

# University of North Texas

PADM 4130.400 – Fall 2026  
American Intergovernmental Relations

## Instructor Information

**Faculty:** Hyo-Jun Kim  
**Pronouns:** him/his/he  
**Office:** Zoom is available after an appointment  
**Office Hours:** Mon & Wed 1:00 PM- 3:00 PM. Anytime by appointment  
**Class Type:** Online course  
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*Please note:* This Syllabus can change in response to UNT Policies. If this were to occur, students would be given advanced notice and a copy of the changes.

## Course Description

The U.S. “government” is actually constituted by an enormous number of “governments” which are not neatly organized into a hierarchy with a clear chain of command. Rather, governmental relationships and interactions are complex and evolving. Such interactions may be collaborative, cooperative, or competitive. The comparative power of federal, state, local, and interregional entities has waxed and waned over time due to changes in legislation, culture, and technology. This course is designed to provide the learner with a road map and a “cheat sheet” for determining who is responsible for what and why.

The course will examine several hot button issues in which the authority of one branch of government was challenged by another, and debate whether the current structure makes sense. Toward the end of the course, we will consider supranational organizations and how the roles of these organizations tie in with traditional notions of national sovereignty.

This course will be helpful to any student interested in the reach and role of governmental entities from the perspective of political science, history, or public policy.

## Course Objectives

**Upon successful completion of this course, students will develop competencies in the following areas:**

1. Constitutional, policy, and administrative relations between the Federal and state governments
2. Constitutional, policy, and administrative relations between state and local governments
3. Collaborative and competitive relations between local governments
4. U.S. role in supranational organizations

## Course Structure

This course is an asynchronous fully online UNT internet course. You are able to be self-paced within structured timeline for module instruction. Course instructions are based on scheduled online materials presented on CANVAS modules. I am incorporating synchronous learning by keeping my online office hours. And participation of office hours is not required nor affects grade.

## Required Materials

- O'Toole, L. J., & Christensen, R. K. (2013). **American intergovernmental relations: Foundations, perspectives, and issues.** Cq Press. (ISBN13: 9781452226293)

Additional materials will be posted on Canvas

## Course Syllabus

It is imperative that you keep a copy of the syllabus. It contains important information relative to the course including the schedule, reading assignments, deliverables, and grade structure of the course. Furthermore, it contains information I expect you to utilize in the preparing of assignments. Failure to follow specific instructions will impact your grade. I retain the right to alter the syllabus, as needed. While alterations are not planned, if any changes are made to this document, they will be clearly announced at the beginning of class periods. The Department of Public Administration's policies on cheating and plagiarism, disability accommodation, use of laptops and cellphones and student behavior are included at the end of the syllabus.

## Course Policies

I expect all students to conduct themselves with professional courtesy, which includes but is not limited to the following:

**(1) Reading Assignments:** Reading assignments should be completed in advance, and class members should be prepared for daily class discussions. I love to lecture, but at this level of your education your participation is required. When the readings are discussed it will be assumed you will be prepared to lead a discussion and or participate significantly.

**(2) Cheating or Plagiarism:** In accordance with departmental policy (attached), cheating or plagiarism will result in a grade of F for the course. Any work submitted for a grade should be the original work of the student. **Remember, plagiarism** is a violation of acceptable student conduct. Long quotations should be avoided. Text or unique ideas taken directly from an author (quoted or paraphrased) should be cited and that citation should include a page number for the text. Violations will not be treated lightly, and disciplinary action will be taken should such violations occur. Please see the professor if you have any questions about academic integrity in general or as it relates to particular requirements for this course.

**(3) Late Work:** Just as you would expect to turn in a work assignment in a timely manner, so also should you submit class assignments in a timely manner. Late work will be subject to a penalty of a grade-a-day deduction unless an arrangement is made well in advance of the due date of an assignment. There will be a 5 % point deduction per day (every 24 hours) if the late policy is applied.

**(4) Respect for fellow students, the field, and the instructor:** Although some of the issues we will cover can be controversial and may evoke an emotional response, please treat other students respectfully. When I am in front of the class lecturing or addressing a question from a student, I expect your full attention. This means no talking with other students or in any way distracting me or the class from the lecture/discussion. Please wait your turn if you would like to contribute to the discussion. Do not carry on a conversation with someone else in the class or you may be asked to leave the classroom – And Please Turn off your Ring thingies.

## (5) Limited use of GenAI

Throughout the semester, you will or may use specific Generative AI (GenAI) tools, such as Chat gpt, Gemini, Claude etc., for certain assignments, with guidance on responsible use. These assignments help build ethical resilience and GenAI literacy, preparing you for careers in a GenAI-oriented workforce.

In accordance with the UNT Honor Code, unauthorized use of GenAI tools is prohibited. Using GenAI content without proper credit or substituting your own work with GenAI undermines the learning process and violates UNT academic integrity policy. If you're unsure whether something is allowed, please seek clarification.

This course allows limited use of Generative AI for assignments. If you want to use Gen AI in your work, you must disclose its use. Failure to disclose the use of Gen AI may result in a penalty to your grade.

**(6) Syllabus Changes:** I reserve the right to change, modify, add to, alter, delete, and otherwise rearrange the syllabus to make the learning process accessible and in response to changes in a situation. If this were to occur, students would be given advanced notice and a copy of the changes.

## ODA accommodation statement

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with a reasonable accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request reasonable accommodations at any time; however, ODA notices of reasonable 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 reasonable accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. Students are strongly encouraged to deliver letters of reasonable accommodation during faculty office hours or by appointment. Faculty members have the authority to ask students to discuss such letters during their designated office hours to protect the privacy of students.

For additional information, refer to the Office of Disability Access website (<http://www.unt.edu/oda>). You may also contact ODA by phone at (940) 565-4323.

## Assessing Your Work

### 1. Discussion postings (10 points\*10 postings=100)

You are required to participate in ten graded discussion postings throughout the semester. Each posting is worth 10 points. These discussions provide opportunities for students to reflect critically on course concepts, connect theory to current policy and administrative issues, and engage with peers in an asynchronous dialogue.

Your initial post is **due by Friday 11:59 PM** of the assigned week, and you must respond to at least one classmate's post **by Friday 11:59 PM**. Your grade will reflect the depth of analysis, clarity of communication, use of course materials, and timeliness of participation.

To ensure meaningful and respectful interaction:

- Be civil and constructive in your tone.
- Stay focused on the topic and relate your comments to the readings.
- Proofread your posts before submission.
- Cite sources appropriately when referring to texts or external materials.

## 2. Quizzes (25 points\* 12 quizzes= 300)

Small quizzes will be assigned every week except exam weeks based on class modules and assigned readings. The quizzes are intended to test your mastery of the material covered.

Each quiz is due **by Friday 11:59 PM** of the assigned week. Late submissions may not be accepted. Quizzes are open-book, but individual work is expected. Pay close attention to Canvas announcements and module guidance for study tips and scope of each quiz.

*Note: Always refer to the course syllabus and announcements for any updates or changes to the quiz schedule or submission guidelines.*

## 3. Short Essays (25 points\* 4 quizzes= 100)

There will be four short essays throughout the semester over the course materials. It should be a double-spaced, 12pt, Times New Roman, and 300-500-word short response to the ques on. **Students are expected to submit short essays by Friday, 11:59 PM of each assigned week.**

## 4. Exams: (Midterm exam = 250, Final exam = 250)

Exams will be a combination of multiple-choice questions and short essay questions. They will be open-book, take-home exams.

- **Midterm Exam:** A midterm exam will be administered in the middle of the semester in week 8. It will account for 25 percent of the final grade. The exam will cover only the first half of the semester.
- **Final Exam:** A final exam will be administered at the end of the semester in week 16. It will account for 25 percent of the final grade. The exam will cover only the second half of the semester.

**\*Detailed instructions for the assignments will be available on CANVAS.**

### Submissions

Submissions should be through CANVAS on the respective assignment page unless notified otherwise. You can generally expect assignments to be graded within a week of the deadline.

| Activity            | Percentage of Final Grade | Points total   |
|---------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| Weekly quiz         | 30% (25 points x 12)      | 300pts         |
| Discussion postings | 10% (10 points x 10)      | 100pts         |
| Short essay         | 10% (25 points x 4)       | 100pts         |
| Midterm exam        | 25% (250 points)          | 250pts         |
| Final Exam          | 25% (250 points)          | 250pts         |
| <b>Total Points</b> | <b>100%</b>               | <b>1000pts</b> |

The standard scale below will be used for grading:

**A = 900-1000    B = 800-899    C = 700-799    D = 600-699    F = 599 and lower**

In most cases, I do not allow students to do extra work (i.e., an additional paper) to improve their grades in the course. This is not fair to other students who are not given the same opportunity. Late homework will be penalized unless the student has a legitimate excuse or crisis causing the delay in completing work (i.e., illness, family death, etc.). Also, I will only grant incompletes or extensions to students who have legitimate excuses or crises and who make requests before the end of the course.

You will lose 5% of your total score if you submit within 48 hours after the deadline. You will lose 10% of your total score if you submit beyond 48 hours after the deadline. Your assignment will not be accepted beyond 7 days of the deadline with no legitimate reasons or no communications with the instructor. Please email the instructor BEFORE the deadline to request an accommodation to waive the late policy.

## Course Requirements/Schedule

*Note: The schedule and assignments may be revised as the course progresses and new material becomes available.*

| <b>Module</b> | <b>Date</b>       | <b>Topic Reading</b>                                                                                                        | <b>Course Activities</b>                                       |
|---------------|-------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Module1       | Aug/17~23         | American Federalism 1<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch1                                                                        | Discussion Post (Aug 21)<br>Quiz (Aug 21)                      |
| Module2       | Aug/24~30         | American Federalism 2<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch1-2<br>- Cox (1999)                                                      | Quiz (Aug 28)<br>Short Essay (Aug 28)                          |
| Module3       | Aug/31~<br>Sep/6  | Federalism or IGR<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch2-3                                                                          | Discussion Post (Sep 4)<br>Quiz (Sep 4)<br>Short Essay (Sep 4) |
| Module4       | Sep/7~13          | Moral Hazard and IGR                                                                                                        | Discussion Post (Sep 11)<br>Quiz (Sep 11)                      |
| Module5       | Sep/14~20         | Federal-State Relations: Policy Conflict and Regulation 1<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch12, 13, 21, 22                       | Discussion Post (Sep 18)<br>Quiz (Sep 18)                      |
| Module6       | Sep/21~27         | Federal-State Relations: Policy Conflict and Regulation 2<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch12, 13, 21, 22<br>- Torruella (2017) | Discussion Post (Sep 25)<br>Quiz (Sep 25)                      |
| Module7       | Sep/28~<br>Oct/4  | Federal-State Relations: Homeland Security<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch25                                                  | Discussion Post (Oct 2)<br>Quiz (Oct 2)                        |
| Module8       | Oct/5~11          | Midterm exam                                                                                                                | Midterm exam (Oct 9)                                           |
| Module9       | Oct/12~18         | Fiscal Federalism 1<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch14, 15, 17                                                                 | Quiz (Oct 16)                                                  |
| Module10      | Oct/19~25         | Fiscal Federalism 2<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch14, 15, 17                                                                 | Discussion Post (Oct 23)<br>Quiz (Oct 23)                      |
| Module11      | Oct/26~<br>Nov/ 1 | State-Local Relations                                                                                                       | Discussion Post (Oct 30)<br>Quiz (Oct 30)                      |
| Module12      | Nov/ 2~8          | State-Local Relations: Policy Conflict and Regulation                                                                       | Quiz (Nov 6)<br>Short Essay (Nov 6)                            |
| Module13      | Nov/ 9~15         | Local Government Relations<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch4<br>- Agranoff (2006)                                              | Discussion Post (Nov 13)<br>Quiz (Nov 13)                      |

|                                      |                   |                                                          |                                                                                        |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Module14                             | Nov/16~22         | International Governance<br>- O'Toole et al. (2013) Ch24 | <b>Discussion Post (Nov 20)</b><br><b>Quiz (Nov 20)</b><br><b>Short Essay (Nov 20)</b> |
| <b>Thanksgiving Break: Nov 23-29</b> |                   |                                                          |                                                                                        |
| Module15                             | Nov 30 ~<br>Dec 6 | Final exam prep                                          |                                                                                        |
| Module16                             | Dec 7~11          | Final exam                                               | <b>Midterm exam (Dec 11)</b>                                                           |

## Grading Policies

Grades are based on mastery of the content. As a rule, I do not grade on a “curve” because that is a comparison of your outcomes to others. I do, however, encourage you to find opportunities to learn with and through others. Explore Navigate’s Study Buddy (<https://navigate.unt.edu>) tool to join study groups. Maximize your learning with our coaching staff at the Learning Center. Focus on areas where you are struggling in this course by attending scheduled study group sessions with me the week before each exam. Forward together! Every student in my class can improve by doing their own work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people’s work without citations will be violating UNT’s Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of guidelines for your academic success (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>). If you have questions about this, or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

## Attendance and Participation

Because this course involves collaboration, participation is essential to learning. Our project-based activities require you to be actively engaged in discussions and group work. I understand tardiness and absences may occur. If you are late in submitting an assignment or taking a quiz, please drop me an email to let me know the circumstances. If you must miss class, please let me know before your absence.

## Rules of Engagement

Rules of engagement refer to the way students are expected to interact with each other and with their instructors. Here are some general guidelines:

- While the freedom to express yourself is a fundamental human right, any communication that utilizes cruel and derogatory language based on 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 will not be tolerated.
- Treat your instructor and classmates with respect in any communication online or face-to-face, even when their opinion differs from your own.
- 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 individuals’ experiences.
- Use your critical thinking skills to challenge other people’s ideas, instead of attacking individuals.
- 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.
- Avoid using “text-talk” unless explicitly permitted by your instructor.
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.

- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.
- **Notice: Class recordings are reserved for use only by students in this class for educational purposes. The recordings should not be shared outside the course in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.**

For more information on Netiquette Guidelines:

<http://teach.ufl.edu/wp-content/uploads/2012/08/NetiquetteGuideforOnlineCourses.pdf>

## Generative AI rule

If you want to use Generative AI in your assignments (essays), you must properly cite or disclose its use. Failure to do so may result in penalties or a reduction in your grade.

## Standard policies

Every student in my class can improve by doing their work and trying their hardest with access to appropriate resources. Students who use other people's work without citations will be violating UNT's Academic Integrity Policy. Please read and follow this important set of guidelines for your academic success, <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>. If you have questions about this or any UNT policy, please email me or come discuss this with me during my office hours.

## Communication Expectations

The primary tool of communication for this course is the Canvas course portal. You should send personal concerns or questions to me via Canvas e-mail. You will receive a response within 24 hours of your e-mail. If you e-mail me on Saturday or Sunday, you may receive a response on Monday morning. I intend to post grades within 7 days of completing the assignment, quiz, or test. Please visit this site for online communication tips at <https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>.

## Supporting Your Success and Creating an Inclusive Learning Environment

Every student in this class should have the right to learn and engage in an environment of respect and courtesy from others. We will discuss our classroom's habits of engagement and I also encourage you to review UNT's student code of conduct so that we can all start with the same baseline civility understanding (Code of Student Conduct, <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>).

## Technology requirements for courses with digital materials:

This course has digital components. To fully participate in this class, students will need internet access to reference content on the Canvas Learning Management System. If circumstances change, you will be informed of other technical needs to access course content. Information on how to be successful in a digital learning environment can be found at Learn Anywhere, <https://online.unt.edu/learn>.

## 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.

### • UIT Help Desk

Website: <http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>

Email: [helpdesk@unt.edu](mailto:helpdesk@unt.edu)

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8 am-9 pm

Telephone Availability

-Sunday: noon-midnight;

-Monday-Thursday: 8 am-midnight;

-Friday: 8 am-8 pm;

-Saturday: 9 am-5 pm;

Laptop Checkout: 8 am-7 pm

For additional support, visit Canvas Technical Help,

<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>.