

PSCI 2305.404: US Political Behavior and Policy

Class Times/Location

Asynchronous Online

Instructor Information

Chase Neill

Email: chaseneill@my.unt.edu

Office Address/Hours: via Canvas Zoom, 9am – 10:30am, Mondays & Wednesdays

Teaching Assistants' Information

Students with last names starting “A” through “Edd”

Catarina Bezerra: CatarinaRoseBezerra@my.unt.edu

Office Address/Hours: via Canvas Zoom, 3pm – 6pm, Mondays

Students with last names starting “Edw” through “Lee”

Dyan Knapp: DyanKnapp@my.unt.edu

Office Address/Hours: via Canvas Zoom, 2pm – 5pm, Wednesdays

Students with last names starting “Lei” through “Riva”

Cameron Maxwell: CameronMaxwell@my.unt.edu

Office Address/Hours: via Canvas Zoom, 09:30am – 10:30am, Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays

Students with last names starting “Rive” through “Zu”

Taposi Sinha: TaposiSinha@my.unt.edu

Office Address/Hours: via Canvas Zoom, 11am – 12pm, Mondays, Wednesdays, & Fridays

*** Utilize the Canvas email system when contacting the instructor or teaching assistants. In order to maintain identity security, emails from non-UNT email addresses will be ignored.**

Important Dates

August 22nd – Last day to add a class or swap section

August 29th – Last day to drop class without a “W”

September 1st – Labor Day (no classes, University closed)

November 7th – Last day to drop the course

November 24th through 30th – Thanksgiving Break (no classes)

December 6th through 12th – Final Exams

Course Description

This course explores the connection between the will of the people and the policies implemented by government by focusing on individual political values and attitudes, the mechanisms that

connect individual beliefs to government action (parties, interest groups, the media, and elections), and the outcomes of government policy.

This is a course about action. In the political science world, we call it “political behavior”: how the behavior (actions) of individuals and groups come together to form the political landscape. It’s exciting, but it can sometimes be complex. Your instructor and teaching assistants are here to help you understand the material.

Pre-requisites

There are no prerequisites for this course

Course Objectives

Students who complete this course will be able to

- (1) explain the development and measurement of individual values, attitudes, and opinions about politics.
- (2) interpret the role of individuals in the political process
- (3) explain the roles of linkage institutions (parties, interest groups, and media) in connecting individuals to institutions of government
- (4) demonstrate the relationship between electoral rules/institutions and outcomes
- (5) explain the connection between the political process and the policies generated by that process

Required Materials

U.S. and Texas Politics with 2305 Workbook 15e

Jocelyn Evans & Kristy Michaud / The Texas Politics Project

Net Price: \$78.75

978-1-954890-96-1

(please note: this is an ONLINE (digital) book + ONLINE workbook)

You can purchase a code for the textbook from the official campus bookstore or you can purchase it directly from the publisher by clicking on the textbook link in our course Canvas site. If you are waiting for financial aid, please access the text through Canvas and choose the free trial of the text (three chapters). If you do not acquire access to the course materials in a timely fashion your grade may be irreparably harmed.

Technical Support

Neither the instructor nor the teaching assistants are technical support resources. If you experience any kind of technical problem, please contact:

Student Helpdesk:
UIT Helpdesk

Sage Hall 130
940-565-2324
helpdesk@unt.edu

Soomo Support: If you are having difficulty with the Soomo product, please contact the publisher directly at <http://soomolearning.com/support>

Technical Requirements

Since the textbook and workbook assignments are web based, you are required to have regular access to the course materials and texts through a web interface.

Technical Skill Requirements

You will need to navigate our Canvas webpage, follow the link to our online textbook, complete multiple choice and short answer questions in the online textbook, follow links to videos and some external websites, and upload/download Word and pdf documents.

In addition, you will need Adobe Flash on your computer, and you will need the ability to take screen shots (screen captures) of websites or your work that can be saved and uploaded to the course Canvas site.

Netiquette

The online environment invites thoughtless and unkind behavior. Please keep in mind that this is a community of scholars, even though we are geographically dispersed. When interacting with your fellow students, instructors, and teaching assistants, you should be polite. When in doubt, pause for five minutes before you hit “submit.” Consider whether you would say something to a person’s face before saying it to them in an electronic format. Also remember that electronic communication does not convey tone well; a well-intentioned comment may be perceived as harsh or offensive. Whether you are the communicator or the recipient, please keep that in mind. All of this is particularly important in a class on politics. We will, inevitably, touch on topics that are touchy under the best of circumstances.

Course Requirements

Multiple-choice Questions (CIAG Chapters)	10%
Investigation Assignments	20%
Workbook Questions/Quizzes	20%
Group Discussion Assignments	20%
Exams	30%
Total	100%

Grading

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:
A 89.5 – 100%

B 79.5 – 89.4%
C 69.5 – 79.4%
D 59.5 – 69.4%
F Below 60%

A 69.5 or higher is required to receive a “Pass” in this class.

I use standard mathematical rounding, but I will make no other adjustment of grades. Please remember that your final grade is the culmination of work that you have done over the course of the semester. It is not the product of bargaining at the end of the term. Moreover, I cannot make an exception for one student without making it for all students, and that is never practical. With respect to homework, late work will be accepted up to five days late with a 50% penalty. After five days, it will not be accepted. It does not matter why the work is late; this policy is uniform. If you DO have an issue such as a family emergency or illness, your grade will not necessarily suffer; at least one grade is dropped for each type of homework, so having a penalized grade or even a missing grade is not the end of the world. Extreme situations will be given consideration if appropriate.

Course Expectations

A university course is a joint endeavor between instructor and students. We all have an important part to play.

As the instructor in this course, I am responsible for:

- providing course materials that will give you the opportunity to achieve our course objectives and providing you with the tools to learn,
- providing timely feedback on your work and explaining concerns you may have with grading,
- and, being fair in my implementation of rules and policies in the course.

As a student in this course, you are responsible for:

- reading and completing all requirements of the course in a timely manner,
- working to remain attentive and engaged in the course and interact with your fellow students,
- and, assisting in maintaining a positive learning environment for everyone.

Course Components

Multiple-choice Questions: Your online textbook has two types of chapters: Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) chapters and Workbook chapters. The CIAG chapters have multiple-choice questions embedded within each page. You are required to complete these questions for each chapter. You can reset and repeat the questions until you get them all correct, so you should aim to get a perfect score! Once the due date passes, though, don't reset the questions because it will override your good score with a late score. Each chapter is worth 100 points. Your average CIAG chapter score for the semester will count for 10% of your final grade.

Investigation Assignments: In the CIAG chapters, you will also find some breakout assignments called “Investigations.” These assignments allow you to dig deep and apply what you know to tougher problems. **You only get two attempts at investigation questions!** The investigations are worth 100 points per chapter. Your average investigation chapter score for the semester will count for 20% of your final grade.

Workbook Chapters/Quizzes: The other type of chapter in your online textbook is called a workbook chapter. Each workbook chapter consists of four essays that explore some facet of the topic of the module, and the essays are followed by questions (usually multiple choice, but sometimes a “poll” (where you can see the summary results of the class) or a short answer question. Each workbook chapter ends with multi-question quiz. These quizzes focus on the government concepts in the chapter through the lens of the four core skills: critical thinking, social responsibility, communication, and personal responsibility. **Students will have only two attempts to answer the workbook/quiz questions, but they may refer back to the relevant pages in the chapter.** The combined scores of the workbook chapter questions and workbook quiz are worth 100 points per chapter. Your average workbook chapter/quiz score for the semester will count as 20% of your final grade.

Group Discussions: Each Module will have one or more group discussions. Each student is required to answer the posted discussion question with 100-200 word responses (worth 50% of assignment grade). Each student is also required to respond to two other students’ initial posts with minimum 50 word replies that build upon the discussion (each response worth 25% of assignment grade). Each discussion assignment is worth 100 points. Example: If you only answer the initial discussion question and don’t respond to two other students, then your score for the assignment will be 50. If you answer the initial discussion post and respond to only one other student, then your score will be 75. Your average group discussion score for the semester will count as 20% of your final grade.

Unit Exams: In this course, four tests will be administered. The first three tests each cover approximately one third of the course material. The fourth test is the cumulative final exam. All exams are multiple-choice. The lowest exam grade will be dropped, and the top three exam scores will constitute your test average. I advise that everyone takes the first three exams. Then, if you are happy with your grade in the course after the third exam you do not need to take the final exam. Your test average for the semester will count as 30% of your final grade. All tests will take place online.

Attendance: This is an online course with no set meeting days/times.

Policies

Americans with Disabilities Act Statement: UNT makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide a student with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding one’s specific course needs. Students may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in

the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the ODA website at disability.unt.edu.

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences: Academic Integrity is defined in the UNT Policy on Student Standards for Academic Integrity. According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. Further sanctions may apply to incidents involving major violations. For policy and procedures: <http://facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity> .

Emergency Notification & Procedures: UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The University's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including University and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct.

Survivor Advocacy: UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct, including sexual harassment sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Federal laws (Title IX and the Violence Against Women Act) and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex, and therefore prohibit sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know is experiencing sexual harassment, relationship violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault, there are campus resources available to provide support and assistance. UNT's Survivor Advocates can assist a student who has been impacted by violence by filing protective orders, completing crime victim's compensation applications, contacting professors for absences related to an assault, working with housing to facilitate a room change where appropriate, and connecting students to other resources available both on and off campus. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648. Additionally, alleged sexual misconduct can be non-confidentially reported to the Title IX Coordinator at oeo@unt.edu or at (940) 565 2759.

Modules/Assignments	Due Dates
Module 1:	
Chapter 1: Public Opinion	September 21st
Chapter 1: Public Opinion Investigations	September 21st
Chapter 2: Workbook: Public Opinion	September 21st
Module 1 Group Discussion	September 21st
Module 2:	
Chapter 3: Voting and Political Participation	September 21st
Chapter 3: Voting and Political Participation Investigations	September 21st
Chapter 4: Texas: Elections, Voting, and Campaigns	September 21st
Chapter 4: Texas: Elections, Voting, and Campaigns Investigations	September 21st
Chapter 5: Workbook: Political Participation	September 21st
Module 2 Group Discussion	September 21st
Exam 1 (Modules 1 & 2)	September 21st
Module 3:	
Chapter 6: The Media	November 2nd
Chapter 6: The Media Investigations	November 2nd
Chapter 7: Workbook: The Mass Media	November 2nd
Module 3 Group Discussion	November 2nd
Module 4:	
Chapter 8: Interest Groups	November 2nd
Chapter 8: Interest Group Investigations	November 2nd
Chapter 9: Workbook: Interest Groups	November 2nd
Module 4 Group Discussion	November 2nd
Module 5:	
Chapter 10: Political Parties	November 2nd
Chapter 10: Political Parties Investigations	November 2nd
Chapter 11: Texas: Political Parties	November 2nd
Chapter 11: Texas: Political Parties Investigations	November 2nd
Chapter 12: Workbook: Political Parties	November 2nd
Module 5 Group Discussion	November 2nd
Exam 2 (Modules 3, 4, & 5)	November 2nd
Module 6:	
Chapter 13: Elections and Campaigns	December 2nd
Chapter 13: Elections and Campaigns Investigations	December 2nd
Chapter 14: Workbook: Elections and Campaigns	December 2nd
Module 6 Group Discussion	December 2nd

Module 7:	
Chapter 15: Public Policy	December 2nd
Chapter 15: Public Policy Investigations	December 2nd
Chapter 16: Texas: Public Policy	December 2nd
Chapter 16: Texas: Public Policy Investigations	December 2nd
Chapter 17: Workbook: Domestic Policy	December 2nd
Chapter 18: Workbook: Foreign Policy	December 2nd
Module 7 Group Discussion	December 2nd
Exam 3 (Modules 6 & 7)	December 2nd
Final Exam (Cumulative)	December 10th