529 - 543)

## Topic 7: The Judiciary

- George, Tracy and Lee Epstein. 1992. “On the Nature of Supreme Court Decision-Making,” *American Political Science Review*. 86(2): 323-337.
- Epstein, Lee and Jack Knight. 1998 “The Choices Justices Make.” p. 9 – 18; Chapter 3
- Kollman 8.1: Rosenberg, Gerald. “The Hollow Hope: Can Courts Bring About Social Change.”
- Cottrel, David and Charles Shipan. “If Obama appoints Scalia’s successor, the Supreme Court will really jump leftward.” *The Monkey Cage*. 2016.
- **Suggested Readings**
  - Hamilton, Alexander. “Federalist 78.”
  - Kollman 8.2: “Marbury v. Madison”
  - Kollman: 4.2: “Brown v. Board of Education.”
  - Segal, Jeffery and Harold Spaeth. “The Supreme Court and the Attitudinal Model Revisited.”
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What is the difference between the legal model and the extralegal (or attitudinal) model?
  - What strategies do justices employ to achieve their goals?
  - To what extent and why is the court’s power constrained?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 9 (Focus on p. 361 – 364; 371 - 379)

## Topic 8: Public Opinion & Political Knowledge

- Lippmann, Walter. 1925. “The Phantom Public” Excerpt.
- Key, V.O. “The Voice of the People: An Echo” from *The Responsible Electorate*. (Canon Section 47)
- Clawson and Oxley, Chapter 5. “Ideological Incongruence and Critiques.”
  - Focus on pages 133 - 141
- Kollman 9.2: Zaller, John. “The Nature and Origins of Mass Opinion.”
- Dropp, Kyle. “The less Americans know about Ukraine’s location, the more they want the U.S. to intervene.”
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What does Lippmann mean when he says “It is bad for a fat man to be a ballet dancer.”? How does this compare with Key’s conception of the electorate?
  - According to Converse
    - To what extent are voters ideological?
    - What is constraint?
    - Are individuals’ opinions and attitudes stable?
  - What does Zaller mean when he states individuals appear to make decisions off “the top of their head?”
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 10 (Focus on p. 399 – 414)

## Topic 9: Rational Choice

- Kollman 9.1: Lupia, Arthur and Mathew D. McCubbins. “The Democratic Dilemma: Can Citizens Learn What They Need to Know?”
  - Downs, Anthony. *An Economic Theory of Democracy* (1957). Chapter 3.
  - Popkin, Sam. *The Reasoning Voter* (1994) p. 1-6, 72-81, 91-95.
  - Page and Shapiro, *The Rational Public* (1992). Chapter 1.
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
- Do voters need to be fully informed to make rational decisions?
  - What is the “expected party differential” and how is it used in voters’ electoral decision-making?
  - What are the two modes of information processing laid out by Popkin?
  - What is the “miracle of aggregation?”
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
- Chapter 10: 417 - 422
  - Chapter 11: 454 - 458

## Topic 10: Partisanship & Polarization

- Hetherington, Mark. “Partisanship and Polarization” in Berinsky (Chapter 5)
  - Kollman 12.2: Campbell, Angus et. al. “The American Voter: An Abridgment”
  - Fiorina, Morris “Culture War? The Myth of a Polarized America.” in Kernell (Section 10.3).
  - **Suggested Readings:**
    - Political Polarization in the American Public. *Pew Research Center 2014*
    - Fiorina, Morris. “Americans have not become more politically polarized.” *The Monkey Cage. 2014*
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
- How polarized is the American public?
  - What is sorting? How does it happen?
  - How can “enduring partisan commitments” shape “attitudes towards political objects?”
  - What is the difference between “closely and deeply divided” and “closely but not deeply divided?” Which better explains public opinion in America?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
- Chapter 10: 408 – 410
  - Chapter 12: 514 - 525

## Topic 11: Electoral Behavior and Institutions

- Bartels, Larry. "Partisan Biases in Economic Accountability." Chapter 3 in *Unequal Democracy*
- Sanders, Laura. 2010. "Home Team Wins May Influence Elections." *Wired: Science News*.
- Kollman 12.3: Cohen, Marty et. al. "The Party Decides: Presidential Nominations Before and After Reform."
- Sides and Vavreck. *The Gamble*. Chapter 3.
- Kollman 13.1: Koza, John. "Every Vote Equal: A State-Based Plan for Electing the President by National Popular Vote."
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What does it mean that voters are myopic?
  - If voters respond to sporting events, what are the implications for elections serving as an accountability mechanism?
  - How democratic is America's system for selecting its president?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 11: 445-446

## Topic 12: Self-Interest & Groups

- Englehart, Drew and Stephen Utych. "The Gridiron or the Ballotbox" *The Blue Review*
- Bartels, Larry. "Homer Gets a Tax Cut" Chapter 5 in *Unequal Democracy*.
- Johnson, Theodore. "Can the Democratic Party Retain Its Hold on Black Voters." *The Atlantic*
- White, Ismail, Chryl Laird, and Troy Allen. "Selling Out?: The Politics of Navigating Conflicts between Racial Group Interest and Self-Interest." *American Political Science Review*. 104(4): 783-800.
- **Suggested Reading:**
  - McCleod, Saul. "Social Identity Theory"
  - Kollman 4.1: Dawson, Michael. "Not in Our Lifetimes: The Future of Black Politics."
  - Kollman 10.2: Wong, Janelle. Et. al. "Asian American Political Participation: Emerging Constituents and Their Political Identities."
  - Kollman 14.2: Abrajana, Marisa. "Campaigning to a New Electorate: Advertising to Latino Voters."
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What are the steps or processes to social identity theory? (The suggested McCleod reading will be helpful for this)
  - What is the "black utility heuristic" and "linked fate?"
  - What evidence do we have that individuals follow their perceived group interests versus their self-interest?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 10: p. 434 - 439

## Topic 13: The Media

- Iyengar, Shanto and Donald Kinder. “News that Matters.” Chapters 2 – 3. 1987.
- Prior, Markus. “News vs. Entertainment: How Increasing Media Choice Widens Gaps in Political Knowledge and Turnout.” In Canon section 46.
- Kollman 14.1: Baum, Matthew. “Soft News Goes to War: Public Opinion and American Foreign Policy in the New Media Age.”
- **Suggested Reading**
  - Gilens, Martin. 1999. *Why Americans Hate Welfare*. Chapters 5 and 6
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What is the agenda-setting hypothesis? How do Iyengar and Kinder provide support for this hypothesis?
  - How can people learn about politics by accident or as a “by-product” of other activities?
  - How have changes to the media environment over the last 60 years and the advent of “soft news” influenced the extent to which (and how) voters learn about politics?
- ❖ Accompanying Kernell, Jacobson, Kousser, and Vavreck Reading
  - Chapter 10: p. 415 - 417

## Topic 14: Public Opinion, Policy, and Representation

- Kollman 16.1: Mettler, Suzanne. “The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policy Undermine American Democracy.”
- Bartels, Larry. “Economic Inequality and Political Representation.” Chapter 8 in *Unequal Democracy* 2016.
- Erikson, Robert, Michael MacKuen, and James A. Stimson. 2002. “Public Opinion and Policy: Causal Flow in a Macro System.” Chapter 2 in *Navigating Public Opinion: Polls, Policy and Future of American Democracy*.
- ❖ Questions to consider while reading:
  - What is the “submerged state?”
  - Do representatives and policy change appear to be responsive to low or high income voters? What evidence do we have that this is the case?
  - How do the arguments of Bartels and Erikson et. al differ regarding the prospects for representative government?