



# Saint Louis University

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Madrid Campus

## **POLS 2720 American Anomaly: American Political Institutions in Comparative Perspective**

Spring 2017  
San Ignacio Hall B  
TR 4:30-5:45 pm

Dr. Wynne Moskop  
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Office hours:  
By arrangement, via Skype until March 14

### **Course Description.**

U.S. institutions often are portrayed inside and outside the U.S. as “anomalous,” which suggests that they are either the best or the worst internationally. This course investigates such claims to understand what difference different institutions make. Students compare executive, legislative, judicial, and party functions in the U.S. to those functions in selected parliamentary systems.

Our main text is *The American Anomaly: U.S. Politics and Government in Comparative Perspective*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by Raymond Smith (Routledge, 2013). It is available in the Madrid campus bookstore.

**Objectives.** Students will learn how U.S. institutions and the ideas and values embedded in them shape policies and practices in areas such as welfare, health care, education, and foreign policy. By the end of the semester, students should be able to

- identify differences between U.S. political institutions and institutions in selected parliamentary systems,
- explain how these differences shape different policies and practices
- present coherent, well-supported comparisons orally and in writing

### **Format and Requirements.**

Class format combines short lectures with class discussions that are focused around study questions given in advance. For each class, specific students will be designated as “expert discussants” who help guide class discussion. Students are expected to complete all reading assignment before the class in which they are to be discussed and participate regularly in class discussions. There will be some small group exercises.

I will teach the class from St. Louis, via Fuze, January 12-March 8. I will meet the class in Madrid starting March 14. On the first day of class, we will establish convenient times to skype or chat for office hours. These will be posted on Blackboard.

Reading assignments from this text will be supplemented by short assignments from classic works in American political thought, articles provided by the instructor, and internet resources. These additional readings provide historical and factual information and also a closer look at major ideas underlying American institutions, laws, and policies. Writing assignments are two take-home essay exams and a final exam. Detailed instructions for specific assignments will be posted on Blackboard.

Because the course relies heavily on class participation, attendance is required at every class session. A student's class participation grade will be reduced for unexcused absences. (Two unexcused absences reduces the class participation grade by one letter, i.e. from A to B, or from B to C). To get an absence excused, students must provide written evidence of a good reason (e.g. illness, university function) and write written responses to study questions for the class session missed. Arriving late and leaving early are taken into consideration in calculating class participation grades. Illustration: A student who has no unexcused absences, makes regular thoughtful contributions to class discussions, demonstrates familiarity with assigned readings, and consistently meets guidelines as a discussant would normally earn an A in class participation. Two unexcused absences would reduce that grade to a B. Class participation assignments include occasional pop quizzes on the assigned readings and student posts on Blackboard to respond to study questions.

Mobile phones and laptops should not be used during class, except when required for class exercises.

### **Grade Components:**

Class participation (includes attendance; regular participation; performance as discussant, pop quizzes, Blackboard posts) = 25%

Two take-home essay exams = 50%

Comprehensive final exam = 25%

### **Grade Scale:**

A	93%-100%
A-	90%-92%
B+	87%-89%
B	83%-86%
B-	80%-82%
C+	73%-79%
C	67%-72%
C-	60%-66%
D	50%-59%
F	0%-49%

### **Course Credits: 3**

### **Academic Integrity and Plagiarism**

Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is "the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity." Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.

The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy can be accessed on the Provost's Office website at:

[http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic\\_affairs/Universitywide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%206-26-15.pdf](http://www.slu.edu/Documents/provost/academic_affairs/Universitywide%20Academic%20Integrity%20Policy%20FINAL%20%206-26-15.pdf).

Additionally, SLU-Madrid has posted its academic integrity policy online:

<http://www.slu.edu/madrid/academics>. As a member of the University community, you are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions and appeals.

The professor will review these matters during the first weeks of the term. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program or the Academic Dean of the Madrid Campus.

Information regarding the collection of student work for assessment In order to maintain quality academic offerings and to conform to accreditation requirements, SLU-Madrid regularly assesses its teaching, services and programs for evidence of student learning. For this purpose, SLU-Madrid keeps representative examples of student work from all courses and programs on file, including assignments, papers, exams, portfolios and results from student surveys, focus groups and reflective exercises. Copies of your work for this course may be kept on file for institutional research, assessment and accreditation purposes. If you prefer SLUMadrid not to retain your work for this purpose, you must communicate this decision in writing to your professor.

#### **Title IX Statement:**

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual misconduct (e.g. sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic or dating violence), we encourage you to report this to the University.

If you speak with a faculty member about an incident of misconduct, that faculty member must notify SLU's Title IX deputy coordinator, Marta Maruri, whose office is located on the ground floor of Padre Rubio Hall, Avenida del Valle, 28 (mmaruri@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 213) and share the basic fact of your experience with her. The Title IX deputy coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the SLUMadrid's Counseling Services on the third floor of San Ignacio Hall (counselingcentermadrid@slu.edu; 915-54-5858, ext. 230) or Sinews Multipletherapy Institute, the off-campus 8 provider of counseling services for SLU-Madrid (www.sinews.es; 917-00-1979). To view SLUMadrid's sexual misconduct policy and for

resources, please visit the following web address:

<http://www.slu.edu/Documents/Madrid/campuslife/SLUMadridSexualMisconductPolicy.pdf>.

### **Accommodation statement:**

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 Academic Dean's Office (San Ignacio Hall) or by going to <http://www.slu.edu/madrid/learning-resources>.

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must contact Disability Services to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Once successfully registered, the student also must notify the course instructor that they wish to access accommodations in the course. Please contact Disability Services at [disabilityservicesmadrid@slu.edu](mailto:disabilityservicesmadrid@slu.edu) or +915 54 58 58, ext. 230 for an appointment. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries. Once approved, information about the student's eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors via email from Disability Services. For more information about academic accommodations, see "Student Resources" on the SLU-Madrid webpage.

Note: Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one are encouraged to contact Disability Services.

### **Tentative Schedule**

*Note: Schedule may be revised occasionally, depending on class progress and student needs and interests. The schedule below generally follows the order of our text and uses the same chapter headings. Specific assignments for each unit below will be posted on Blackboard. If any link to assignments do not work, please try copying and pasting it into your browser or googling the words. It is your responsibility to let me know if you cannot access a assignment or a reading or video. It isn't acceptable to arrive in class and then announce that you couldn't find some part of the assignment.*

#### **Part 1. The Constitutional Order**

- 1/12 Introduction
- 1/17,19 The U.S. political regime in comparative perspective
- 1/24,26 The U.S. Constitution
- 1/31,2/2 Federalism
- 2/7,9 Separation of Powers

#### **Part II. The Institutions of Government**

2/14,16 The Executive Branch

2/21 **1<sup>st</sup> take-home essay exam due, 6 pm; post to Blackboard.** Class will not meet, but I will be available via Fuze for anyone who needs help. Questions will be given one week in advance. You may submit a rough draft for comment, through Blackboard, until Friday, February 17 at 10 pm. Students who submit a rough draft that meets guidelines (posted on Blackboard) will get extra credit on the final version (1/3 of a letter grade).

**2/23 Winter Break**

2/28,3/2 The Legislative Branch

3/7,9 The Judicial Branch

### **Part III. Political Participation**

3/14,16 Conventional and unconventional participation: Activism, Social Movements, and Interest Groups (I will start teaching in Madrid on the 14<sup>th</sup>.)

3/21,23 Voting and Elections

3/28 **2<sup>nd</sup> take-home essay exam due, 6 pm; post to Blackboard.** Class will not meet, but I will be available via Fuze for anyone who needs help. Questions will be given one week in advance. You may submit a rough draft for comment, through Blackboard, until April 3<sup>rd</sup> at 12 pm (noon). Students who submit a rough draft that meets guidelines (posted on Blackboard) will get extra credit on the final version (1/3 of a letter grade).

3/30 Political Parties

**4/4,6 Atlas Week presentations.** We will do a class project (TBD) that will be available to all SLU students in Madrid and St. Louis.

**4/11,13 Holidays. University closed.**

4/18 Political Parties continued; Public Opinion and Political Values

### **Part IV Public Policy and Policymaking**

4/20 Domestic Policy

4/25 Foreign Policy

4/27 Review

**5/2 Holiday. University closed.**

**5/8 Final Exam**

