

# PSCI 2306 Section 702 - US and Texas Constitutions and Institutions (Spring 2024 SDC)

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## **American & Texas Government: Institutions INET PSCI 2306.702 (13884) (SDC) Spring 2024 (16wk)**

Instructor: Prof. Andrew J. Enterline  
Dept. of Political Science  
Email: Canvas Email System Only

### **Course Description**

This course provides an introduction to American and Texas politics. The course focuses on the institutions central to federal and state governance and decision making, including the executive, the legislative, and the judicial branches of government, the bureaucracy, as well as civil rights and liberties.

### **Syllabus Revisions**

I reserve the right to revise this syllabus during the semester.

### **Communication**

We use Canvas Email exclusively to communicate during the course. Briefly, if you are logged into Canvas, the "Inbox" for the Canvas Email is located on the left-hand, vertical toolbar. Click on "Inbox", click on the button "compose new message", and then select me (Enterline) or your assigned TA in the drop down menu in the "To" field. It is your responsibility to make sure that your alerts in Canvas are enabled, so that you are aware of any emails, announcements, changes to the canvas shell for our course, etc.

### **Teaching Assistants (Assigned by Student Last Name)**

The following Dept. of Political Science graduate students are assigned as Teaching Assistants (TAs) for the course:

- TBA (Last Names A-G)

- **TBA (Last Names H-N); and**
- **TBA (Last Names O-Z).**

The TAs are assigned to students by student last name. Communication with your TA regarding the course is through the Canvas Email system only.

## General Course Format

The online format of the course affords a significant degree of flexibility for the student and the course structure is designed with this goal in mind. The course components are as follows:

1. Soomo Webtext & PSCI Workbook (and exercises embedded therein);
2. Two Exams (1 Midterm & 1 Final [the latter does not include material from the former]); and
3. the Constitutional Amendment Exercise.

There will be no formal lectures (synchronous or asynchronous) in the course. The student's work in the course each week is anchored to the Webtext and PSCI Workbook and exercises therein. Upon completion, the webtext and exam grades are automatically logged into Canvas Grades. The two exams are completed by the student online via Canvas Quizzes. Last, the student engages in a Constitutional Amendment Exercise in which the student proposes an amendment to the American Constitution. These course components are discussed in greater detail, in turn.

## Soomo/PSCI Webtexts (35% of Final Course Grade)

The required materials for the course are as follows:

**2306 Big Bundle with Texas V11: U.S. and Texas Politics with 2306 Workbook  
(CIAG 14eV2, TexPol 11eV2, 2306 Workbook 7eV2)**

Jocelyn Evans & Kristy Michaud / The Texas Politics Project

Net Price: \$93.75

978-1-954890-58-9

Soomo provides a free 3-week trial period that enables students to access the first three chapters of the webtext. This free trial allows you to complete assigned webtexts as the semester begins. However, once the free trial expires, you must purchase the webtext license to complete the exercises and log your grades in Canvas Grades. You can purchase access at the UNT bookstore or via Soomo directly through the Webtext link in Canvas.

The Webtext exercises are useful because they require the student to move through the material gradually. Additionally, the material covered in the exercises comprises the bulk of the questions on the two exams. So, gradual absorption of the course material serves to prepare the student for each exam. Each topic includes exercises from each webtext. Each set of exercises is worth 100 points and is due at 11:59 pm on the assigned date (see the course calendar, below; or the date posted in

Canvas Assignments).

**Please Note:** It is important that you complete the webtext exercises once you begin a chapter. Do not log out of the system mid-exercise, drift away from your computer for lengthy periods of time, etc., or your grade may not be logged correctly in Canvas.

**Please Note:** It is the student's responsibility to alert their TA of missing or erroneous webtext grades within 48 hrs. of their due date in Canvas Assignments. Put differently, the student cannot return after the 48 hr window and argue that a given webtext was completed and Canvas failed to log the grade accordingly.

## **Exams (25% Each [50% Total] of Final Course Grade)**

There will be two exams in this course:

- Midterm Exam on **Friday, March 8**; and
- Final Exam on **Wednesday, May 8**.

Each exam requires that the student answer multiple-choice questions drawn primarily from the required webtext readings. Each exam will be taken by the student online via Canvas on the appointed date and completed at the student's discretion between 6am--11:59pm on the assigned date. A lockdown browser will not be employed. Each exam is an individual exercise, so you are to do your own work with your own brain. Put differently, do not collaborate with anyone.

**Please Note:** In order to maintain the integrity of the exams, **NO** early exams will be administered.

## **Constitutional Amendment Exercise (15% of Final Course Grade)**

**This exercise is due by 11:59 on Wednesday, February 21.**

### General Setup:

The president of the United States (identity and political party unspecified) is interested in proposing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that will improve American democracy. The president tasks you with formulating a proposal for such an amendment. The president stipulates that your proposal reflect the following attributes:

1. The proposed amendment should improve (broadly defined) American democracy; and
2. The proposed amendment should not duplicate existing articles or amendments.

### Assignment Instructions:

In an MS-Word document (i.e., .docx), execute the following:


1. Write your full name, UNT student number, PSCI 2306.901, and date in the upper left corner of the first page;
2. Place a sub-heading, "Proposed Amendment," and below this write the text of your amendment;
3. Place a sub-heading, "Explanation," and below this answer/discuss in **250-300 (no more, no less)** words the following:
  - A. How is your proposed amendment novel to the current constitution?
  - B. How/why will your proposed amendment improve American democracy?
  - C. How likely is your proposed amendment to be ratified? If so, why? If not, why not?
4. Upload your finished document to the appropriate Canvas Assignment link by the specified due date.

#### Grading Criteria:

1. There is no preference regarding the substance of your amendment;
2. Your work is serious and contemplative;
3. Your work is original to your mind (i.e., you do not plagiarize; you do not use AI [ChatGPT]; you do not use your own material from another course);
4. Your work fulfills the aforementioned assignment instructions; and
5. Your work reflects clear reasoning, composition, spelling, diction, etc.

Your assigned TA will be grading your assignment. You are free to communicate with your assigned TA about this assignment. Given the labor and care required for grading the submissions, no late submissions will be allowed after the due date.

## **Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) (e.g., ChatGPT) in Your Coursework**

According to the UNT Academic Integrity Policy ([UNT Policy 6.003](https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003%20Student%20Academic%20Integrity.pdf) , <https://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/06.003%20Student%20Academic%20Integrity.pdf>), any form of "unauthorized assistance" constitutes cheating. As a result, use of any artificial intelligence is not authorized for assignments in this course. Please refrain from using any AI system to complete any of your coursework. If UNT Turnitin.com (built into Canvas) detects AI usage in your coursework, I reserve the right to query you in person regarding your writing before awarding a grade for a given assignment. If you are unable to convince me that the content is not AI-generated, then you will not receive credit for the assignment in question.

## **Missed Exams, Webtext Exercises, Etc.**

Permission to complete missed exams, webtext exercises, and constitutional amendment exercise will be provided only in the case of a documented excuse acceptable to the UNT Dean of Students and evaluated as such. In such cases, please email your assigned TA via Canvas Email.

# Posting Grades in Canvas

Grades will be reported via Canvas Grades. We do our best to keep the grade book up to date. Please let your assigned TA know if you detect any issues or problems in the grade book. It is your responsibility to police the grades in Canvas Grades. A missing or erroneous grade must be reported to your assigned TA within 48 hrs. of the due date for the given assignment.

## Final Course Grade (Numeric)

Canvas will weight your Assignments in Grades. The final column in Canvas Grades, labeled "Total", should reflect this weighting and your progress as the semester unfolds.





## Final Course Grade (Letter)











The "Final Course Letter Grade" is the grade that will be uploaded to the UNT Registrar's grade system. This letter grade will never be lower than the standard corresponding numeric value that I compute for the course (e.g., you earned a numeric value of 95, but I awarded you a letter grade of "C"). However, this letter grade may be higher than the standard corresponding numeric value (e.g., you earned a numeric value of 88---in the high "B" range---but I awarded you a letter grade of "A").

## UNT Policies


Please familiarize yourself with the University's policies here: [UNT Policies](https://unt.instructure.com/courses/93853/pages/unt-policies)  
(<https://unt.instructure.com/courses/93853/pages/unt-policies>).

## Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Fri Jan 19, 2024	 <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058413">Webtext - Chapter 1</a> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058413">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058413</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Fri Jan 26, 2024	 <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058414">Webtext - Chapter 2</a> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058414">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058414</a> )	due by 11:59pm
	 <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058415">Webtext - Chapter 3</a> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058415">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058415</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Fri Feb 2, 2024	 <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058416">Webtext - Chapter 4</a> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058416">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058416</a> )	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
	<a href="#"><u>/104874/assignments/2058416)</u></a>	
	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 5</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058417"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058417)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
Fri Feb 9, 2024	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 6</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058418"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058418)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 7</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058419"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058419)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
Fri Feb 16, 2024	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 8</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058420"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058420)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
Wed Feb 21, 2024	 <a href="#"><u>Constitutional Amendment Exercise</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058411"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058411)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
Fri Feb 23, 2024	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 9</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058421"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058421)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
Fri Mar 1, 2024	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 10</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058422"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058422)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
Wed Mar 6, 2024	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 11</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058423"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058423)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
	 <a href="#"><u>Webtext - Chapter 12</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058424"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058424)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm
Fri Mar 8, 2024	 <a href="#"><u>Midterm Exam</u></a> <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058409"><u>(https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058409)</u></a>	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Fri Mar 22, 2024	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 13</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058425">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058425</a> )	due by 11:59pm
	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 14</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058426">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058426</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Fri Mar 29, 2024	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 15</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058427">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058427</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Fri Apr 5, 2024	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 16</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058428">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058428</a> )	due by 11:59pm
	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 17</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058429">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058429</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Fri Apr 12, 2024	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 18</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058430">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058430</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Fri Apr 19, 2024	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 19</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058431">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058431</a> )	due by 11:59pm
	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 20</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058432">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058432</a> )	due by 11:59pm
Fri Apr 26, 2024	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 21</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058433">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058433</a> )	due by 11:59pm
	 <u>Webtext - Chapter 22</u> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058434">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058434</a> )	due by 11:59pm

Date	Details	Due
Wed May 8, 2024	 <b><u>Final Exam</u></b> ( <a href="https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058410">https://unt.instructure.com/courses/104874/assignments/2058410</a> )	due by 11:59pm