



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2018

3,316: Introduction to US Politics

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Group examination paper (all given the same grades) (40%)

Decentral - Written examination (60%, 60 mins.)

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[3,316,1.00 Introduction to US Politics](#) -- Englisch -- [Brühwiler Claudia Franziska](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

There aren't any prerequisites - non-IA majors are welcome to join the class.

Course content

A shining city upon a hill, a beacon of hope, land of the free: in the past, many would have agreed with or at least smiled generously about these (self-)portrayals of the United States. Given the current state of American politics, most react with ridicule, incredulity, or outrage, and many wonder where the country is headed. Why is American politics so polarized? Is there anything Democrats and Republicans can agree on? And isn't democracy at risk with the Republicans dominating all three branches of government?

These are some of the questions we will explore during the course of the semester. We will have a look at the roots of the US political system, its evolution, and key institutions, including the famous "checks and balances." And, naturally, we will continuously keep track of what is happening in the White House and on Capitol Hill. In particular, we will take a closer look at the midterm elections, with all 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 35 in the Senate up for (re-)election.

Course structure

We will meet on a weekly basis. The final course session will coincide with your final exam. Topics we will cover include:

- the origins of the US Constitution
- checks and balances: the interplay of legislature, judiciary, and the executive branch
- red or blue: political parties
- elections
- the role of interest groups

Course literature

A course reader will be available for purchase at the SKK; in addition, you will find all slides and additional documents on the course page on StudyNet.

Additional course information

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at claudia-franziska.bruehwiler@unisg.ch.



Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Group examination paper (all given the same grades) (40%)

Remark

Paper written in groups of 2

Examination-aid rule

Term papers

- Term papers must be written without anyone else's help and in accordance with the known quotation standards, and they must contain a declaration of authorship.
- The documentation of sources (quotations, bibliography) has to be done throughout and consistently in accordance with the APA or MLA standards. The indications of the sources of information taken over verbatim or in paraphrase (quotations) must be integrated into the text in accordance with the precepts of the applicable quotation standard, while informative and bibliographical notes must be added as footnotes (recommendations and standards can be found, for example, in METZGER, C. (2015), *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (11th ed., 4th printing). Aarau: Sauerländer).
- For any work written at the HSG, the indication of the page numbers both according to the MLA and the APA standard is never optional.
- Where there are no page numbers in sources, precise references must be provided in a different way: titles of chapters or sections, section numbers, acts, scenes, verses, etc.
- For papers in law, the legal standard is recommended (by way of example, cf. FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R. et SCHINDLER B. (2018), *Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende* (6. Auflage), Zürich: Schulthess, or the recommendations of the Law School).

Supplementary aids

Adequate sources will be discussed in class.

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Written examination (60%, 60 mins.)

Remark

Final exam held during last course session.

Examination-aid rule

Extended Closed Book

The use of aids is limited; any additional aids permitted are exhaustively listed under "Supplementary aids". Basically, the following is applicable:

- At such examinations, all the pocket calculators of the Texas Instruments TI-30 series and mono- or bilingual dictionaries (no subject-specific dictionaries) without hand-written notes are admissible. Any other pocket calculator models and any electronic dictionaries are inadmissible.
- In addition, any type of communication, as well as any electronic devices that can be programmed and are capable of communication such as notebooks, tablets, PDAs, mobile telephones and others, are inadmissible.
- Students are themselves responsible for the procurement of examination aids.

Supplementary aids



A dictionary is allowed.

Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

You will sit for a final exam on the last session of the course, which will cover the course reader, the documents available on StudyNet (by Tuesday, Dec. 11), and our discussions in class. In addition, you will write a short term paper in groups of two. In the term paper, you will analyze the midterm elections in one particular state (e.g., Senate seat for Arizona, House election in California). You will need to submit that paper by Monday, November 26. Details will be discussed in our first course session.

Examination relevant literature

You will find all relevant texts in the course reader available for purchase at SKK as well as on StudyNet (final uploads on Tuesday, Dec. 11).

Please note

We would like to point out to you that this fact sheet has absolute priority over other information such as StudyNet, faculty members' personal databases, information provided in lectures, etc. When will the fact sheets become binding?

- Information about courses and examination time (central/decentral and grading form): from the start of the bidding process on 23 August 2018
- Information about decentral examinations (examination-aid rule, examination content, examination relevant literature): after the 4th semester week on 15 October 2018
- Information about central examinations (examination-aid rule, examination content, examination relevant literature): from the start of the enrolment period for the examinations on 05 November 2018

Please look at the fact sheet once more after these deadlines have expired.