

Political Science 1: Introduction to American Politics and Government

UC Berkeley Fall 2018 Prof. Paul Pierson

Class Meetings: Tuesday and Thursday, 9:30-11:00 a.m., Dwinelle 155

Office Hours: Thursday, 2:00-4:00, and by appt.

pierson@berkeley.edu

Office: 850 Barrows [NOTE: take stairs from 7th floor on WEST side of Barrows***]

Course Overview

This class is an introduction to the American political system. The course is designed to help you understand the key features of our government's institutions, and the consequences of these institutions for the political behavior of citizens, legislators, and other political leaders and activists. Topics to be covered include the Constitution, American political culture, civil rights, the presidency, Congress, Supreme Court, political parties, elections, public opinion, interest groups, and social movements. We will devote considerable attention to the distribution of political power, the relationship between social and political inequality, patterns of governance and public policy, the significance of partisan polarization, and to why and how these key elements of American politics change over time.

The primary goal of the course is to help students become more critical, sophisticated observers of American politics. We will make use of a number of political science theories that help explain political behavior and outcomes. I have also assigned a number of short readings on current or recent political controversies to encourage you to think about how the theories and empirical research of political scientists can help improve our understanding of contemporary politics.

Course Texts available at campus bookstore:

Robert A. Dahl, *How Democratic is the Constitution?* Yale University Press, Second edition.

Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of American Conservatism*, Oxford University Press, 2013.

Additional readings will be on the Bcourse website.

*** I am happy to make alternative arrangements to meet with students who are unable to take the stairs.

Assignments, Grading and Expectations

This course will have an in-class midterm, final exam, and two short essays (4-6 double-spaced pages; assignments to be provided via the course website and in class). The components of your course grade are distributed as follows:

Midterm Exam 25%
Participation in Discussion Section 15%
Final Exam 30%
Essays 30%

It is essential that you attend all lectures. Considerable material for your assignments will be discussed in lecture but not covered in the readings. You are responsible for all material in assigned readings and discussed in class. The course also requires you to attend an assigned discussion section once a week.

The syllabus lists due dates for the essays. Late papers will be graded down 1/3 of a grade for each day they are late. Only well-documented cases of exceptional circumstances qualify for an exception. Incomplete grades, changes in exam dates, and extensions of written assignments will be approved only by the instructor, Paul Pierson, and only upon evidence of extenuating circumstances.

Academic dishonesty will result in a failing grade for the course. Any test or paper submitted by you and that bears your name is presumed to be your own original work that has not previously been submitted for credit in another course unless you obtain prior written approval to do so from your instructor. In all of your assignments you may use words or ideas written by other individuals in publications, web sites, or other sources, but only with proper attribution. If you are not clear about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or examination, be sure to seek clarification from your instructor or GSI beforehand.

Collaboration and Independence: Reviewing lecture and reading materials and studying for exams can be enjoyable and enriching things to do together with one's fellow students. We recommend this. However, assignments should be completed independently and materials turned in should be the result of one's own independent work.

Cheating: Anyone caught cheating on a quiz or exam will receive a failing grade and will also be reported to the University Office of Student Conduct.

Plagiarism/Self-plagiarism: You must be original in composing the writing assignments in this class. To copy text or ideas from another source (including your own previously, or concurrently, submitted course work) without appropriate reference is plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for your assignment and usually further disciplinary action. For additional information on plagiarism, self-plagiarism, and how to avoid it, see, for example:
<http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/research-support/cite-sources>

Turnitin: UC Berkeley's honor code states "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." As a tool to promote academic integrity in this course, written work submitted via bCourses may be checked for originality using Turnitin. Turnitin compares student work to a database

of books, journal articles, websites, and other student papers. This creates an opportunity for students to improve their academic writing skills, by ensuring that other sources have been properly cited and attributed. For more information about Turnitin at UC Berkeley, visit <http://ets.berkeley.edu/academic-integrity>(link is external)

Class Website

Please visit the course web site on Bcourse regularly for information about the course, including the syllabus, paper assignments, and contact information.

Multi-tasking in Class

This will not be tolerated; it is disruptive not only to your learning experience, but that of your classmates. When in lecture or in section please turn off your cell phones, etc. *Better yet:* leave your laptops at home. There is good evidence that taking notes by hand is a more effective way to learn than using a computer.

Enrollment Policy

If you are currently enrolled in the course, you **MUST** attend the first TWO discussion sections or else you may be dropped from the course and your place will be given to someone else. If you must miss section during the first two weeks, you must inform your GSI and obtain his or her approval to remain in the course.

If you are currently **NOT** enrolled in the course but are on the waiting list, you must attend your section to preserve your chance of being admitted to the course. Students will be added as space permits and on the basis of your position on the section waiting lists. Being on the waiting list and attending does not guarantee you will be added.

If you are neither enrolled nor on the waiting list, you should attend a section, give your name to the GSI and use TELEBEARS to try to add yourself to the waiting list.

Switching Sections

If you are currently enrolled but would like to switch sections: Do **NOT** approach your GSI with this question. A switch list will be posted on the 7th floor of Barrows Hall outside the GSI office at 715 Barrows. It is your responsibility to place your name, the time and location of your present section, the time and location of the section you prefer, and your contact information on the switch list in the hope of finding someone to trade with (i.e. someone who has the section you want and wants the section you are enrolled in). After and only after you have found this happy match, both parties must let both GSIs know that they are switching sections and with whom. Switching without informing your GSI may cause you to be dropped from the course.

COURSE OUTLINE

Introduction: Governments and Governance (August 23rd and 28th)

The Constitution and the Founding (August 30th and September 4th)

Transformation 1: The Right to Vote (September 6th and 11th)

American Institutions and Congress (September 13th and 18th)

The Presidency and the Bureaucracy (September 20th and 25th)

Transformation 2: The Rise of “Big Government” (September 27th and October 2nd)

The Courts and Federalism (October 4th and 9th)

Political Culture, Public Opinion, The Media (October 11th and 16th)

Mid-Term Exam: October 18th

Transformation 3: Growing Economic and Political Inequality (October 23rd)

Political Parties and Polarization (October 25th and 30th)

Interest Groups and Social Movements (November 1st and 6th)

Voting, Campaigns, and Elections (November 8th and 13th)

Transformation 4: The Rise of Right-Wing Populism (November 15th and 20th)

Conclusion: Governance, Accountability, and “Democratic Backsliding” (November 27th and 29th)

Lecture and Reading Schedule:

Week 1 (August 23rd and 28th): Introduction: Governance and Power

Joseph J. Ellis, "The Dinner," in *Founding Brothers: The Revolutionary Generation* (New York: Vintage), 2000, pp. 48-80.

Hamilton – "You'll Be Back" and "The Room Where it Happens"

Garret Hardin, "The Tragedy of the Commons," *Science*, Vol. 162, No.13, December 1968, pp. 1243-48.

Mancur Olson, *The Logic of Collective Action: Public Goods and the Theory of Groups*, pp. 5-22, 33-36. [L]
[SEP]

Jonathan Maller, "The Case for the Subway," *New York Times Magazine*, Jan. 7, 2017.

German Lopez, "The Opioid Epidemic Explained," *Vox*, December 18, 2017.

Megan Twohey, Jodi Kantor, Susan Dominus, Jim Rutenberg and Steve Deder, "Weinstein's Complicity Apparatus," *The New York Times*, December 5, 2017.

Matto Mildemberger and Leah Stokes, "No, We Didn't Almost Solve the Climate Crisis in the 1980s," *Mischiefs of Faction*, August 6, 2018.

Week 2 (August 30th, September 4th): The Constitution and the Founding

Garry Wills, "The Constitution," in *James Madison* (New York: Henry Holt), 2002, pp. 24-37.

David Brian Robertson, "The Political Landscape of the Constitutional Convention," in Robertson, *The Constitution and America's Destiny* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2005, pp. 100-30.

Robert A. Dahl, *How Democratic is the American Constitution?* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2003, Chapters 1-4.

Federalist 10 and 51

The Constitution of the United States

Week 3 (September 6th and 11th) **Transformation 1: The Right to Vote**

Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books), 2000, pp. xv-xxiv ("Introduction").

Phillip A. Klinkner with Rogers S. Smith, "'The Negro Has Got as Much as He Ought to Have': Reconstruction and the Second Retreat, 1865-1908," in *The Unsteady March: The Rise and Decline of Racial Equality in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 1999, pp. 72-105.

Keyssar, *The Right to Vote*, pp. 172-224.

David Batemen, "Race, Party and American Voting Rights," *The Forum*, 2016, Vol. 14 No 1, pp. 39-65.

Week 4 (September 13th and 18th): Congress

Emily Badger, "As American as Apple Pie? The Rural Vote's Disproportionate Share of Power," *The New York Times*, November 20th, 2016.

. Richard M. Valelly, *A Very Short Introduction to American Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp. 22-41.

. Thomas Mann and Norman Ornstein, *The Broken Branch*, pp. 14-46.

. Gary Jacobson, "The Electoral Connection, Then and Now," in Gerber and Schickler, pp. 35-64.

Frances E. Lee, "Legislative Parties in an Age of Alternating Majorities," in Alan S. Gerber and Eric Schickler, eds., *Governing in a Polarized Age: Elections, Parties, and Political Representation in America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2016, pp. 115-42.

Mark Leibovich, "This is the Way Paul Ryan's Speakership Ends," *The New York Times Magazine*, August 7, 2018.

Week 5 (September 20th and 25th): The Presidency and the Bureaucracy

Samuel Kernell, *Going Public: New Strategies of Presidential Leadership*, excerpt.

William G. Howell, *Power without Persuasion: The Politics of Direct Presidential Action* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 2003, excerpt.

Terry Moe, "The Politics of Bureaucratic Structure," in John E. Chubb and Paul E. Peterson, eds., *Can the Government Govern?* (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press), 1989, pp. 267-85.

John Cassidy, "Anatomy of a Meltdown: Ben Bernanke and the Financial Crisis," *The New Yorker*, December 1st, 2008.

Prokop, Andrew. "How Barack Obama is expanding presidential power — and what it means for the future." Vox. 9 Sep 2014.

Brady Dennis and Juliet Eilpern, "How Scott Pruitt Turned the EPA into One of Trump's Most Powerful Tools," *The Washington Post*, December 31st, 2017.

FIRST PAPER DUE SEPTEMBER 27TH AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS

Week 6 (September 27th and October 2nd) Transformation 2: The Rise of "Big Government"

William G. Howell and Terry M. Moe, "The Constitution, Social Change, and the Progressives," in *Relic: How Our Constitution Undermines Effective Government and Why We Need a More Powerful Presidency* (New York: Basic Books), 2016, pp. 1-46.

Paul Pierson, "The Rise of the Activist State," in Paul Pierson and Theda Skocpol, eds., *The Transformation of American Politics: Activist Government and the Rise of Conservatism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp. 19-38.

Paul Pierson, "Madison Upside-Down: The Policy Roots of Our Polarized Politics," in Jeffrey Jenkins and Sidney Milkis, eds., *The Politics of Major Policy Reform in Postwar America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), 2014, pp. 282-301.

Katherine J. Cramer, "Support for Small Government," in *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 2016, pp. 145-68.

Emily Badger, "The Outsize Hold of the Word 'Welfare' on the Public Imagination," *New York Times*, August 6th, 2018.

Week 7 (October 4th and 9th): The Courts and Federalism

Federalist Paper #78

Gerald N. Rosenberg, "The Real World of Constitutional Rights: The Supreme

Court and the Implementation of Abortion Decisions,” in Lee Epstein, ed., *Contemplating Courts* (Washington, D.C., Congressional Quarterly Press), 1995, pp. 390-415.

Robert Dahl “Decision-Making in a Democracy: The Supreme Court as National Policy-Maker,” *Journal of Public Law* 6 (1957): 279-95.

Jack M. Balkin, “From Off the Wall to On the Wall: How the Mandate Challenge Went Mainstream,” *The Atlantic*, June 4, 2012

David Brian Robertson, *Federalism and the Making of America*, 2017, Ch. 1

Tim Arrango, “In Clash Between California and Trump, It’s One America versus Another,” *The New York Times*, January 7, 2018.

Richard Rothstein, “Preface” and Ch. 1 “If San Francisco, then Everywhere?” *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America* (New York: Norton), 2017, pp. VIII-XIV and 3-14

Week 8 (October 11th and 16th): Political Culture, Public Opinion, the Media

Jack Citrin and David Sears, *American Identity and the Politics of Multiculturalism*, pp. 1-29.

Lilliana Mason, *Uncivil Agreement: How Politics Became Our Identity*, Ch. 1 (“Identity-Based Democracy”), pp. 1-23.

Louis Menand, “The Unpolitical Animal: How Political Science Understands Voters,” *New Yorker*, August 30, 2004.

Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein, *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2008, pp. 1-14.

Christopher Achen and Larry Bartels, “Do Sanders Supporters Favor His Policies?” *New York Times*, May 23, 2016.

Amanda Taub and Brendan Nyhan, “Why People Continue to Believe Objectively False Things,” *New York Times*, March 22, 2017

James T. Hamilton, “The Market and the Media,” in Geneva Overholser and Kathleen Hall Jamieson, eds., *The Press* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2005, pp. 351-71.

Jen Kirby, “[Study: Hillary Clinton’s emails got as much front-page coverage in 6 days as policy did in 69](#)” *Vox*, December 7, 2017.

Matthew Levendusky, "News Media and the Public," Paper Presented at the Cornell Conference "A Republic If You Can Keep It," Washington, D.C., Spring 2018.

Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), 2012, Chapter 4.

Mid-Term Exam: October 18th

Week 9 (October 23rd) Transformation III: Growing Economic and Political Inequality

Thomas Piketty, Emanuel Saez, and Gabriel Zuckman, "Economic Growth in the United States: A Tale of Two Countries," *Washington Center for Equitable Growth*, December 6, 2016.

Alfred Stepan and Juan Linz, "Comparative Perspectives on Inequality and the Quality of Democracy in the United States," *Perspectives on Politics*, December 2011, pp. 841-56.

"Banks are Winning," *Politico*, December 28, 2017.

Theda Skocpol and Alexander Hertel-Fernandez, "The Koch Network and Republican Party Extremism," *Perspectives on Politics*, September 2016, Vol. 14, No. 3, pp. 681-99.

Jim Tankersley and Michael Tackett, "Trump Tax Cut Unlocks Millions for a Republican Election Blitz," *The New York Times*, August 18th, 2018.

Week 10 (October 25th and 30th): Political Parties and Polarization

George Washington, Farewell Address

Alan I. Abramowitz, "The New American Electorate," in Abramowitz, *The Great Alignment: Race, Party Transformation, and the Rise of Donald Trump* (New Haven: Yale University Press), 2018, pp. 90-120.

Morris Fiorina and Sam Abrams, "Party Sorting: The Foundation of Polarized Politics," in James A. Thurber and Antoine Yoshinaka, eds., *American Gridlock*, 2015, pp. 113-29.

Julia Azari, "Weak parties and strong partisanship are a bad combination," *Vox*, 3 November 2016

David Karol, "Party Activists, Interest Groups and Polarization in American

Politics,” in Thurber and Yoshinaka, *American Gridlock*, pp. 68-85.

Pew Research Center. “[Polarization in the American public.](#)” June 12, 2014. Introduction, Sections 2 and 3. ^[L]_[SEP]

Week 11 (November 1st and 6th): Interest Groups and Social Movements

E. E. Schattschneider, “The Scope and Bias of the Pressure System,” in *The Semi-Sovereign People* (New York: Hold, Rinehart, Winston), 1960, pp. 20-45.

Joel Achenbach, Scott Higham, and Sari Horwitz, “How NRA’s True Believers Converted a Marksmanship Group into a Mighty Gun Lobby,” *Washington Post*, January 12, 2013

Tom Hamburger, “White House Deal with Drug Firms Draws Flak,” *LA Times*, August 14, 2009.

Theda Skocpol and Vanessa Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), Introduction and Chapters 1-3.

Week 12 (November 8th and 13th): Voting, Campaigns, and Elections

Samuel Popkin, *The Reasoning Voter: Communication and Persuasion in Presidential Campaigns* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), 2nd ed., 1994, pp. 212-19.

Christopher H. Achen and Larry M. Bartels, *Democracy for Realists: Why Elections Do Not Produce Responsive Government* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 2016, pp. 1-51.

Wayne Steger, “Conditional Party Arbiters: The Limits of Political Party Insiders in Presidential Nominations,” *PS*, Vol. 49, No. 4, October, 2016, pp. 709-15.

Dan Hopkins, *FiveThirtyEight*. “[Most voters haven’t changed their mind all year.](#)” November 2, 2016. ^[L]_[SEP]

John Sides, Michael Tesler, and Lynn Vavreck, “The 2016 U.S. Election: How Trump Lost and Won,” *Journal of Democracy* 28, no. 2 (2017): 34-44

Week 13 (November 15th and 20th): Transformation IV: The Rise of Right-Wing Populism

Skocpol and Williamson, *The Tea Party and the Remaking of Republican Conservatism*, Preface, Introduction, and Chs. 5 and 6.

Marisa Abrajano and Zoltan L. Hajnal, "A Theory of Immigration Backlash Politics," in *White Backlash: Immigration, Race, and American Politics* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), 2015, pp. 25-59.

Katherine Cramer Walsh, "Putting Inequality in its Place: Rural Consciousness and the Power of Perspective," *American Political Science Review*, 2012 pp. 517-32.

Michael Tesler: Three essays on the 2016 Election in *The Monkey Cage* (*Washington Post* political science blog): "The Education Gap Among Whites this Year Wasn't About Education. It Was About Race," "How Racially Resentful Working-Class Whites Fled the Democratic Party – Before Trump," and "Views About Race Mattered More in Electing Trump than Electing Obama."

Morris Fiorina, "The Meaning of Trump's Election Has Been Exaggerated," *Real Clear Politics*, January 10, 2018.

November 22nd: No Class (Thanksgiving)

SECOND PAPER DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS ON NOVEMBER 27th

Week 14 (November 27th and 29th): Conclusion: Governance, Responsiveness, and Democratic Backsliding

Dahl, *How Democratic Is the American Constitution?* Chapters 5-7.

- Robert Mickey, Steven Levitsky, and Lucan Ahmad Way, "Is America Still Safe for Democracy? Why the United States is in Danger of Backsliding," *Foreign Affairs* May/June 2017, 20-29 ^[1]_{SEP}

Jason Zengerle, "Is North Carolina the Future of American Politics?" *The New York Times Magazine*, June, 2017

FINAL EXAM: TBA