

PSCI 2305.012

U.S. Political Behavior and Policy

Spring 2022

Instructor Contact

Dr. Elizabeth Oldmixon

Pronouns: she/her

Office Location: Wooten Hall 139

Office Hours: Mondays 2:00PM-5:00PM and by appointment. I will hold office hours in my office but will be available by [Zoom](https://unt.zoom.us/j/83658866899) (https://unt.zoom.us/j/83658866899) as well. Write me to set up an appointment if you cannot make my office hours.

Communication Expectations: I will communicate with you using the Canvas announcement tool, so be sure you are receiving notifications from Canvas. Please contact me if you have questions about the course material. Canvas email is an excellent way to set up a meeting or otherwise reach me. If you write me M-F during normal business hours, I should get back to you within 24 hours. If I don't, please feel free to send me a reminder!

Course Website

Most material, assignments, and communications are available through the Canvas [course page website](https://unt.instructure.com/courses/64787) (https://unt.instructure.com/courses/64787). Contact information for course teaching assistants is available through the course page.

Welcome to UNT!

As members of the UNT community, we have all made a commitment to be part of an institution that respects and values the identities of the students and employees with whom we interact. UNT does not tolerate identity-based discrimination, harassment, and retaliation. UNT's full Non-Discrimination Policy can be found in the UNT Policies section of the syllabus.

Please let me or another professor know if you are having any problems with your safety, well-being, or access to educational or other resources during the pandemic, or if you know of another student who is having trouble. If you are in doubt about whether you should ask for help, please contact me. My colleagues and I care about your well-being and success and we are here to help you.

Course Description

This course explores the following topics: political culture, public opinion, participation, elections and voting, political parties, media, interest groups, and public policy. It partially fulfills legislative requirement "the university not award a baccalaureate degree or a lesser degree or academic certificate unless the student has completed 6 hours of credit in American Government."

Course Objectives

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the role of public opinion, interest groups, media, political parties, and elections in American politics.
2. Identify and analyze political issues and policies.
3. Demonstrate active participation in class.

4. Describe how course topics affect personal and social responsibility.
5. Think critically and communicate effectively about the course topics.

Materials

Central Ideas in American Government + 1050 Workbook, published by Soomo Publishing, 9781954890909. (Webtext)

You can purchase a code for this text from the campus bookstore or you can purchase it directly from the publisher. 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 have an ongoing financial hardship, contact your instructor immediately. If you do not acquire access to the course materials in a timely fashion your grade may be irreparably harmed.

Syllabus Revisions

I reserve the right to revise the syllabus as necessary. Of course, if this happens, it will be clearly communicated to you as soon as possible via Canvas or UNT email.

Course Technology & Skills

Minimum Technology Requirements

The minimum technological requirements for the class are as follows:

- Computer
- Reliable internet access
- Speakers
- Microphone
- Plug-ins
- Microsoft Office Suite
- [Canvas Technical Requirements](https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements) (https://clear.unt.edu/supported-technologies/canvas/requirements)

Computer Skills & Digital Literacy

In order to succeed in the class, students must possess the following technical skills:

- Using Canvas
- Using email with attachments
- Downloading and installing software

Technical Assistance

Part of working in the online environment involves dealing with the inconveniences and frustration that can arise when technology breaks down or does not perform as expected. Here at UNT we have a Student Help Desk that you can contact for help with Canvas or other technology issues.

UNT IT Help Desk

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 330

Hours and Availability: Visit <https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk> for up-to-date hours and availability

For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328) (https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328).

Rules of Engagement

Here are some general guidelines for communicating and engaging with each other:

- Remember that college communication is still professional communication. Use correct spelling and grammar and always double-check your response before hitting send or reply.
- Respect the personal identities of others based on gender, sexuality, race, ethnicity, class, religion, veteran status, and/or culture.
- Respect the privacy of yourself, your instructor, and your peers. Keep in mind what you reveal and do not reveal, particularly if this information involves personal health and/or classroom performance, such as grades.
- Give people the benefit of the doubt. Though there may be a computer between you, there are people on the other side of the screen.
- Ask for and use the correct name and pronouns for your instructor and classmates.
- Speak from personal experiences. Use “I” statements to share thoughts and feelings. Try not to speak on behalf of groups or other individual’s experiences.
- Avoid using all caps while communicating digitally. This may be interpreted as “YELLING!”
- Be cautious when using humor or sarcasm in emails or discussion posts as tone can be difficult to interpret digitally.

Please review [Engagement Guidelines](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) for more information.

Course Requirements

Assignment (All due dates and reading assignments are listed in Canvas.)	Points Possible
Webtext “Get the Gist” Assignments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 12 of 16 are required, 10 points each• Lowest scores will be dropped for students who complete more than 12	120 points
Quizzes <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Zip Code Quiz, 10 points• Completion Quiz, 10 points	20 points
Discussion Boards <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 5 of 7 Discussion Board Forums, 25 points each• Lowest scores will be dropped for students who complete more than 5	125 points
Letter to the Editor	35 points
Examinations <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2 examinations, 100 points each• Optional final to replace an exam score	200 points
Total Points Possible	500 points

Grading

Final grades are based on the number of points accrued by each student and assigned according to the following schedule. Traditional rules of rounding apply.

A = 450-500

B = 400-449
C = 350-399
D = 300-349
F = 0-299

Topics and Readings

Topic	Timeframe	Webtext Reading Assignment
Public Opinion	Weeks 1 and 2	Chapters 1 and 2
Voting and Participation	Weeks 3 and 4	Chapters 3, 4, and 5
Media	Weeks 5 and 6	Chapters 6 and 7
Interest Groups	Weeks 7 and 8	Chapters 8 and 9
Political Parties	Weeks 9 and 10	Chapters 10 and 11
Campaigns and Elections	Weeks 11 and 12	Chapters 12 and 13
Public Policy	Weeks 13 and 14	Chapters 14, 15, and 16

Course Policies

Late Work

If you need an extension on an assignment, please reach out to me ahead of time. Late Webtext assignments, quizzes, and exams will receive no credit without a University-approved excuse. Late discussion board posts and the letter to the editor assignment will be penalized 20% for each day they are late.

Of course, if you are having an unexpected emergency that can be verified with a documentation or by someone with the Dean of Students Office, that's another story. In that case, contact me or have somebody with the Dean of Students Office email me directly. If you are having computer or technology issues, you must call the Helpdesk before reaching out to me. The Helpdesk will issue a "remedy ticket number." Always have the Helpdesk fill out a remedy ticket and provide that information to me if technological problems make it difficult to hand something in on time. I will only consider accepting late assignments due to technological issues if I can verify the legitimacy of the issue. See the section called "Technical Assistance" for the Helpdesk's contact information.

Examination Policy

Each examination will be open book and open note, but students must complete each examination independently. Respondus Lockdown browser is NOT required. The final examination is optional. This will serve as the makeup exam for examinations 1 and 2. The optional final may also be taken to replace a low score on examinations 1 and 2.

Assignment Policy

All due dates are listed on Canvas. All assignments will be available and submitted through Canvas. Discussion Board posts may be analyzed using Turnitin. Extra credit will not be provided to students on an individual basis. There may, however, be extra credit opportunities available for all students. These will be announced on Canvas, should they occur.

UNT is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, I will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate

accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk (helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324) and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Face Coverings

UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering when indoors, regardless of vaccination status, to protect yourself and others from COVID infection, as recommended by current CDC guidelines. Face covering guidelines could change based on community health conditions.

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Integrity Standards and Consequences. 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.

ADA Policy

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](https://disability.unt.edu/) (<https://disability.unt.edu/>).

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation (Policy 16.004)

The University of North Texas (UNT) prohibits discrimination and harassment because of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal or state law in its application and admission processes; educational programs and activities; employment policies, procedures, and processes; and university facilities. The University takes active measures to prevent such conduct and investigates and takes remedial action when appropriate.

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 Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Retention of Student Records

Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Canvas online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic

environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.

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. Visit UNT's [Code of Student Conduct](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>) to learn more.

Access to Information - Eagle Connect

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: my.unt.edu. All official communication from the University will be delivered to a student's Eagle Connect account. For more information, please visit the website that explains Eagle Connect and how to forward e-mail [Eagle Connect](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect) (<https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect>).

Student Evaluation Administration Dates

Student feedback is important and an essential part of participation in this course. The student evaluation of instruction is a requirement for all organized classes at UNT. The survey will be made available during weeks 13, 14 and 15 of the long semesters to provide students with an opportunity to evaluate how this course is taught. Students will receive an email from "UNT SPOT Course Evaluations via IASystem Notification" (no-reply@iasystem.org) with the survey link. Students should look for the email in their UNT email inbox. Simply click on the link and complete the survey. Once students complete the survey they will receive a confirmation email that the survey has been submitted. For additional information, please visit the [SPOT website](http://spot.unt.edu/) (<http://spot.unt.edu/>) or email spot@unt.edu.

Survivor Advocacy

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as 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. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-5652648.

Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses

Federal Regulation

To read detailed Immigration and Customs Enforcement regulations for F-1 students taking online courses, please go to the [Electronic Code of Federal Regulations website](http://www.ecfr.gov/) (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

The paragraph reads:

(G) For F-1 students enrolled in classes for credit or classroom hours, no more than the equivalent of one class or three credits per session, term, semester, trimester, or quarter may be counted toward the full

course of study requirement if the class is taken on-line or through distance education and does not require the student's physical attendance for classes, examination or other purposes integral to completion of the class. An on-line or distance education course is a course that is offered principally through the use of television, audio, or computer transmission including open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, or satellite, audio conferencing, or computer conferencing. If the F-1 student's course of study is in a language study program, no on-line or distance education classes may be considered to count toward a student's full course of study requirement.

University of North Texas Compliance

To comply with immigration regulations, an F-1 visa holder within the United States may need to engage in an on-campus experiential component for this course. This component (which must be approved in advance by the instructor) can include activities such as taking an on-campus exam, participating in an on-campus lecture or lab activity, or other on-campus experience integral to the completion of this course.

If such an on-campus activity is required, it is the student's responsibility to do the following:

- 1) Submit a written request to the instructor for an on-campus experiential component within one week of the start of the course.
- 2) Ensure that the activity on campus takes place and the instructor documents it in writing with a notice sent to the International Student and Scholar Services Office. ISSS has a form available that you may use for this purpose.

Because the decision may have serious immigration consequences, if an F-1 student is unsure about his or her need to participate in an on-campus experiential component for this course, s/he should contact the UNT International Student and Scholar Services Office (telephone 940-565-2195 or email internationaladvising@unt.edu) to get clarification before the one-week deadline.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

Use of Student Work

A student owns the copyright for all work (e.g. software, photographs, reports, presentations, and email postings) they create within a class, and the University is not entitled to use any student work without the student's permission unless all of the following criteria are met:

- The work is used only once.
- The work is not used in its entirety.
- Use of the work does not affect any potential profits from the work.
- The student is not identified.
- The work is identified as student work.

If the use of the work does not meet all of the above criteria, then the University office or department using the work must obtain the student's written permission.

Transmission and Recording of Student Images in Electronically-Delivered Courses

1. No permission is needed from a student for his or her image or voice to be transmitted live via videoconference or streaming media, but all students should be informed when courses are to be conducted using either method of delivery.
2. In the event an instructor records student presentations, he or she must obtain permission from the student using a signed release in order to use the recording for future classes in accordance with the Use of Student-Created Work guidelines above.
3. Instructors who video-record their class lectures with the intention of re-using some or all of recordings for future class offerings must notify students on the course syllabus if students' images may appear on video. Instructors are also advised to provide accommodation for students who do not wish to appear in class recordings.

Example: This course employs lecture capture technology to record class sessions. Students may occasionally appear on video. The lecture recordings will be available to you for study purposes and may also be reused in future course offerings.

No notification is needed if only audio and slide capture is used or if the video only records the instructor's image. However, the instructor is encouraged to let students know the recordings will be available to them for study purposes.

Academic Support & Student Services

Student Support Services

Mental Health

UNT provides mental health resources to students to help ensure there are numerous outlets to turn to that wholeheartedly care for and are there for students in need, regardless of the nature of an issue or its severity. Listed below are several resources on campus that can support your academic success and mental well-being:

- [Student Health and Wellness Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- [UNT Care Team](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- [UNT Psychiatric Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-health-and-wellness-center/services/psychiatry)
- [Individual Counseling](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling) (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services/services/individual-counseling)

Chosen Names

A chosen name is a name that a person goes by that may or may not match their legal name. If you have a chosen name that is different from your legal name and would like that to be used in class, please let the instructor know. Below is a list of resources for updating your chosen name at UNT.

- [UNT Records](#)
- [UNT ID Card](#)
- [UNT Email Address](#)
- [Legal Name](#)

**UNT EUIDs cannot be changed at this time. The collaborating offices are working on a process to make this option accessible to UNT community members.*

Pronouns

Pronouns (she/her, they/them, he/him, etc.) are a public way for people to address you, much like your name, and can be shared with a name when making an introduction, both virtually and in-person. Just as we ask and don't assume someone's name, we should also ask and not assume someone's pronouns.

You can [add your pronouns to your Canvas account](#) so that they follow your name when posting to discussion boards, submitting assignments, etc.

Below is a list of additional resources regarding pronouns and their usage:

- [What are pronouns and why are they important?](#)
- [How do I use pronouns?](#)
- [How do I share my pronouns?](#)
- [How do I ask for another person's pronouns?](#)
- [How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?](#)

Additional Student Support Services

- [Registrar](https://registrar.unt.edu) (<https://registrar.unt.edu>)
- [Financial Aid](https://financialaid.unt.edu/) (<https://financialaid.unt.edu/>)
- [Student Legal Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/student-legal-services>)
- [Career Center](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/career-center>)
- [Multicultural Center](https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center) (<https://edo.unt.edu/multicultural-center>)
- [Counseling and Testing Services](https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services) (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services>)
- [Pride Alliance](https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance) (<https://edo.unt.edu/pridealliance>)
- [UNT Food Pantry](https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry) (<https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/food-pantry>)

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)