POSC 300: Summer 2020

For this paper, students must lay out a potential reform of a component of California government and assess the likelihood of its success. To be perfectly clear: a reform of a component of government is **NOT** about policy. This is about the structure of our politics. Think of it this way: you should be dealing with a change to the RULES that affect politics; you should NOT be dealing with something that directly impacts citizens. The paper should *briefly* describe the problem the reform is intended to fix and the reform itself. The bulk of the paper should be devoted to an assessment of whether or not such a reform would work. This assessment should focus on how well the reform would work if implemented; depending on the proposal. For example, you could think that former legislators shouldn’t ever be able to lobby government, and seek to impose a lifetime ban on former legislators being lobbyists. Your paper would then proceed to assess how likely such a ban would be to work. Doing these tasks may involve some library research for some inspiration or research, but this paper is meant to focus on the quality of your argument, and should not depend on the arguments of others.

What reforms can you suggest? Your reform must be *plausible*. At a minimum, your reform should reflect basic realities of the US Constitution and what policies Americans and Californians would generally accept. Appointing yourself dictator or ignoring the federal structure of our government are just too fantastical. Introduction to American Politics (whether taken here, elsewhere, or AP credit) is a prerequisite for this class; you are expected to make a proposal that a student at this level would find plausible.

The paper should be between 3 to 5 full pages. The paper should adopt a conventional font and spacing, such as 12 point Times New Roman, with double-spacing and 1-inch margins. Please do not play any games to try to “pad” a short paper to 3 pages or cram a long one into 5; doing so pretty much means you won’t have done the assignment well. Papers should follow a consistent citation style, such as Chicago, MLA, or APA. Plagiarism is a *very* serious issue, and will not be tolerated.