

## Course Information

Semester & Year: Spring 2021

Course ID & Section #: POLSC 1 (V0442)

Instructor's name: Dr. Ryan Emenaker

Course units: 3

## Instructor Contact Information

Office hours: By appointment Online via email or Zoom.

Phone number: use email

Email address: ryan-emenaker@redwoods.edu

## Catalog Description

An introduction to current controversies in US politics. Students will become familiar with contemporary issues, critique different viewpoints, and construct policy solutions while learning about constitutional principles and government institutions.

## Course Student Learning Outcomes *(from course outline of record)*

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Identify and critique major contemporary political issues in American politics.
2. Describe the role of US political institutions in contemporary political problems.
3. Analyze how responses to political issues differ from the local, state, to national level.
4. Construct policy solutions to political problems.

## Accessibility

College of the Redwoods is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you have a disability or believe you might benefit from disability-related services and accommodations, please contact your instructor or [Disability Services and Programs for Students](#) (DSPS). Students may make requests for alternative media by contacting DSPS based on their campus location:

- Eureka: 707-476-4280, student services building, 1<sup>st</sup> floor
- Del Norte: 707-465-2324, main building near library
- Klamath-Trinity: 530-625-4821 Ext 103

During COVID19—DSPS will email approved accommodations for distance education classes to your instructor. In the case of face-to-face instruction, please present your written accommodation request to your instructor at least one week before the needed accommodation so that necessary arrangements can be made. Last minute arrangements or post-test adjustments usually cannot be accommodated.

## Admissions deadlines & enrollment policies

### Spring 2021 Dates

- *Classes begin: 1/16/21*
- *MLK Jr. Birthday (all campuses closed): 1/18/21*
- *Last day to add a class: 1/22/21*
- *Last day to drop without a W and receive a refund: 1/29/21*
- *Census date: 2/01/21 or 20% into class duration*
- *Last day to petition to file P/NP option: 2/12/21*
- *Lincoln's Birthday (all campuses closed): 2/12/21*
- *President's Day (all campuses closed): 2/15/21*
- *Last day to petition to graduate or apply for certificate: 3/04/21*
- *Spring Break (no classes): 3/15/21 – 3/20/21*
- *Last day for student-initiated W (no refund): 4/02/21*
- *Last day for faculty-initiated W (no refund): 4/02/21*
- *Final examinations: 5/08/21 – 5/14/21*
- *Semester ends: 5/14/21*
- *Grades available for transcript release: approximately 5/31/21*

## Academic dishonesty

In the academic community, the high value placed on truth implies a corresponding intolerance of scholastic dishonesty. In cases involving academic dishonesty, determination of the grade and of the student's status in the course is left primarily to the discretion of the faculty member. In such cases, where the instructor determines that a student has demonstrated academic dishonesty, the student may receive a failing grade for the assignment and/or exam and may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

## Disruptive behavior

Student behavior or speech that disrupts the instructional setting will not be tolerated. Disruptive conduct may include, but is not limited to: unwarranted interruptions; failure to adhere to instructor's directions; vulgar or obscene language; slurs or other forms of intimidation; and physically or verbally abusive behavior. In such cases where the instructor determines that a student has disrupted the educational process, a disruptive student may be temporarily removed from class. In addition, the student may be reported to the Chief Student Services Officer or designee. The Student Code of Conduct ([AP 5500](#)) is available on the College of the Redwoods website. Additional information about the rights and responsibilities of students, Board policies, and administrative procedures is located in the [College Catalog](#) and on the [College of the Redwoods website](#).

# POLSC 1: Political Controversies (V0442)

Spring 2021  
Course Syllabus

**Instructor:** Ryan Emenaker -- [ryan-emenaker@redwoods.edu](mailto:ryan-emenaker@redwoods.edu) -- [use email to contact]

## I. Required Texts

Corey L. Brettschneider. *Constitutional Law and American Democracy: Cases and Readings*. New York: Wolters & Kluwer, 2011. You must have regular access to the text to have any hope of passing the class.

Additional readings and/or activities will be posted on Canvas.

## II. Instructor Expectations & Student Requirements

You will need to commit at least as much (but probably more) time as you would to a face-to-face class. Conscientiousness, attention to details, and reading and writing skills are critical for success.

- carefully watch video lectures, read textbook chapters & articles, and take notes
- complete online Reading Analysis Papers requiring the submission of documents
- participate in weekly online discussions
- complete & submit analysis essays requiring the submission of documents
- participate in group work requiring email &/or video chats with group members

Expect to put in about 7-9 hours-per-week for this class. Additional time will be needed to complete essays and group work.

If you fail to keep up with Discussion Posts or Reading Analysis Papers you may be dropped from this class.

**Computer Skills:** Online courses require adequate computer skills. You must be able to:

- navigate the course Learning Management System (Canvas)
- receive and respond to your CR email
- download and upload files to Canvas, &
- use a word processor (such as Microsoft Word)

It is your responsibility to meet the technological demands of the course.

**Technology Requirements:** You should have high-speed internet (such as broadband) service from cable, DSL, or satellite providers which you can reliably access for the duration of the course. Anticipate problems with your computer and internet access (including power outages) by not waiting until the last minute to submit assignments. It is your responsibility to meet the class deadlines.

*Portable Devices vs. Computers:* Although you can use late-model portable devices (such as Android or iOS phones & tablets) for some things, you should plan on doing the majority of your work (especially essays) from a reasonably late-model notebook or desktop computer. *Do NOT*

*plan to participate in this class solely from a portable device.* If you do decide to use your portable device for *some* class work, use the free Canvas app (“Canvas by Instructure”) available in iTunes (for iOS) and the Google Play Store (for Android). Your experience with Canvas will be a lot better using the app.

**Course Availability:** The course will be available on CR’s Canvas system beginning on the first day of classes. On or after that date, you must login to Canvas at <https://redwoods.instructure.com> to enter our “classroom.”

**Login instructions for Canvas:**

1. Open your web browser and go to <https://redwoods.instructure.com>
2. Your Username is the same as your **Webadvisor User ID** (first initial + lastname + last 3 digits of your student ID number.) Your initial password is your 6-digit birthdate (mmddyy).
3. Once logged in, on top left side of the screen there is a drop down menu of your Courses.

**Student Resources:** There are instructions on how to log in to Canvas, the basics of using Canvas, and additional support for taking an online course at College of the Redwoods at <http://redwoods.edu/online/>

**Confirm your presence in the online classroom:** Log in to Canvas and post in the “Introductory Discussion Post” Forum no later than 11:59pm on 1/24/21 to confirm your presence in the online classroom. Doing so will confirm your enrollment and avoid being dropped as a “no show.”

**Faculty Initiated Drop:** Note that students may be dropped from the class for inactivity and insufficient participation in the class (i.e. not taking exams, not submitting course work, etc.).

**III. Course Requirements:**

- 10 Discussion Questions– 20% collectively
- 8 Reading Analysis Papers –20% collectively
- 2 Group Hypothetical Arguments—20% collectively
- 3 Analysis/Argumentative Essays - 10% each (30% collectively)
- Final Exam – 10%

**IV. Assignment Explanations:**

**1) 10 Discussion Questions [10 x 20 points =200 total]**

During 12 weeks of this semester, I will pose a Discussion Question; each one is worth up to 20 points and your ten highest grades, based on the rubric detail below, are counted toward your semester total.

| Points | Definition  |
|--------|---|
| 18-20  | Substantially exceeds the minimal requirements. The Post (1) directly answers the question and (2) demonstrates critical analysis and deep creative thinking by providing an accurate breakdown and a thoughtful evaluation of one or more of the week's readings. The Post is of professional quality, it is free of errors, and it indicates a deep reflection on the material.   |
| 16-17  | Exceeds minimum requirements. The Post (1) directly answers the question and (2) clearly demonstrates an understanding of one or more of the week's readings. It displays some critical analysis and some creative thinking (even if the analysis is not as outstanding as it could be) and the Post is mostly accurate in its breakdown of the author's argument while also providing some evaluation of that argument. Further, the writing is well organized, and thoughts are expressed clearly. No major errors in writing style or mechanics. |
| 14-15  | Satisfactorily meets the minimum requirements. The Post (1) attempts to answer the question and (2) clearly demonstrates the acquisition of knowledge, and that the student has completed the readings and comprehended most of the author's argument. There is little attempt to evaluate the author's work, or the evaluation that is attempted is untethered to the argument made by the author. The Post may contain some minor errors, and rough grammar which may hinder the clarity of expression.   |
| 12-13  | Unsatisfactory attempt to achieve the minimum requirements. The Post (1) fails to answer the specific question posed but (2) still indicates some knowledge of the reading, even though there is minimal summation and evaluation and some of that summation and evaluation is inaccurate. There may be frequent serious errors in grammar and comprehension.   |
| 11 ≥   | Unacceptable attempt to achieve the minimum requirements. The Post (1) fails to answer the specific question posed and (2) fails to demonstrate knowledge of any of the week's required readings because the summation/evaluation is missing or almost wholly inaccurate. The writing may lack coherence or relevance.  |

## 2) 8 Reading Analysis Papers [8 x 25 points =200 total]

These are written pieces to required readings from 8 different weeks. There are 12 weeks when you have an opportunity to submit an Analysis, so you get to choose which 8 of those 12 weeks you will submit Papers. I will grade your first 8 (not your best 8) and *extra credit will not be given for turning in more than 8.*

Please do not attempt to summarize the entire chapter or article. Instead, (1) pick a quote, theme, or idea from one of the assigned readings for that week then (2) write 1-2 paragraphs summarizing the author's intended meaning and (3) write 1-2 paragraphs describing your reactions to the quote or theme. *I do not simply want to know what the authors said; I want to know what YOU think about what they said.* A sample reading analysis is included on Canvas; please read this sample a couple of times to get a sense of what I expect. Also read the section labeled "Mistakes that Drive Me Crazy" at the end of the Sample Analysis so you can avoid making these mistakes.

These writings are designed to get you thinking about the readings we do throughout the semester, they reinforce lectures and discussions and sharpen your analytical skills. *Each response piece should be at least one double-spaced typed page (approx. 300-450 words).* It must be submitted through Canvas

as a Word Doc. No late or e-mailed analysis pieces will be accepted!!! You must have at least one turned in by Sunday, Feb. 7 or I may drop you from the course; however, you should feel free to turn one in before this.

A similar criterion to the one used for Discussion Forum Posts is used to grade Reading Analysis Papers. Earning a full 25 requires serious analysis, evaluation of the required readings, thus earning a full 25-points on a Reading Analysis should not be expected as the default grade, but the grade earned by outstanding Analysis papers.

### **3) 3 Analysis/Argumentative Essays [100 points each; 300 total]**

These are three 1800-2200-word papers Questions for the papers will be announced approximately ten days prior to the assignment's due date. Please see course schedule for relevant dates. The questions are based on the readings from the previous weeks, and they will require you to carefully contemplate what we have read. No outside research is expected (in fact it is discourage). Further explanation of the essays will be provided with each round of questions. I will provide a sample essay and a writing checklist.

### **4) 2 Group Hypotheticals Arguments (AKA Group Hypos)**

You will be placed into a group and assigned two separate political controversies (one during Week 4 and one during Week 9) with made up facts. Your group will be tasked with a specific role that you will play and asked to craft a resolution for the controversy that employs the information contained in course readings and lectures from the previous weeks. Specific details on the assignment will be provided about a week before the due date.

### **5) Final [100 points]**

Further explanation of the final will be provided during week 15. The Final is due Wed. May. 12.

**Late Assignments:** For each day an assignment handed is late, the grade will be lowered by 1/3 of a grade (e.g. from A to A-, from a B+ to a B). No late Final, Reading Analysis Papers, or Discussion Questions will be allowed.

## **V. Grading Scale**

|    |             |
|----|-------------|
| A  | = 93 – 100  |
| A- | = 90 – 92.9 |
| B+ | = 86 – 89.9 |
| B  | = 83– 85.9  |
| B- | = 80 – 82.9 |
| C+ | = 76 – 79.9 |
| C  | = 73 – 75.9 |
| C- | = 70 – 72.9 |
| D+ | = 66 – 69.9 |
| D  | = 60 – 65.9 |
| F  | = 0 – 59.9  |

# Class Schedule

## Week 0 [Jan. 16-24]

### - Introductions & Outline

- 1) Course Syllabus (Canvas)
- 2) Sample Reading Analysis & “Mistakes that Drive Me Crazy (Canvas)

## Week 1 [Jan. 19-24]

### - What is Political Science? Overview of U.S. Political System

- 1) “The 3 I’s of Political Studies: Institutions, Interests, & Ideology.” (Canvas)
- 2) “Political Thinking: Becoming a Responsible Citizen” Ch. 1 of *We the People*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. (Canvas) Read to “Politics & Power in America” Section.
- 3) Declaration of Independence. (Canvas)
- 4) *Federalist 51* (Canvas)

## Week 2 [Jan 25-31]

### - Controversies over *Who Ought to Interpret Law?* [Judicial Review & Judicial Supremacy]

- 1) “How to Read and Brief a Case” [*CL&AD*] p. xxxiii-xxxiv.
- 2) Chapter 1 “Judicial Authority,” [*CL&AD*] p. 3-7
- 3) Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist* No. 78 [*CL&AD*] p. 22-6
- 4) Brutus, “Untitled Essay Against Ratification,” [*CL&AD*] p. 27-34
- 5) *Marbury v. Madison* [*CL&AD*] p. 40-8
- 6) Jeremy Waldron, “The Core of the Case Against Judicial Review,” [*CL&AD*] p. 95-100
- 7) Ryan Emenaker, “High Court not Final Say...” Times-Standard. 2012. (Canvas)

## Week 3 [Feb. 1-7]

### - Controversies over *How to Interpret the Law* [Originalism & Proceduralism]

- 1) Chapter 2 “Theories of Interpretation,” [*CL&AD*] p. 135-41
- 2) “Originalism,” [*CL&AD*] p. 139-41.
- 3) Antonin Scalia, “Originalism: The Lesser Evil,” [*CL&AD*] p. 141-9
- 4) *District of Columbia v. Heller* [*CL&AD*] p. 150-158
- 5) “Proceduralism” [*CL&AD*] p. 159-60
- 6) John Hart Ely, *Democracy and Distrust: A Theory of Judicial Review* [*CL&AD*] focus on p. 176-7. Starting with section labeled “Democracy & Distrust.”
- 7) *Reynolds v. Sims* [*CL&AD*] p. 179-83.

***Must have first Reading Analysis done by end of week.***

## Week 4 [Feb. 8-14]

### - Controversies over *How to Interpret the Law* [Moral Reading & Pragmatism]

- 1) “Moral Reading of the Constitution,” [*CL&AD*] p. 183-4
- 2) Ronald Dworkin, *Freedom’s Law* [*CL&AD*] p. 185-92.
- 3) *Lochner v. New York* [*CL&AD*] p. 197-200
- 4) “Pragmatism & Consequentialism” [*CL&AD*] p. 208-9
- 5) Richard Posner, “Against Constitutional Theory,” [*CL&AD*] p. 209-13.
- 6) *Lochner v. New York* [*CL&AD*] p. 226-7
- 7) *District of Columbia v. Heller* [*CL&AD*] p. 227-33

## Week 5 [Feb 15-21]

### - First Essay Assignment

## Week 6 [Feb 22- 28]

### - Controversies over Free Speech & Politics [Can the government really prevent me from “saying” that?]

- 1) Ch. 5: “Free Speech” [CL&AD] p. 563-8
- 2) John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* [CL&AD] p. 569-76
- 3) Alexander Meiklejohn, *Free Speech and Its Relation to Self- Government* [CL&AD] p. 576-86
- 4) Gordon Brown “Speech on Terrorism,” [CL&AD] p. 593-4
- 5) [Jacinda Ardern, “How to Stop the Next...Massacre,” NY Times, May 11, 2019.](#) (Canvas)
- 6) Liptak, “Can Twitter Legally Bar Trump? First Amendment Says Yes,” *NY Times*, Jan 9, 2021 (Canvas)
- 7) *Schenck v. United States* [CL&AD] p. 594-6
- 8) *New York Times Co. v. Sullivan* [CL&AD] p. 615-21
- 9) *Brandenburg v. Ohio* [CL&AD] p. 622-4

## Week 7 [March 1-7]

### - Controversies over Hate Speech & Obscenity [Can they really say such hatefully/obscene things?]

- 1) Ch. 5: “Obscenity, Pornography, & Hate Speech” [CL&AD] p. 659-61
- 2) *Miller v. California* [CL&AD] p. 689-98
- 3) *Virginia v. Black* [CL&AD] p. 734-40
- 4) Video: [Zoeann Murphy, “State of Emergency Declared After White Nationalist Gathering in Charlottesville,” The Washington Post. Aug. 14, 2017.](#)
- 5) Greenfield, “Limits of Free Speech,” *The Atlantic Monthly*. March 13, 2015 (Canvas)
- 6) Totenberg “Court Struggles w/ Military Funerals Case” *NPR*, Oct. 06, 2010 (Canvas)
- 7) Editorial, “Hate Speech is Loathsome, but...” *LA Times*. August 17, 2017 (Canvas)
- 8) Barrett, “When is Speech Violence?” *The New York Times*, July 14, 2017 (Canvas)
- 9) Katie Mettler, “Why Free Speech Makes it Difficult to Prosecute White Supremacy in America,” *Washington Post*, August 8, 2019 (Canvas)

## Week 8 [March 8-14]

### - Controversies over Religious Free Exercise [Can my faith get me out of jail?]

- 1) Chapter 6 “Religious Freedom,” [CL&AD] p. 749-56
- 2) *Sherbert v. Verner* [CL&AD] p. 797-802
- 3) *Wisconsin v. Yoder* [CL&AD] p. 802-9
- 4) *Employment Division v. Smith* [CL&AD] p. 823-35
- 5) [Audio: Heightened Scrutiny: A Podcast About..., Episode 7: Employment Division v. Smith,” May 5, 2017.](#)
- 6) *Church of Lukumi Babalu Aye v. City of Hialeah* [CL&AD] p. 835-42
- 7) Adam Liptak, “Justices to Hear Case on Religious Objections to Same-Sex Marriage,” *The New York Times*. June 26, 2017 (Canvas)
- 8) Audio: [Nina Totenberg, “A Supreme Court Clash Between Artistry And The Rights Of Gay Couples,” NPR. Dec. 4, 2017.](#) (Canvas)

## Spring Break March 15-19



## Week 9 [March 22-28]

### - Controversies over the Establishment Clause [Can the government express religious beliefs?]

- 1) Ch. 6: “Establishment, Public Funding, & Prayer,” [CL&AD] p. 853-5
- 2) *Engel v. Vitale* [CL&AD] p. 889-92
- 3) *Lemon v. Kurtzman* [CL&AD] p. 892-6
- 4) *Lynch v. Donnelly* [CL&AD] p. 899-907
- 5) *County of Allegheny v. ACLU* [CL&AD] p. 907-15
- 6) Amy Howe, “Introduction: More Than Just a Playground Dispute,” *Trinity Lutheran Church v. Comer* (Canvas)
- 7) Lia Eustachewich, “Alaska Officials Walk Out of Session After Speaker Declares ‘Hail Satan,’” *NY Post*, August 7, 2019 (Canvas)
- 8) Video: [“2 Judges Rule Against Trump’s Latest Travel Ban,” \*The New York Times\*. March 15, 2017.](#) (Canvas)

## Week 10 [March 29-April 4]

### - Second Essay Assignment

## Week 11 [ April 5 -11]

### - The Controversial Right to Privacy/Autonomy [What other rights do I have?]

- 1) Chapter 7 “Substantive Due Process & Fundamental Rights,” [CL&AD] 951-5
- 2) Ch. 7c “Right to Privacy,” [CL&AD] 999-1001
- 3) John Hart Ely, “Wages of Crying Wolf,” [CL&AD] p. 1011-1019
- 4) *Lochner v. New York* [CL&AD] p. 967-71
- 4) *Griswold v. Connecticut* [CL&AD] p. 1021-9
- 5) Audio: [“Abortion, Precedent and the Supreme Court,” SCOTUSTalk](#)
- 6) *Roe v. Wade* [CL&AD] p. 1029-38
- 7) *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* [CL&AD] p. 1054-61
- 8) Amy Howe “Abortion could return to the Supreme Court: In Plain English,” *SCOTUSBlog*. (Canvas)
- 9) *Bowers v. Hardwick* [CL&AD] p. 1043-7
- 10) *Lawrence v. Texas* [CL&AD] p. 1061-9

## Week 12:

### - Controversies over Equality & Race [Can government ever take race into account?]

- 1) Chapter 8: “Race & Equality,” [CL&AD] 1093-100
- 2) Frederick Douglass, “What to the Slave is the Fourth of July?” [CL&AD] p. 1102-5
- 3) Thurgood Marshall, “The Bicentennial Speech,” [CL&AD] p. 1110-1
- 4) *Dred Scott v. Sanford* [CL&AD] p. 1115-27
- 6) *Plessy v. Ferguson* [CL&AD] p. 1134-43
- 7) *Brown v. Board of Education (I)* [CL&AD] p. 1143- 47
- 8) Chapter 8b “Affirmative Action” [CL&AD] p. 1159-60.
- 9) *Regents of University of California v. Bakke* [CL&AD] p. 1168-74
- 10) *Grutter v. Bollinger* [CL&AD] p. 1185-9
- 11) *Gratz v. Bollinger* [CL&AD] p. 1189-93
- 12) Amy Gutmann, “Responding to Racial Injustice,” [CL&AD] p. 1166-7
- 13) Ifill, “Racial Justice Demands Affirmative Action,” *The New York Times*, Aug. 2, 2017 (Canvas)

### **Week 13 [April 19-25]**

**- Controversies over Equality: Gender & Sexual Orientation** [Can government ever treat people differently based on sex, gender or sexual orientation?]

(12/2) Day 1: Debating Race & Equality

- 1) Chapter 9: “Gender, Sexual Orientation, and Equality,” [CL&AD] p. 1247-51
- 2) *Reed v. Reed* [CL&AD] p. 1264-5
- 3) *Frontiero v. Richardson* [CL&AD] p. 1265-9
- 4) *United States v. Virginia* [CL&AD] p. 1287-93
- 5) Chapter 9: “Sexual Orientation,” [CL&AD] p. 1294
- 6) *Bowers v. Hardwick* [CL&AD] p. 1302-5
- 7) *Romer v. Evans* [CL&AD] p. 1305-9
- 8) *Lawrence v. Texas* [CL&AD] p. 1310-3
- 9) *Obergefell v. Hodges* (Canvas)
- 10) Bump, “Trump’s Argument Against Transgendered Soldiers Echoes,” July 26, 2017 (Canvas)
- 11) Amy Howe, “Court to take up LGBT Rights in the Workplace,” *SCOTUSblog*, April 22, 2019 (Canvas)
- 12) Joshua Matz, “Two Reasons Why Title VII Bans Transgender Discrimination,” *Take Care Blog*, July 9, 2019 (Canvas)

### **Week 14 [April 26-May 2]**

**- Third Essay**

### **Week 15 [May 3-9]**

**- Course Recap**

**Final Due Wednesday, May 12**

Course Outline, Readings and Due Dates Subject to Change at Instructors Discretion