# Course Information

## Senior Seminar in American Politics

**Class Number**

PLSI 0606

**Section**

02

**Semester**

Fall 2021

**Description**

Prerequisites: Senior Political Science majors; all Political Science core courses and PLSI 302GW. Focus on the specialization and particular interests of the professor in question in the field of American Politics. Topics to be specified in the Class Schedule. May be repeated when topics vary.

### Schedule Information

* Humanities Building 129 — **T** 13:00 to 15:45

# Instructor

Greetings, scholars! My name is Amanda Roberti (she/her) and I am excited to be your professor for Senior Seminar in American Politics: Gender, Law, & Public Policy. I always find gender and the law to be an interesting topic, but it is a particularly good year to study this. The current ideological makeup of the US Supreme Court might make us think about how they will interpret important questions about gender, sex, and sexuality.

My main field of study is in women and politics, American politics, public policy, and public law. I studied at Rutgers University in New Jersey, where I earned my PhD. I have been teaching there and at Ramapo College of New Jersey for the last 6 years or so. I just joined you all at SFSU last year, so last summer summer I had to pack all of my things and drive across the country – from one coast to another – to live and work in SF. It’s been a wild ride, but I really love it here!

Please watch my introductory video for more about me. I truly can’t to get to know you all! This will be a really fun and enlightening semester!

## Amanda Roberti

Assistant Professor

### Contact

**Email:** [aroberti@sfsu.edu](mailto:aroberti@sfsu.edu)

### Office Location

HUM 565

### Office Hours

Wednesday from 1pm – 4pm

### About

Amanda Roberti — Ph.D. PhD, Political Science – concentrations in Women and Politics, American Politics, Public Policy, and Public Law. My research focuses specifically on abortion policy in the US, reproductive justice, gender and rhetoric, conservative women in the US, and US states. MA, Political Science, Women’s and Gender Studies – Rutgers, Newark BA, Political Science, Philosophy – Kutztown University, PA Certified to teach in Women’s and Gender Studies Fun facts: I lived in Philadelphia for about 7 years, I’ve traveled across the country twice, I just moved from New Jersey, I used to have a miniature dachshund (but she died right before I moved here), I’m an avid hiker and hula hoop dancer!

# Student Learning Outcomes

* Demonstrate ability to apply study of principles and content of American politics to an original research project.
* Demonstrate ability to apply skills developed the PLSI major to analysis of real-world politics.
* Demonstrate ability to craft, develop, and produce a semester-long research project in political science.

# Policies

## COVID-19 and Our Campus

Your health and safety is our paramount concern at SF State. During the COVD-19 pandemic, every member of our Gator community is expected to do their part in keeping fellow students, faculty, and staff safe and well. Feeling well and safe will support you in focusing on your academic success.

For the limited number of classes meeting face-to-face, In-person class attendance is an option, but not a requirement. Students who do not wish to or are unable to comply with these requirements will be allowed to take the class virtually or provided with other remote options for course completion.

Please consult the campus plan website ( <https://news.sfsu.edu/campus-plan>) for up-to-date information and explanation of requirements. For all students attending in-person, the following are required:

* Wear a face covering when around other people outside of those in your household.
* Stay at least 6 feet physically distant from people outside the members of your household.
* Stay home if you have one or more symptoms of COVID-19 (Please check in with the SF DPH website for the most up-to-date symptoms & testing: <https://www.sfcdcp.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/GetTestedSF-Eng-052920.pdf>)
* If you would like to discuss reasonable accommodations based on disability related to COVID- 19, please contact the Disability Programs & Resource Center: dprc@sfsu.edu.

Information is changing rapidly, as our health professionals, scholars, and researchers are learning more about COVID-19, and as such, we encourage you to frequently check your San Francisco State University email account and <https://news.sfsu.edu/campus-plan/students-families>for the most current information.

* You are encouraged to keep your emergency information updated on Campus Solutions in order to receive campus emergency alerts: https://upd.sfsu.edu/ENSFAQ
* You are also encouraged to provide your contact information to receive city of SF emergency alerts, including COVID-19 updates and instructions for public safety: https://sfdem.org/get-cityalerts
* If you have any questions regarding COVID-19 or your own health during this time, please reach out to Student Health Services: https://health.sfsu.edu
* If you are feeling overwhelmed, you are encouraged to connect with our on-campus health professionals in Counseling & Psychological Services: https://caps.sfsu.edu
* If you are looking for education on how to keep yourself and your loved ones healthy, then reach out to our Health Promotion & Wellness Team: https://wellness.sfsu.edu

## Plagiarism Policy

In this course, we will be employing software from TurnItIn.com as a tool for learning how to correctly cite resources. Turnitin.com is useful in helping to determine whether or not a writer is relying too heavily upon sources and whether a writer has given appropriate credit to an author or source. Students will be assigned a username and will be expected to submit their papers on the assigned due date to Turnitin.com, which in turn produces an “originality” report. This report will compare the student’s paper to content on the Web, to the Turnitin.com database of previously submitted papers, and to databases of common full-text journals. In creating an account, students agree that by taking this course, all required papers will be reviewed by Turnitin.com and acknowledge that their papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. All identifiers (student name, ID #, etc.) will be removed from the paper before it is uploaded into Turnitin.com. Use of Turnitin.com services is subject to the Terms and Conditions of Use, which are posted on the Turnitin.com website.

## Plagiarism Policy

Plagiarism includes using someone else’s exact words, or even their ideas but not their exact words, without proper citation. It is a good rule of thumb that if you did not know the information before you started the assignment, you must cite your source. If you are still unsure of how to cite, ask your instructor or a librarian.

For more information on Standards for Student Conduct, visit the Office of Student Conduct site, here: <https://conduct.sfsu.edu/standards>.

## Accommodations for Religious Holidays Policy

The SFSU community recognizes and takes pride in the diversity of religious and spiritual backgrounds of its student body and strives to make every reasonable effort to give its students the opportunity to observe their recognized religious holidays. The Academic Senate Policy on the Observance of Religious Holidays indicates that, “The faculty of San Francisco State University shall make reasonable accommodations for students to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class activities….” Refer to the policy for further information, including  implementation procedures, found here: <https://cs.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/AcademicSenateSyllabiPoliciesSP09.pdf>.

## Class Attendance Policy

The SFSU community recognizes and takes pride in the diversity of religious and spiritual backgrounds of its student body and strives to make every reasonable effort to give its students the opportunity to observe their recognized religious holidays. The Academic Senate Policy on the Observance of Religious Holidays indicates that, “The faculty of San Francisco State University shall make reasonable accommodations for students to observe religious holidays when such observances require students to be absent from class activities….” Refer to the policy for further information, including  implementation procedures, here: <https://cs.sfsu.edu/sites/default/files/AcademicSenateSyllabiPoliciesSP09.pdf>.

## Late Work Policy

Be sure to pay close attention to deadlines—there will be no make up assignments or quizzes, or late work accepted without a serious and compelling reason and instructor approval.

## Syllabus Change Policy

Disclaimer: This syllabus is subject to change.

## Personal Identity Policy

All humans have the right to be addressed in accordance with their personal identity preferences. In some cases, you may prefer to be called by a name other than what is listed on the course roster. For example, you want to be called the shortened version of a name (for example, “Alex” as opposed to “Alexander/Alexandra”). Sometimes this means that though your given name might be coded as one gender, you identify as another, and use a different name and pronoun. In all cases, faculty will use the name you provide, rather than the name provided by the campus database. If you have reason to believe that your instructor may refer to you by an incorrect name or pronoun, please inform your instructor as to how you would prefer to be addressed (for example: she, he, they, ze, etc.) right away.

## How to Appeal a Grade

How to appeal a grade: <https://senate.sfsu.edu/policy/grade-appeal-practices-and-procedures-current>.

## How to Enroll in/Drop a Class

How to enroll in/drop a class: <https://cms.sfsu.edu/content/registering-classes>.

## University Grading Information

Information regarding grades: <https://cms.sfsu.edu/content/grades-student-information>.

## Class Culture

**My classroom is based on mutual respect.** Students need to **respect** the professor and other students in the course. Controversial topics may arise in political classes, opinions will likely differ, but the tone and tenor of class shall always remain cordial and civil. I seek to provide an intellectual environment where students can feel free to express their views without ideological or partisan oppression from the professor or other students. As this is college, we are all adults, and fully expect our conversations to reflect that fact.

## Academic Calendar

To review course drop, withdrawal, instruction dates, or other information related to important dates at the university, visit the SF State academic calendar, here: <https://webapps.sfsu.edu/public/webcal/acadcalendar>.

## Resilient Teaching & Learning Plan

Resilient Teaching & Learning Plan

Our campus community is often called to demonstrate compassionate resiliency by adapting and responding to a number of unexpected events, or disruptions, such as personal illness or injury, the COVID-19 pandemic, or unhealthy air quality and power outages due to wildfires. A disruption is a situation that will prevent you, me, or the entire class from participating in 'class as usual' for a reason we could not have predicted at the beginning of the semester. Our goal as a learning community is to do our best to keep teaching and learning with as little interruption as possible, so here’s my plan to keep teaching in the event of a possible class disruption:

**If I’m out:**

How I will communicate my absence: Via email (so be sure to check your sfsu emails often)

How I expect you to participate in my absence: Complete any assignments I indicate in my email.

Possible alternative assignments in my absence: Watch a documentary and reflect on it via an online forum.

**If you’re out:**

How you can communicate your absence: Please email me as soon as you know you’ll be out!

How you can keep pace with the course in your absence: Try not to miss more than 2-3 classes but check in with me to make sure you can make up any missed deadlines.

Possible alternative assignments in your absence: I am willing to extend deadlines for assignments.

**If the campus is closed:**

How I will communicate with students about next steps: Via email!

How the course will change: It largely will not – it will move to a synchronous online format. All assignments and responsibilities will stay the same.

Possible low-bandwidth assignments in case poor access: Personal reflection papers on readings/documentaries.

For more information and to help you prepare to “Keep Learning,” visit the Instructional Continuity website.

The Instructional Continuity website provides a collection of resources on many topics that support teaching and learning during times of disruption and unforeseen events, including instructor planning guides on resilient teaching, teaching modalities, equity and inclusion, academic integrity, technology, and well-being.

# Activities

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Name | Contribution to Grade | Description |
| Watch Party Papers | 25% | There are 4 documentaries/talks we will watch throughout the course (if we have time, we can watch together, otherwise it is independent viewing at your own leisure). You will write 4 short papers corresponding to the topic at issue in the documentary. Each paper should be in response to prompts I will post on iLearn. These are just to inspire your writing! Ideally you will provide thoughtful, organized, and substantively sourced responses. Each paper should be about 500-750 words. Please include **proper citations** for each paper! |
| Case Briefs | 35% | There are 8 case briefs that you will be expected to complete – don’t worry – this is group work! You will be assigned a group at the beginning of class. Each week that we read cases, you will be responsible for reading the case on the syllabus that corresponds with your group. As an in-class activity, we will split into groups and work on filling out a google slide that includes a case brief, and then present it to each other. Each group member should be responsible for coming prepared, having read, taken notes (and you may do your own case brief at home, and compare notes with your fellow classmates). Your grade then will be based off of the clarity of the presentation, the accuracy of the brief, as well as a tidy presentation. On those case brief weeks, you will be given extra time outside of class to fix any errors or formatting issues in the slide(s). I will compile the slides into one larger slideshow for the week and share during class. |
| Choose Your Own Final | 40% | Your final for this course is project-based. You can choose from the following: Write a scholarly research paper that you would present to academics, or submit to a law journal. Your paper should be on a gendered policy/application of law. It should resemble the scholarly work we have been reading throughout the semester. It will consist of original analysis and research. Write an amicus brief that you would have submitted to the court in one of the cases we have read. If you were approached by counsel to shed some light on a particular area of law, the potential impact of this case, or some fact not discussed in the case during argument, what would you have written to sway the court? Create a visual policy analysis poster. Using a creative poster-style infographic presentation, you will walk through the evaluation of a gender-based policy. Is this policy meeting its goals? What are the implenetation hurdles? What are the potential conflicts and impacts? Each of these final projects will culminate in class presentations. Each student will be expected to talk for 5-7 minutes about what they chose, briefly summarize their findings or arguments, and receive feedback from the class. |

# Schedule

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Topics | To Do |
| August 24 | Introduction to course, theories and frameworks, and each other! | Read Syllabus |
| August 31 | Theories and Frameworks of Gender and the Law | Read Chp. 1 of Gender Law and Policy (on iLearn) Read Kimberlé Crenshaw’s Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex Watch: Crenshaw’s The Urgency of Intersectionality (Ted Talk) |
| September 7 | **Formal Equality** Historical Foundations | Read: Kerber Chapter Case Brief Readings: A: Muller v. Oregon B: Goesart v. Cleary (We will do these first case briefs together, and go over what’s in a case brief, but from here on out, we will break up into groups). **Due in class: Paper #1 (on Crenshaw)** |
| September 14 | No Class – Election Day | Vote if you can in the California Recall Election |
| September 21 | **Formal Equality** Equal Individual Treatment versus Equal Group Treatment | Read: Reflections on Sex Equality under Law – MacKinnon Case Brief Readings: A: Frontiero v. Richardson B: Orr v. Orr C: Reed v. Reed D: Craig v. Boren |
| September 28 | **Formal Equality** Employment: Equal pay (Title VII CRA), Appearance discrimination | Case Brief Readings: A: Sandor v. Safe Horizon B: Ledbetter v. Goodyear C: Jespersen v. Harrah’s D: Wilson v. Southwest Airlines Watch: [Duke Fuqua Talk](https://www.fuqua.duke.edu/duke-fuqua-insights/ashleigh-rosette-research-suggests-bias-against-natural-hair-limits-job) |
| October 5 | **Substantive Equality** Difference Theory: Benign Sexism, Affirmative Action, and Pregnancy in the workplace | Read: Daniels Chapter Case Brief Readings: A: Kahn v. Shevin B: Johnson v. Transportation Agency C: Troupe v. May Department Stores D: Young v. UPS **Due in Class: Paper #2 (on Duke Fuqua Talk)** |
| October 12 | **Substantive Equality** Difference Theory: Sex Segregation in Education and Athletics, and for Gender nonconforming, pregnant, and parenting students (Title IX) | Read: **“Girls Don’t Just Wanna Have Fun: Moving Past Title IX’s Contact Sports Exception” Jessica Constance Caggiano “Title IX and the School Experiences of Pregnant and Mothering Students” Mary Patrice Erdmans** |
| October 19 | **Substantive Equality** Families: Same-sex marriage, divorce, and child custody | Case Brief Readings: A: Loving v. Virginia B: Obergefell v. Hodges C: Arneault v. Arneault D: Patricia v. James Watch: To a More Perfect Union: U.S. v. Windsor **Final Project Topic/Selection** |
| October 26 | **Nonsubordination** Sexual Harassment in the workplace and education | Read: **“Confluence of Race and Gender in Women’s Harassment Experiences” Kent** Case Brief Readings: A: Meritor Savings Bank v. Vinson B: Oncale v. Sundowner Offshore C: Davis v. Monroe County BOE D: FMF v. Hurley **Due in Class: Paper #3 (on US v. Windsor)** |
| November 2 | **Nonsubordination** VAW: Domestic Violence and Pornography (content warning – graphic violence in court cases) | Read: “Pornography is a Civil Rights Issue for Women” Dworkin Case Brief Readings: A: Stevenson v. Stevenson B: Castle Rock v. Gonzales C: US v. Morrison D: American Booksellers v. Hudnut **Due: Outline for Final Project** |
| November 9 | **Autonomy** Rape and Sexual Harassment on Campus (Title IX) Sex Work | Read: “Standing In Between Sexual Violence Victims and Access to Justice: The Limits of Title IX” Johnson **Due in Class: Paper #4 (on the Hunting Ground) Due: Forum #4** |
| November 16 | **Autonomy** Birth Control and Religious Freedom | Read: Gordon Selected Chapter Case Brief Readings: A: Griswold v. Conn B: Eisenstadt v. Baird C: Burwell v. Hobby Lobby D: Little Sisters of the Poor v. Pennsylvania |
| November 30 | **Autonomy** Abortion: Rights and Regulations | Read: Case Brief Readings: A: Harris v. McRae B: Planned Parenthood v. Casey C: Gonzales v. Carhart D: Whole Women’s Health v. Hellerstedt |
| December 7 | **Autonomy** Maternal-Fetal Conflict: drug addicted pregnant women, autonomy in childbirth | Read: Goodman Selected Chapter Pemberton v. Tallahassee (we’ll do this one together – one last case!) **Due: Drafts of Final Projects** |
| December 14 | Presentations! | Final Project Submission via Turn It In (Due Tuesday, 12/21 @11:59pm) |

# Objectives

## Analysis of Gender Norms

We will trace the evolution of gender norms embedded within the law bringing the historical current. In doing so we seek to challenge our own normative assumptions of gender.

## Exploring Relationships of Gender and Law

We will explore the interaction between gender and the law across the legal system. We ask how the law has – at some times – taken a contradictory viewpoint on gender, sex, and sexualities.

## Feminist Theorizing on Citizenship

We will further explore how different feminist theories can help us organize and understand how the law has constructed gender-based rights. Based on feminist legal scholarship as well as feminist theory, we will delve into larger applications of intersectionality, queer theory, masculinities, autonomy, (non)subordination, and difference theory among others.

# SF State Policies

## Disclosures of Sexual Violence (Title IX)

SF State fosters a campus free of sexual violence including sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, stalking, and/or any form of sex or gender discrimination. If you disclose a personal experience as an SF State student, the course instructor is required to notify the Dean of Students. To disclose any such violence confidentially, contact:

* The SAFE Place – (415) 338-2208; [psyservs.sfsu.edu/content/safe-place](http://www.sfsu.edu/~safe_plc/)
* Counseling and Psychological Services Center – (415) 338-2208; [psyservs.sfsu.edu](http://psyservs.sfsu.edu/)

## Disability Access

Students with disabilities who need reasonable accommodations are encouraged to contact the instructor. The [Disability Programs and Resource Center](http://www.sfsu.edu/~dprc) (DPRC) is available to facilitate the reasonable accommodations process. The DPRC is located in the Student Service Building and can be reached by telephone (voice/TTY 415-338-2472) or by email to [dprc@sfsu.edu](http://mailto:dprc@sfsu.edu) .

## COVID-19 and Our Campus

Your health and safety are our paramount concern at SF State. We ask every member of our campus community to join a pledge to make and follow plans to keep fellow students, faculty, and staff safe and well. Feeling confident, safe and well will help you focus on your academic success. To participate in this class, all students are expected to:

* stay informed on the most up-to-date information related to SF State’s COVID-19 response and Campus Comeback plan
* plan ahead for possible class disruptions due to COVID-19 or other unexpected events, such as unhealthy air quality caused by smoke
* take care of yourself and others by staying home when you aren’t feeling well or believe you have been exposed to COVID-19, and
* follow all required health and safety guidelines, including verifying your proof of vaccination or exemption status before coming to class; and wearing a multilayered mask over your nose and mouth at all times when indoors on campus; and wash your hands as often as possible (i.e. soap and water, hand sanitizer).

For more information about SF State’s response to COVID-19 and how you can keep yourself and others safe and well, visit the [Campus Comeback Website](https://together.sfsu.edu/) . To plan for how you will maintain your academic success when unexpected events disrupt regular teaching and learning activities, follow the information on the course syllabus and consult the Keep Learning guide.

Per Academic Senate policy resolution SU21-292

# Materials

**There is a recommended book for this course, however, it is quite expensive. Therefore, it is NOT required.** I will conduct lectures from the book in order to frame our topics and provide theoretical background. However, all required readings will be provided by me as pdfs or links on iLearn.

## *Gender Law and Policy - Third Edition*

**Author(s)**

Bartlett, Rhode, Grossman, Brake

# Grades

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  |  |
| 100.00% - 93.00% | A |
| 92.99% - 90.00% | A- |
| 89.99% - 87.00% | B+ |
| 86.99% - 83.00% | B |
| 82.99% - 80.00% | B- |
| 79.99% - 77.0% | C+ |
| 76.99% - 73.00% | C |
| 72.99% - 70.00% | C- |
| 69.99% - 67.00% | D+ |
| 66.99% - 63.00% | D |
| 62.99% - 60.00% | D- |
| 59.99% - 0.00% | F |

# Resources

### Asian American and Pacific Islander Retention and Education — ASPIRE

<https://aspire.sfsu.edu>

The goal of ASPIRE is to improve and expand SF State’s capacity to serve high-need Asian American and Native American Pacific Islanders (AANAPI) and low-income degree-seeking undergraduate students, improve the learning environment, and strengthen academic outcomes.

### Black Unity Center

<https://equity.sfsu.edu/blackunitycenter>

The mission of the Center is to provide Black students, through cross-campus community collaborations and an intersectional, African-centered environment, with transformative, impactful and socially conscious programs that allow them to grow academically, interpersonally, culturally and professionally, in order to advance their recruitment, matriculation, retention and graduation.

### Disability Programs and Resource Center — DPRC

<https://access.sfsu.edu>

We work with students and employees with disabilities to ensure all aspects of life on campus including academics, events and employment are accessible.

### Educational Opportunity Program — EOP

<https://eop.sfsu.edu/>

For over 50 years, the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) at SF State University has improved access and retention of historically underserved (low income, first generation college) students by facilitating their matriculation into SF State and by providing a support system for their success. The program provides comprehensive services designed to provide participants with admissions, academic, financial, and personal support. Participants receive on-going advising, tutoring, peer mentoring, and developmental workshops designed to increase retention and graduation rates.

### iLearn Support

<https://ilearn.sfsu.edu>

Contact the iLearn Helpdesk at [ilearn@sfsu.edu](mailto:ilearn@sfsu.edu) for iLearn questions or technical support.

### ITS Service Desk

<https://its.sfsu.edu/getstarted/students>

Need help connecting to campus WiFi? Locked out of your account? Need to download software to your computer? Need help with Outlook email?

### Safe Zone Program

<https://safezone.sfsu.edu>

The Safe Zone is a voluntary program of trained faculty, staff and administrators. A person displaying the program symbol has completed a training to develop a greater awareness of issues affecting students of all genders and sexual identities and anyone negatively impacted by heterosexism and homophobia.

### Student Health Services

<https://health.sfsu.edu/>

San Francisco State University Student Health Services provides accessible and low–cost quality health care to all SF State students. Their goal is to help students develop the skills and knowledge to manage their health.

### Tutoring and Academic Support Center — TASC

<https://ueap.sfsu.edu/tutoring>

The Tutoring and Academic Support Center (TASC) is a new university-wide center that supports the academic success of all San Francisco State students.