This course provides an in-depth study of the American Political System. Students will be exposed to a variety of matters pertaining to American Politics, including, but not necessarily limited to: underlying American political values, the US Constitution, political parties, interest groups, elections, the role of mass media, and social movements. We will pay special attention to Latina/o/x immigrant rights and the rights of Black women and men, as we follow the primaries and real news in order to hone our focus and assist you with your course assignments.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- The student will be able to correctly identify the structure and processes of the three branches of the US Government: Legislative, Executive, and, Judicial.
- The student will be able to describe the non-institutional aspects of the American system of government: political parties, interest groups, and the media.
- The student will learn how to research and compose election materials for Congressional, Senate or Democrat Presidential candidates. Congressional candidates are from any party.
- The student will be able to engage with the US electoral system, the media, and elections.
- The student will have an opportunity to work with their peers.

**Required Reading:**


Reserve Readings in the Library or in CourseSpaces. TLI and BWP are in the UVIC Bookstore. If you want to print AG—the UVIC Bookstore can assist you.

* My office is NOT in the Poli Sci Dept wing.
Student Evaluation:

Mid-Term: There will be a two-part midterm. A brief part in class, and an essay portion that will be take home. Thank you for working on your own. 😊 The mid-term includes weeks 1-6.

Group Facilitation of a Reading: Groups of 3-4 students will collaborate on leading the class discussion or topic for a reading. The schedule is included in the syllabus on page 6 and the presentations are Week 3-12. Sign up with Prof. A via face to face or an email. If you do not sign up by Week 3—you will be assigned the townhall option. Your facilitation should be 14-16 minutes and include up to 4 slides.

Attendance/Participation: I take roll and I run class in a lecture and discussion format. Your participation is necessary, as together we make the class successful. Likewise, you will not earn points toward this part of the class if you do not attend 70% of the class meetings.

Infographics: Students will compose two to three infographics related to their candidates. One is due on Feb 1st and the others are part of the candidate document.

Paper: Students will compose a candidate assessment and research document. Do not cite Dictionary.com or Encyclopeida.com as sources in any of your coursework. You will need to research extensively from US government sites like the Census, Electoral College, election results, and more in order to do justice to your research document. You will also need to have at least one infographic as part of this document. More information in the syllabus.

Candidate Townhall at Term’s end: Can participate in lieu of Group Facilitation. But, if you do not sign up for a group facilitation by the end of week 3 you are automatically participating in the townhall. Students will participate in a candidate townhall as the media lead for the candidate. This is optional. Sign up with Prof. A face to face or via email. The townhall take place during the last week of the term.

Keep abreast of events in the US. Read or listen to a daily news report such as Newsweek, Time, New York Times, Los Angeles Times, Washington Post, National Public Radio or watch the Daily Show or the Colbert Report. I’ll use #313a on Twitter.

Evaluation Percentages:

- Candidate document: 35%
- Mid-term: 30
- Group Facilitation or Townhall: 15
- Attendance/Participation: 10
- Infographics: 10

Week 1: Jan 7, 8 & 10th Course introduction and the Constitution
Constitution Center https://constitutioncenter.org/ AG Ch 2
Center for the American Woman & Politics http://www.cawp.rutgers.edu/ Ch 1 TLI = Sampaio book Intro BWP = Jordan-Zachery and Alexander-Floyd book
**Week 2: Jan 14, 15, & 17**<sup>th</sup> Congress  
AG Ch 11  
*School House Rocks: America Rocks*  
http://www.spectator.org/ American Spectator  
C Schmitt and H Brant, “Gender, Ambition, and Legislative Behavior in the US House”

**Week 3: Jan 21, 22 & 24**<sup>th</sup> Presidency  
AG Ch 12  
http://www.whitehouse.gov/ The White House and http://www.potus.com/ Presidents, USA  
Conservapedia https://www.conservapedia.com/Main_Page  
Ch 1 and 2 BWP  
P. Strach, “What’s Wrong with Us? Sexual Misconduct and the Discipline of Poli Sci”

**Week 4: Jan 28, 29, & 31**<sup>st</sup> Infographics Workshops and Start to SCOTUS  
Infographic Workshop in Class  
Supreme Court of the United States http://www.supremecourt.gov/  
AG Ch 13  
First Infographic due by Saturday, Feb 1st at noon and uploaded to CourseSpaces

**Week 5: Feb 4, 5 & 7**<sup>th</sup> Voting and Elections, and Interest Groups  
AG Ch 7 AG Ch 10  
TLI Ch 2 and start of 3  
T. Ditonto, “Direct and Indirect Effects of Prejudice: Sexism, Information, and Voting Behavior in Political Campaigns”

**Week 6: Feb 11, 12 & 14**<sup>th</sup> Mid-Term Fri in Class and Take Home due Fri, Public Opinion  
Fri—in class portion of mid-term (distribution of take home on Tues and due Fri, Feb 14<sup>th</sup> to me at the start of class and CourseSpaces by 1pm)  
AG Ch 6  
Ch 4 BWP Ch 3 TLI  
A. Zucker, et al, “Grab ‘Em by the Masculinity” Changes in Gendered Beliefs and Sexism Following the 2016 US Presidential Election” *SLD on Weds and not Fri*

**Week 7: Feb 25, 25, & 28**<sup>th</sup> The Media and Political Parties  
Emily’s List http://www.emilyslist.org/  
AG 8 and AG Ch 9  
B. Gervais and W Wilson, “New Media for the New Electorate? Outreach to Latinos on Twitter”  
T. Billard, “Setting the Transgender Agenda: Intermedia Agenda-Setting in Digital News Env’t”  
J. Feezal, ”An Experimental Test of Using Digital Media Literacy Education and Twitter to Promote Political Interest and Learning in American Politics Courses”
Week 8: Mar 3, 4 & 6th  Civil Liberties
http://www.opensecrets.org/ Open Secrets
AG Ch 4
TLI Ch 4-5
M. Centellas and Cy Rosenblatt, “Do Intro Poli Sci Courses Contribute to a Racial ‘Political Efficacy Gap’? Findings from a Panel Survey of a Flagship University”

Week 9: Mar 10, 11 & 13th  Civil Rights and Political Equality
Civil Rights AG Ch 5
Ch 5 BWP
K. Rands, “Considering Transgender People in Education”
V. Tyson, “Understanding the Personal Impact of Sexual Violence and Assault”

Week 10: Mar 17, 18 & 20th  Domestic Policy
http://www.civicyouth.org/ Center for Research on Civic Learning and Engagement
AG 16
E. Swank “The Political Distinctiveness of Gays and Lesbians”
N Goodyear-Ka’òpua, “‘Now We Know’: Resurgences of Hawaiian Independence”

Week 11: Mar 24, 25 & 27th  More Domestic Policy and Foreign Policy
Ch 9-10 BWP
Angela Bos, et al, “Who is in the Picture? The Gender Composition of Images of Congress in Party Caucus Twitter Feeds and Online Media”
W. Hatcher, “Teaching Curiosity in Public Affairs Programs”

Week 12: Mar 31, Apr 1 & 3rd  Townhall and last Group Facilitation
Candidate Townhall on Tues and Weds
O. Takeda, “How Far Have We Come? Asian Pacific Americans in Intro American Gov’t Textbooks”
Group Facilitation Schedule: On Fridays

Week 3: Jan 24<sup>th</sup>
P. Strach, “What’s Wrong with Us? Sexual Misconduct and the Discipline of Poli Sci”

Week 5: Feb 7<sup>th</sup>
T. Ditonto, “Direct and Indirect Effects of Prejudice: Sexism, Information, and Voting Behavior in Political Campaigns”

Week 6: Feb 14<sup>th</sup> This student led is Weds, not Friday
A. Zucker, et al, “Grab ‘Em by the Masculinity” Changes in Gendered Beliefs and Sexism Following the 2016 US Presidential Election”

Week 7: Feb 28<sup>th</sup>
T. Billard, “Setting the Transgender Agenda: Intermedia Agenda-Setting in Digital News Env’t”
J. Feezal, "An Experimental Test of Using Digital Media Literacy Education and Twitter to Promote Political Interest and Learning in American Politics Courses”

Week 8: Mar 6<sup>th</sup>
http://www.opensecrets.org/ Open Secrets
M. Centellas and Cy Rosenblatt, “Do Intro Poli Sci Courses Contribute to a Racial ‘Political Efficacy Gap’? Findings from a Panel Survey of a Flagship University”

Week 9: Mar 13<sup>th</sup>
Ch 5 BWP
K. Rands, “Considering Transgender People in Education”

Week 10: Mar 20<sup>th</sup>
E. Swank “The Political Distinctiveness of Gays and Lesbians”

Week 11: Mar 27<sup>th</sup>
Angela Bos, et al, “Who is in the Picture? The Gender Composition of Images of Congress in Party Caucus Twitter Feeds and Online Media”
W. Hatcher, “Teaching Curiosity in Public Affairs Programs”

Week 12: Apr 1 3<sup>rd</sup>
O. Takeda, “How Far Have We Come? Asian Pacific Americans in Intro American Gov’t Textbooks”
Official Business:

The assignment of letter grades is as follows per the UVIC guidelines:

90-100 = A+  85-89 = A  80-84 = A-  77-79 = B+  73-76 B
70-72 = B-  65-69 = C+  60-64 = C  50-59 = D  Below 50 = F

Digital and Face to Face Communication Expectations: Place Poli 313A in the subject heading of any email sent to me. I will treat students with the respect that you deserve as a human being in my classroom, office or via other forms of communication. Likewise, I expect the same. Please send a complete email, address me, sign your name, and use complete sentences to make sure that your email is clear. I ask that you wait 24 hours after you get graded work returned to you before you email me. Here is a great link of an example of how to send an email to your instructor: [http://www.wikihow.com/Sample/Email-Professor-About-a-Question](http://www.wikihow.com/Sample/Email-Professor-About-a-Question)

Treat online communication with the same integrity as student hour consultations—use complete sentences, sign your name—you know the drill. Understand that I prefer to be called Prof. A or Prof. Eh.

It is the students’ responsibility to add, drop, or withdraw from the course adhering to the university deadlines. If you have a learning accommodation it is part of your learning plan and you have the right to have your learning needs met and any discussion about your learning needs is important and confidential.

Excessive late arrival is unfair to the class and can affect your participation/attendance mark, but I also understand that you might be walking across campus. I like to say that I have 99 Problems and students are not one of them!

Absences are not excusable and late work is not accepted, however in instances of verifiable illness or family emergencies some exceptions can be made. Medical exceptions might be made, when there is satisfactory evidence of an illness. Medical notes alone are not always sufficient for an extension and the point penalty might still apply. See me if you are deathly ill before the assignment is due.

Please remember to save all of your assignments on an encrypted USB or email the latest copy to your UVIC netlink account, gmail or proton email. No extensions are granted with computer hardware/software crashes. All assignments are to be typed with Times New Roman 12 font, double-spaced, with one-inch margins throughout and stapled in the left-hand corner. Use MLA citation for all assignments. Life happens—so always email yourself the latest version of your paper.

Course Experience Survey (CES)

Towards the end of term you will have the opportunity to complete a confidential course experience survey (CES) regarding your learning experience in this class. The survey is vital to providing feedback regarding the course and your learning experience in my class. When it is
time for you to complete the survey, you will receive an email inviting you to do so. If you do not receive an email invitation, you can go directly to ces.uvic.ca. I appreciate your feedback—please take the time to fill out the CES. Remember that I want to hear about your assessment of the materials and my teaching style. Thank you!

**Plagiarism:** A student commits plagiarism when they submit the work of another person as original work, gives inadequate attribution to an author or creator whose work is incorporated into the student’s work, including failing to indicate clearly through accepted practices such as footnotes, internal references, and the crediting of all verbatim passages through indentations of longer passages or the use of quotation marks, the inclusion of another individual’s work, and paraphrases material from a source without sufficient acknowledgment as described. I reserve the right to use plagiarism detection software to detect plagiarism in essays, term papers, and other assignments. All of your work must be sourced properly—Creative Commons and the like.

**Disclaimer:** The professor reserves the right to alter the Course Calendar at any time without prior notice. It is the students’ responsibility to attend class, verify announcements, and check the Course Spaces site. No question is dumb. I might refer you to the syllabus, so please review the syllabus prior to emailing me. Thank you! If you read this, please email me a photo of a kitten or puppy. I love animals and lots of research suggests that pets are good for our health.

I READ THE SYLLABUS!
Candidate Paper      Prof. Aragon

Paper: Students will write one candidate research document page-paper about one of the US Congressional or Senate candidates running for election in California, Texas, Colorado, Florida, Iowa, Ohio, Nevada, Minnesota, North Carolina, and Michigan. You may also choose one of the Democrat Presidential candidates. The paper will explain the candidates’ stance on issues and other germane information voters needed for the candidates’ success in your state or district.

The biographical sketch for your candidate should include the stance on the majority of the following issues: Immigration, Women’s Issues, Indigenous Peoples, Gun Control, Education, Environment, Economy, Abortion, #BlackLivesMatter, and Drug Legalization.

Use either the Census or Fed Stats to help you give more information. For instance, how many registered Democrats/Republicans/Independents are from their city/state? What is the average amount of education from their city/state? What makes them different than the opposing party(ies) candidate? You should also include counter-intelligence information on your opponents in your paper. How supportive has the party been of said candidate? If the candidate has held a previous office—they should have a voting history in their state or in Congress/Senate.

Is the coverage gendered, “raced” or ageist? What is interesting or missing from the media coverage? What is the platform or main message to voters? What sort of campaign war chest does the candidate have and how should it be used to get the Latina/o/x and/or African American vote? Is the candidate up to date with notifying the FEC about their donations? Has the candidate benefited from the appearance of other public officials endorsements? What sort of advertisements is your candidate running on TV, radio, and online? And, what sort of social media footprint does your candidate have?

Avoid Wikipedia as a style guide, and use the official candidate sites such as the partisan websites, partisan blogs, American newspapers, and scholarly sources such as referred journals. Make sure that you engage all three textbooks. TLI and BP will be crucial for examining immigration, race/ism, identity, and gender issues. Review some .gov sites for up to date information. You are making the document useful for targeting the Latina/o/x vote or the African-American vote—ergo TLI and BP must be engaged and an intersectional lens is necessary for a strong document. Think of this document as the niche backgrounder for your candidate. You are the media, regional, and research lead for you candidate and your candidate is relying on your shrewd expertise to win their district or state. Remember, this is an internal document for your candidate/party use.

Your final papers are due March 31st through April 3rd by 1220pm. The hard papers are due to my dropbox in Political Science (or to me in class) and the soft copies uploaded into CourseSpaces. This is a rolling deadline and merely means that papers turned on the 31st get full comments and papers turned in thereafter through the final deadline get fewer comments. No late papers are accepted. The rolling deadline is meant to relieve the stress pressure for you.

Double-space, use TNR 12, MLA citation, and page numbers on the lower right or left side of the document. Tips: avoid contractions and spell out the entire word. With government agencies, spell out the title and then abbreviate. Please watch your grammar. I park my car in a lot. Use a better word than a lot—such as many or several.
Some of you will think of this as a 10 page document and others will provide an 18 page document. I want you to be thorough, but I will not read past 20 pages. The infographics are appendices and do not count in the page count. Your MLA style Works Cited do not count in the page count.

**Grading Grid (Attach this to your paper—there’s a copy in CourseSpaces)**

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<th>Strong</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>Marginal</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
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<td>Content: insight, thinking, depth, grasp of concepts</td>
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<td>Detail: relevant and persuasive evidence and support, sufficient quotation, introduction and integration of sources</td>
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<td>Followed directions</td>
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<td>Organization: guiding the reader with topic sentences, transitions, and focus (thesis); structure suited to content</td>
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<td>Language: wording, diction appropriate language and terminology</td>
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<td>Mechanics: spelling (names &amp; key terms), grammar, punctuation, usage, proofreading</td>
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<td>Overall impression: energy, originality, reading appeal</td>
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