

Modesto Junior College - Fall 2018 - POLSC 101 American Politics - TuTh 8:00am-9:25am

About POLSC 101 - Fall 2018

Meeting Times

TuTh 8:00am-9:25am MFND 154, East

Course Website

<https://modesto.instructure.com/courses/20084>

Professor Josh Franco, Ph.D.

<http://www.joshfranco.com/>

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209-575-7950 x6689

Office Hours: TuTh 9:25am-10:00am in Room FH120-G or by appointment

Course Description

Introduction to United States politics emphasizing the essential institutions, groups, beliefs, behaviors and processes that comprise the American political system at the national, state, and local levels. Special attention to rights and obligations of citizenship.

Course Prerequisites

None

Important Academic Year 2018-2019 Dates

Refund Date: 09/09/2018

Drop without 'W' Date: 09/09/2018

Pass No Pass Date: 09/25/2018

Last Day to Drop Date: 11/15/2018

<https://www.mjc.edu/instruction/calendar.php>

https://www.mjc.edu/instruction/18_19acadcal.pdf

MJC Political Science Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs)

PLO #1:

Use critical and creative thinking to address major political problems.

PLO #2:

Analyze key concepts and important theories in political science.

PLO #3:

Effectively search for, interpret, and critique political science literature.

PLO #4:

Formulate and communicate thoughtful opinions about governmental systems, political institutions, laws, and public policies.

<https://www.mjc.edu/general/research/plos.php>

POLSC 101 Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs)

CLO #1:

1. Critically and creatively analyze a major contemporary issue in American politics.

CLO #2:

2. Effectively search for, interpret, and critique literature that addresses topics in American politics.

CLO #3:

3. Evaluate the extent to which the American political system is democratic.

CLO #4:

4. Summarize the roles, powers, and operation of the three main branches of the U.S. federal government.

MJC Course Policies

Class Attendance

I believe attendance is important because showing up and being present is integral to our life. As a university-level student, it is important that you attend course because it strengthens your connection with your peers, the professor and understanding of the materials.

As discussed later, I do take attendance and it accounts for a portion of your overall grade. Additionally, much of the material will be presented only in class, and it will be difficult to do well on assignments and the final exam if you do not attend.

Electronic Devices

Please turn off cell phones and mute the volume on other electronic devices. No audio, video, or photographic recording of lectures is allowed without prior consent of the instructor.

Laptops

Laptop computers are to be used for note-taking only, unless the professor explicitly says otherwise. Any "off task" use of laptops (i.e. chatting, social networking, emailing) during class will be frowned upon, may result in you being considered "absent" from class, and potentially being banned from using your laptop in future class sessions.

Missing Class

Make ups are allowed only with a valid excuse, such as a doctor-excused illness, a family emergency, or a documented conflict with another college-sanctioned activity. If you know you will have such a conflict, please email me as soon as practicable.

Changes to the Syllabus

The schedule in this syllabus is largely settled; however, I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule or to other aspects of the course discussed in the syllabus. Any such changes will be announced in class and an updated syllabus noting version number

will be uploaded to the course website. Each student is responsible for being aware of such changes.

Student Conduct and Academic Honesty Policy

You are responsible for your personal, academic, and professional conduct. Additionally, academic honesty is of critical importance at all institutions of higher education. Visit the following links for more information.

<https://www.mjc.edu/student-services/sdncl/conduct.php>

<http://www.mjc.edu/student-services/freedomintegrity.php>

Disabled Student Programs and Services

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Modesto Junior College is committed to make our courses accessible to all students, including students with limited mobility, impaired hearing or vision, and learning disabilities. If you believe you have a special need or a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Disabled Student Programs and Services at (209)575-6225, mjcdsps@mjc.edu, or in Student Services Building Room 112, 435 College Ave., Modesto, CA 95350.

<https://www.mjc.edu/student-services/disability/>

Writing

The Writing Center is the part of the Library & Learning Center where students can get help with all aspects of the writing process.

<http://libguides.mjc.edu/writingcenter>

Sexual Harassment

Sexual harassment is a form of unlawful sexual discrimination and will not be tolerated by the College. The College strongly forbids any form of sexual harassment, including acts of nonemployees. Disciplinary action will be taken promptly against any student or employee, supervisory or otherwise, engaging in sexual harassment.

<http://www.mjc.edu/student-services/complaints.php>

Course Drop

Modesto Junior College has a webpage that links to the deadlines for a given semester or academic year. You are responsible for knowing the drop dates for the given semester or academic year. As course instructor, I do not have the power to drop a student.

<https://www.mjc.edu/student-services/enrollment/importantdates.php>

<https://www.mjc.edu/student-services/enrollment/howtodrop.php>

Extra Credit

No extra credit will be offered in this course.

Readings

Required

McClain, P. D. and S. C. Tauber (2018). American government in Black and White : diversity and democracy. New York, Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780190298791
See Course Schedule for Journal Articles

Recommended for All

Valelly, R. M. (2013). American politics : a very short introduction. Oxford ; New York, Oxford University Press. ISBN: 9780195373851

Recommended for Analysts Roles

Policy (Regulatory, Legislative, Judicial) Analyst: Kraft, M. E., & Furlong, S. R. (2013). Public policy : politics, analysis, and alternatives (4th ed.). Los Angeles: SAGE Publications.

GIS Analyst: Law, M., & Collins, A. (2016). Getting to know ArcGIS Pro. Esri Press.

Data Analyst: Hamilton, L. C. (2012). Statistics with Stata: version 12. Cengage Learning.

Communications Analyst: Lankow, J., et al. (2012). Infographics : the power of visual storytelling. Hoboken, N.J., John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Grading

Grade Posting

All grading will be posted to Course Website in a timely fashion

Final Grades will be uploaded to Course Website no later than Tuesday, December 18, 2018 (at noon)

Grading Policy

A+: 100% to 98.0%

A: < 98.0% to 94.0%

A-: < 94.0% to 90.0%

B+: < 90.0% to 87.0%

B: < 87.0% to 83.0%

B-: < 83.0% to 80.0%

C+: < 80.0% to 77.0%

C: < 77.0% to 73.0%

C-: < 73.0% to 70.0%

D+: < 70.0% to 67.0%

D: < 67.0% to 63.0%

D-: < 63.0% to 60.0%

F: < 60.0% to 0.0%

Grade Dispute and Resolution

If you have a concern regarding your grade, please contact me directly via email or visit me during office hours so we can discuss your concern and resolve it.

POLSC 101 - Fall 2018 - Assignments and Assessments

Class Attendance - 10%

32 Class Periods

We have 31 eighty-five minute periods of class and one final exam period of class.
You will be automatically marked "Present" for Thanksgiving Holiday.

Measuring Attendance

I will take attendance during each class via Course Website

Present: If you attend class, you are marked "present" and this positively affects your grade.

Unmarked: If you notified me prior to class of your absence, your attendance for the day is "unmarked" and does not negatively or positively affect your grade. However, this reduces your overall denominator.

For example, if you are "unmarked" 8 of the 32 total days I take attendance, this means your attendance grade is calculated based on 24 days instead of 32 days.

While this may seem beneficial, what happens is that if you are late or absent, then it weighs more heavily against you.

For example, a student who is absent 1 of 32 days will receive a ~97% out of 100%.

However, a student who is absent 1 of 24 days will receive a ~96% out of 100%.

Late: If you did not notify me prior to class that you would be late, you are marked "late" and this negative affects your grade.

Absent: If you did not notify me prior to class that you would not be present, you are marked "absent" and this negatively affects your grade.

Grading

Each day of attendance is worth at least ~0.6% of your overall grade.

Journal Article Analysis Team - 10%

About

Journal Article Analysis Teams are groups of students who read journal articles and analyze them. Teams are responsible for identifying ten parts of a journal article: title, main point and question, puzzle, debate, theory, hypotheses, research design, empirical analysis, policy implications, and contribution to the discipline and future research.

Assessments

Journal Article Analysis #1

Journal Article Analysis #2 and Oral Presentation

Workbook

Download JAA Workbook on Course Website for complete Instructions

Public Policy Project Team - 10%

About

Public Policy Project Teams are groups of students who identify a public problem to focus on. Teams are responsible for identifying the causes, effects, and solutions to the identified public problem. Each student assumes one of four analyst roles: Data Analyst, Geographic

Information Systems Analyst, Policy Analyst, or Communications Analyst. These analysts work together to produce a presentation that is orally presented before their peers.

Assessments

Reflections
Oral Presentation
Post-Oral Presentation Reflection

Workbook

Download PPP Workbook on Course Website for complete Instructions

Simulation - 10%

About

Simulations of real-world institutions, processes, and behaviors help you apply what you are learning

Assessments

Participation
Discussion Posts
Reflections

Workbook

Download SIM Workbook on Course Website for complete Instructions

Quizzes - 10%

About

Learning Unit Quizzes: Each Learning Unit has a 5-20 question quiz associated with it. If you do NOT attempt to complete the quiz during the designated week, you will not have access to the quiz questions or answers. This means you will not have a tool to help you prepare for the final exam.

Schedule

These quizzes will be available during the interval starting Sunday, 12:01am and close Saturday, 11:59pm corresponding to the week when lecture occurs. After Saturday, at 11:59pm, the quiz will close and no longer be available to attempt.

Grading

You will have up to three attempts to earn the highest score possible.

Essays - 50%

About

There are 4 essays of 750-1250 words (3-5 pages, font size 12, font Times New Roman, 1 inch margins, and double spaced) that you need to complete throughout the semester.

Assessments

Each essay is related to a specific Course Learning Outcome (CLO).

Essay 1 is worth 5% of your overall grade. Essay 2 is worth 10% of your overall grade. Essay 3 is worth 15% of your overall grade. And Essay 4 is worth 20% of your overall grade.

Each essay will be graded using the same rubric. The Rubric is available on the course website.

Schedule

An essay is due every 4 weeks. Essay 1 is due by the end of week 4. Essay 2 is due by the end of week 8. Essay 3 is due by the end of week 12. And Essay 4 is due by the end of week 16.

POLSC 101 - Fall 2018 - Course Schedule

Week	Date	Learning Unit	Book	Journal Articles
1	Tuesday, August 28, 2018	Introductions + Course Overview + Words You Need To Know		
1	Thursday, August 30, 2018	American Government and Politics in a Racially Divided World + Teams: JAA, PPP, SIM	McClain and Tauber Chapter 1	
2	Tuesday, September 4, 2018	The Constitution: Rights and Race Intertwined + PPP 1	McClain and Tauber Chapter 2	Lutz, D. S. (2013). "Toward a Theory of Constitutional Amendment." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 88(02): 355-370.
2	Thursday, September 6, 2018	Federalism: Balancing Power, Balancing Rights + SIM 1	McClain and Tauber Chapter 3	McCann, P. J. C., et al. (2015). "Top-Down Federalism: State Policy Responses to National Government Discussions." <i>Publius-the Journal of Federalism</i> 45(4): 495-525.
3	Tuesday, September 11, 2018	Political Socialization and Political Participation + PPP 2		van Deth, J. W., et al. (2011). "Children and Politics: An Empirical Reassessment of Early Political Socialization." <i>Political Psychology</i> 32(1): 147-173. Nickerson, D. W. (2015). "Do Voter Registration Drives Increase Participation? For Whom and When?" <i>Journal of Politics</i> 77(1): 88-101.
3	Thursday, September 13, 2018	Civil Liberties: Freedom and Government Authority in Tension + SIM 2	McClain and Tauber Chapter 4	Lahav, G. and M. Courtemanche (2012). "The Ideological Effects of Framing Threat on Immigration and Civil Liberties." <i>Political Behavior</i> 34(3): 477-505.

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Week	Date	Learning Unit	Book	Journal Articles
4	Tuesday, September 18, 2018	Civil Rights: Inequality and Equality + PPP 3	McClain and Tauber Chapter 5	Schickler, E., et al. (2010). "Congressional Parties and Civil Rights Politics from 1933 to 1972." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 72(3): 672-689.
4	Thursday, September 20, 2018	Congress: Representation and Lawmaking + SIM 3	McClain and Tauber Chapter 6	Hutchings, V. L., et al. (2004). "Congressional representation of black interests: Recognizing the importance of stability." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 66(2): 450-468.
5	Tuesday, September 25, 2018	The Presidency: Conventional Wisdom Redefined + PPP 4	McClain and Tauber Chapter 7	Rogowski, J. C. (2016). "Presidential Influence in an Era of Congressional Dominance." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 110(2): 325-341.
5	Thursday, September 27, 2018	PPP 5 + SIM 4		
6	Tuesday, October 2, 2018	The Bureaucracy: Career Government Employees, Accountability, and Race + SIM 5 Take Home Due Friday, October 5	McClain and Tauber Chapter 8	Clinton, J. D., et al. (2014). "Influencing the Bureaucracy: The Irony of Congressional Oversight." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> 58(2): 387-401.
6	Thursday, October 4, 2018	PPP 6 + PPP 7: Walkthrough Data Analyst and R Studio; Walkthrough GIS Analyst ArcGIS Online		
7	Tuesday, October 9, 2018	The Judiciary: Blending Law and Politics + SIM 6 In Class Due Same Day	McClain and Tauber Chapter 9	Franco, J. A. (2018). <i>Judicial Pork: The Congressional Allocation of Districts, Seats, Meeting Places, and Courthouses to the U.S. District Courts</i> . Political Science Merced, CA, University of California, Merced. Ph.D.
7	Thursday, October 11, 2018	PPP 8 + PPP 9: Walkthrough Policy Analysts; Walkthrough for Communications Analysts		
8	Tuesday, October 16, 2018	Public Opinion: Divided By Race? + SIM 7 Take Home Due Friday, October 19	McClain and Tauber Chapter 10	Baker, A. (2015). "Race, Paternalism, and Foreign Aid: Evidence from US Public Opinion." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 109(1): 93-109.
8	Thursday, October 18, 2018	SIM 8 (Rank Order Your Role with Other Roles) + SIM 9 (Respond to a Foreign-Related External Shock to the Status Quo)		
9	Tuesday, October 23, 2018	PPP 10: Sit with PPP Team, Final Preparation for Presentation		

Week	Date	Learning Unit	Book	Journal Articles
9	Thursday, October 25, 2018	PPP 11: Presentations Day		
10	Tuesday, October 30, 2018	SIM 10: Foreign Policy Crisis Day 1		
10	Thursday, November 1, 2018	SIM 11: Foreign Policy Crisis Day 2		
11	Tuesday, November 6, 2018	The Media: Reinforcing Racial Stereotypes? + JAA 1	McClain and Tauber Chapter 11	Conroy, M., et al. (2015). "From Ferraro to Palin: sexism in coverage of vice presidential candidates in old and new media." <i>Politics Groups and Identities</i> 3(4): 573-591.
11	Thursday, November 8, 2018	Social Movements: Civil Rights as a Movement Model + JAA 2	McClain and Tauber Chapter 12	Mazur, A. G., et al. (2016). "Comparative strength of women's movements over time: conceptual, empirical, and theoretical innovations." <i>Politics Groups and Identities</i> 4(4): 652-676.
12	Tuesday, November 13, 2018	Interest Groups: Good Outcomes with Few Resources + JAA 3	McClain and Tauber Chapter 13	Fernandez, F. (2014). "Interest Groups and Health Care Reform across the United States." <i>Journal of Politics</i> 76(4).
12	Thursday, November 15, 2018	Political Parties: Linking Voters and Governing Institutions + JAA 4	McClain and Tauber Chapter 14	Ramey, A. (2015). "Bringing the minority back to the party: An informational theory of majority and minority parties in Congress." <i>Journal of Theoretical Politics</i> 27(1): 132-150.
13	Tuesday, November 20, 2018	NOT IP Voting and Elections: From Obama to Clinton + JAA 5	McClain and Tauber Chapter 15	Simonovits, G. (2015). "An Experimental Approach to Economic Voting." <i>Political Behavior</i> : 1-18.
13	Thursday, November 22, 2018	Holiday - Thanksgiving		
14	Tuesday, November 27, 2018	California State and Local Government + JAA 6		Varone, F., et al. (2017). "Defending the status quo across venues and coalitions: evidence from California interest groups." <i>Journal of Public Policy</i> 37(1): 1-26. Hajnal, Z. L., et al. (2002). "Minorities and direct legislation: Evidence from California ballot

Week	Date	Learning Unit	Book	Journal Articles
				proposition elections." Journal of Politics 64(1): 154-177.
14	Thursday, November 29, 2018	The Making of Domestic and Foreign Policy: Summing Up American Government in Black and White + JAA 7	McClain and Tauber Chapter 16	Vernby, K. (2013). "Inclusion and Public Policy: Evidence from Sweden's Introduction of Noncitizen Suffrage." American Journal of Political Science 57(1): 15-29.
15	Tuesday, December 4, 2018	JAA 8: Sit with JAA Team, Final Preparation for Presentation		
15	Thursday, December 6, 2018	JAA Presentations Day 1		
16	Tuesday, December 11, 2018	Final Exam - 7:00am to 9:50am	Final Exam - 7:00am to 9:50am	Final Exam - 7:00am to 9:50am

