## Course Instructor
Ellie Ertle, Political Science  
Butte 707A  
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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:30-2:45 and by appointment

Brenton Farrell, English  
SSKU  / 898-6796  
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Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 2-3 pm and by appointment

## Course Teaching Associate (TA)
Brian Goodwin  
Butte 707B  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 12:30-1:30pm

## Peer Mentor  
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<tr>
<th>Mentor</th>
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<th>Office Hour Location &amp; Time</th>
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| Jesus Gonzalez    | jgonzalez88@mail.csuchico.edu | 530-520–4300  
**Office Hours:** Library or other location as needed  
Tues & Thurs: 12:15 - 2:00 |
| Anaiza Novoa      | anovoa@mail.csuchico.edu    | Mondays 11am: MLIB 161     |
| Annelise Wipfli   | awipfli@mail.csuchico.edu   | **Office hours:** 8am Wednesdays at the Naked Lounge (coffee shop downtown Chico) |
| Katya Ponce       | kponce-snchez@mail.csuchico.edu | **Office hours:** 4pm Wednesdays, location TBD |
| Clarisse Austria  | caustria@mail.csuchico.edu  | **Phone Number:** (951) 892-4644  
**Office Hours:** M 3-5pm  MLIB 161 |
| Blake Coppock     | bcoppock@mail.csuchico.edu  |                           |
| Melodie Watkins   | mwatkins12@mail.csuchico.edu | **Email:** mwatkins12@mail.csuchico.edu  
**Office Hours:** Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30, MLIB 161  
**Phone:** 805-796-4246 (if necessary for immediate help or can't make office hours) |
| Alex Alcantar     | aalcantar8@mail.csuchico.edu | **Office hours:** Mondays from 1-2pm BMU 220. |
Course Description and Goals

We are a passionate group of faculty and students inspired by the potential for group action to transform our community. What will we do? Together, we will explore our needs and values as citizens, along with the roles and tools of our government, to spur creative ideas about how to make government more effective, and empower ourselves to let our voices be heard in how we are governed.

In this project and theme-based course, teams will work intensively on issues, problems, and policies in various communities. By working with each other, mentors, faculty and community activists, we will explore the challenges of fostering innovations in government policy on the issues we uncover and research. We will also examine government, enabling us to see how social and political values shape public policy.

As you and your team research and write and act on issues you will come to care about, you will have the opportunity to explore the context of critical issues of concern right now to our campus and community. We will work with a diverse set of interests, think outside of the box, breach boundaries, and get our hands dirty doing this authentic work.

This spring’s U-Course provides credit for students’ required writing course and for the required American Government course (English 130 and Political Science 155). Within the U-course students are treated as emerging professionals and innovators. Their work is project-based and is supported by student mentors who act as writing coaches, subject matter advisors, and project managers. Projects may include blogs, mock political campaigns, community projects, simulations, films, interactive exhibits, and much more. Students will develop your creative thinking and writing abilities to create a social and political policy future that reflects your values. You will craft policy action as a direct result of this course. We hope this course will be a life-changing experience.

Required Texts and Materials

- American Government: Myths and Realities. Alan Gitelson, et. al
- California in the American System. Craig Scarpelli
- Composition notebook (students should purchase a bound composition notebook and bring each day)
- All materials in our Bb Learn classroom.
- Students should bring textbooks and a laptop or tablet (if available) with them to class each day.
- You’ll need to read the news daily. Find a few news sources (both those that support your worldview and those that don’t) read/view them daily. In order to fully participate and enjoy this course, you’ll need to do this.

Course Policies & Protocol

Attendance. Attend diligently. This is a community of practice--your group counts on your presence every class to complete work. Many assignments in the course are done in class; if you’re absent, you will not earn credit for these assignments. Note the descriptions and the course calendar.

Late work: We do not accept late work. Ever. Please do not ask.

Bb Learn: All assignments are due, most of the time to our Bb Learn classroom. All supplemental readings are also in this classroom. We use Bb Learn for everything.

Absence Policy: We firmly believe that you will get out of this class what you choose to put into it, and that it is your choice how best to prioritize your attendance. Therefore we do not take regular attendance. Please do not attend if you feel that you cannot be a fully engaged member of class. If you miss class, it is your
responsibility to get the information that you missed. However, as this is a class about democracy and engagement, participation is an integral part of this course. We do not accept late work.

**Email:** Sending instructors or mentors an email with questions or concerns is always fine. In your message, please identify yourself and the class you're in, fill in the subject line, and send it to one of the email addresses at the top of the syllabus. Please note, however, that we do not accept course assignments by email.

**Civil and mutual respect.** Our learning community is our collective and individual responsibility; please give your full attention to the class sessions and participate in discussion with a willingness to listen to and appreciate diverse perspectives and personalities.

**Course Calendar.** The calendar of assignments and due dates and class activities is posted to our Bb Learn classroom as a Google document. Before every class, check the calendar to make sure you have completed everything by class time. Always bring your textbooks, composition notebooks, and laptops.

**Academic Dishonesty.** In academic writing, we not only share with readers what our sources are, we show readers how we've used these sources. We will discuss techniques for properly citing sources as each of you completes this short assignment and throughout the course. Do not plagiarize in our class. Representing someone else’s work as your own will earn you an F in my course and a referral to Student Judicial Affairs.

**Policy on Withdrawal/Assigning Incomplete Grades.** We do not assign incomplete grades (I) to students who do not complete their work in the class. If serious or compelling reasons are adversely affecting student progress in the course, contact the instructor early in the semester. Secondly, consider a drop or withdrawal from the course. Completing work without classroom support and interaction is impossible in a U-Course. A drop beyond certain deadlines must be documented for “serious and compelling reason(s)”. 

**Adult Learners and Student Veterans:** Instructors and mentors are available for support and information.

**Students With Disabilities.** Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact an instructor privately to discuss your specific needs. If you have a documented disability, please also contact Accessibility Resource Center to coordinate reasonable accommodations: 898-5959 (http://www.csuchico.edu/arc/index.shtml). **Alternate Media Statement:** Students with a print disability-- a visual limitation or reading difficulty that limits access to traditional print materials-- may request printed materials in alternate media. Examples of alternate media formats include electronic format (e.g., text on CD), Braille, tactile graphics, audiotape, and large print. Students can make alternate media requests through the ARC office.

**Course Grade Breakdown**

Detailed descriptions of these assignments are in our Bb Learn classroom, assignments folder.

- **Briefs.** (Individual.) 800+ word responses to chapters in our course textbook, other texts, films, and other sources of your choice. Expect 5 briefs throughout the semester, each worth 20 points. (100 points).
- **Composition Book.** (Individual.) Students will keep a notebook the entire semester: reading notes, free writes, research, classroom activities, and various other writing tasks. Notebooks are checked regularly. (50 points).
- **Groundwork Reviews** (Individual.) Nearly every week (12 times in the semester) you will complete a review of the groundwork assigned prior to discussion in class. Groundwork reviews are due on Tuesdays at 9:15am and are posted the Thursday prior to due date. (100 points).
- **Webpages.** (Group.) This is a semester-long artifact that will be compiled collaboratively. (100 points).
- **Annotated Bibliography.** (Individual.) As a group, choose a subject of interest to you that’s been addressed in this course so far. Each person in your group will then find ten sources on a specific area of this subject and write an annotated bibliography with to share with your group. **(100 points).**

- **Political Voice.** (Group.) In THM Policy Groups, students will work collaboratively to find an example of “political voice” on their issues. Groups will post AND present for complete credit. All group members must participate to earn a grade. Political Voice examples and date sign ups will occur in class week 5. **(25 points).**

- **2 COP Reflections.** (Individual.) Periodic reflections on course content and implementation of Communities of Practice. **(25 points each).**

- **Talking Points.** (Individual.) This assignment pulls together all of your work in the semester into a summary of information to use as you discuss your policy issue during Town Hall Meeting. A form is posted on Blackboard for your use. While this is a summary, and designed to be brief in nature, students will be held to the highest standard of writing and citation. The final submission will include student notes from the Town Hall Meeting. **(50 points).**

- **Town Hall Meeting, April 5 5:45pm-8:45pm.** (Group.) After a series of assignments throughout the course, you will participate in the CSU Chico Town Hall Meeting, a forum for students to inform and learn from various communities about a policy issue or problem you care about. From there, your group will draft an action plan on this issue to share with the CSU Community at the Civic Engagement Fair. **(Attendance at THM is mandatory to earn a passing grade in the course.)**

- **Persuasive Essay** (Individual.) Each student will write a persuasive editorial to send to a media outlet or legislator to introduce an important idea of their interest group, relevant information concerning their campaign plan, or as a way to impact policy for a larger audience. **(75 points).**

- **Citizens in Action (Campaign Plan, Video & Presentation) May 2, 10-3.** (Group.) Your group will carry out a plan of action to affect policy and create a video cataloging your work and experiences over the course of the semester. In May, you will share the results of your action and the knowledge you’ve gained over the course of the semester with the CSU Chico Community at the Civic Engagement Forum. Groups will be graded on the campaign plan & action, video, the introduction of the video, and the question and answer session. **(100 points).**

- **Final Reflection.** (Individual.) Using the research and writing you’ve completed all semester, write an essay about the role of the citizen in understanding responding to and affecting policy. Use primary research, experiences in the course, credible sources, and your own insights to provide an informed argument. **(100 points).**

- **Extra Credit.** (Individual). There will be two “extra” groundwork reviews offered throughout the semester. **(10 points each).**

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*group grade

**English: Out of 650 points**

**Political Science: out of 675**

*(475 common points)*

This U-Course is graded A through F. You must receive a C- or better to fulfill the General Education Requirement. **No late work will be accepted.**

- A = 93-100%
- A- = 90-92%
- B+ = 87-89%
- B = 83-86%
- B- = 80-82%
- C+ = 77-79%
- C = 73-76%
- C- = 70-72%
- D+ = 67-69%
- D = 60-66%
- F = 59% or less
- WU/IC = see above

**Required Events**

This course is part of the Political Science Department’s Town Hall Meeting program. Students will work throughout the semester on a policy issue relating to the political question “What is possible?”. Ongoing coursework and assignments will help students to research their policy issue, and better understand the issue within a political context. On **April 5 from 5:45pm-8:45pm** students will attend a **required** Town Hall meeting.
Meeting. During this meeting, you will have a chance to present your research on a policy issue, discuss your issue with other students and community members, and begin to prepare an action plan outlining a possible “next step” for yourself and others. Students will also spend some time with an agency, organization, individual or other political actor to advocate for a policy position. The Town Hall Meeting course is designed to help participants to better understand their role in American government and the political process. The program will help you engage on issues of importance to you, and give you the tools to be a more engaged and effective part of the democratic process.

Following the Town Hall Meeting, the Civic Engagement Forum **May 2, 2016 10a-2pm** combines research, community discussions, and student innovation to create this open event where students produce solutions to the contemporary issues discussed in the THM. The events move beyond the evaluation of big social issues to identify courses of action for mitigating or reducing the harms of powerful social problems. Students in the U-Course will screen their “Citizens in Action” videos and host a Q&A at the event.

**The Student Learning Outcome for ENGL 130 and POLS 155 as defined by Executive Memorandum 10-01 regarding General Education**

- **Oral Communication:** Demonstrates effective listening and speaking skills necessary to organize information and deliver it effectively to the intended audience.
- **Written Communication:** Demonstrates the ability to question, investigate and draw well-reasoned conclusions and to formulate ideas through effective written communication appropriate to the intended audience.
- **Critical Thinking:** Identifies issues and problems raised in written texts, visual media and other forms of discourse, and assesses the relevance, adequacy and credibility of arguments and evidence used in reaching conclusions.
- **Active Inquiry:** Demonstrates knowledge of and applies research techniques and information technology appropriate to the intellectual and disciplinary context.
- **Personal and Social Responsibility:** Demonstrates knowledge and skills necessary to take responsibility for one's own life and actions, and to recognize opportunities and responsibilities to become engaged in our various local, regional, national, and international communities.