

**Political Science 3100.002 – Fall 2025**  
Topics in American Government  
**POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY**  
Tuesday and Thursday, 11:00am-12:20pm, WH 121

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Office Hours: Tu 2:00-4:00pm (in person) and by appointment. E-mail anytime with questions.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Political psychology uses concepts and theories from psychology to study political actors and political behavior. The course introduces a range of political phenomena and shows how a psychological approach serves to deepen our understanding of them. The course also introduces how political psychologists conduct research, which helps explain the process of discovery and knowledge creation in the field. The course is built around the following learning objectives:

Knowledge:

- Learn concepts and theories central to political psychology.
- Learn about psychological approaches to the study of leaders, groups, and nations.

Application:

- Employ psychological concepts and theories to analyze political problems.
- Use knowledge of political psychology to explain contemporary political phenomena.

Skills:

- Reflect and analyze political phenomena from a psychological perspective.
- Verbal and written expression and argumentation.
- Basic research – locating, evaluating, and using trustworthy source materials.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES AND EVALUATION**

To facilitate successful completion of the course, students are expected to:

- Attend and participate in class.
- Complete *reading assignments* by the Tuesday of the week for which they are assigned.
- Complete the two short paper assignments and turn them in via Canvas by the day and time they are due.
- Complete the quizzes and examination as scheduled.

\*In addition to attending class, expect to spend time reading and completing assignments outside of class. For a 3-credit hour class, be prepared to spend (on average) 3 hours a week completing work outside of class. Of course, the actual time spent depends on a variety of individual factors.

\*The instructor does not accept doctor's notes or other notes explaining absences, except for verifications for absences provided by the Office of the Dean of Students. To report serious illness or other issues for which you seek accommodation, please contact the Dean of Students at <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/resources/temporary-illness>.

\*If you cannot meet a deadline for an assignment, quiz, or exam, contact the instructor *prior* to the date/time the work is due or the quiz or exam is to start. *E-mail the instructor at the address listed at the top of this syllabus.* Unless you have reached *prior* agreement with the instructor, the following rules apply: *No* late assignments will be accepted. *No* make-up examinations will be given. Exceptions can only be made for serious illness and other issues that have been reported to the Dean of Students (see above).

Your responsibility to notify the instructor in a timely manner – and before the date/time the work is due or the exam is to start – applies also to absences for students participating in athletic or other activities that require off-campus travel, as well as students who require accommodations for religious holidays or other valid reasons.

\*The course grade will be determined on basis of the following, with the various assignments weighted as indicated:

Assignment	Points	Earned points
Contributions to class discussions (be there and participate)	200	
Quiz 1	100	
Quiz 2	100	
Quiz 3	100	
Paper 1	150	
Paper 2	150	
Exam (Final)	200	
<i>TOTAL</i>	1,000	

Course grades are determined on the basis of your final cumulative point total, using the above weighting. The maximum cumulative point total is 1,000 and a standard scale is employed (i.e. A $\geq$ 900, B $\geq$ 800, C $\geq$ 700, D $\geq$ 600, F<600). The instructor may make small modifications from the standard scale when warranted by the performance of the class as a whole – although excellent classes are not penalized with a more stringent scale than the standard one!

This course does *not* provide extra credit opportunities.

Students who have questions about their performance in the course should contact the instructor and plan to meet during office hours or another mutually agreed upon time.

Information on dropping a course can be found at <https://registrar.unt.edu/registration/dropping-class>.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

Cottam, Martha L., Elena Mastors, Thomas Preston, and Beth Dietz. 2022. *Introduction to Political Psychology*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Routledge.

ISBN: 978-0-367-20001-5 (paperback \$97.99)

ISBN: 978-0-429-24464-3 (e-book \$83.29)

## COURSE OUTLINE

### **Week 1 (Tu 8/19; Th 8/21): I. What is political psychology?**

Read: Chapter 1 Political Psychology: Introduction and Overview, pp.1-15.

### **Week 2 (Tu 8/26; Th 8/28): II. Key psychological theories**

Read: Chapter 2 Personality and Politics, pp.16-47.

### **Week 3 (Tu 9/2; Th 1/29):**

Read: Chapter 3 Cognition, Social Identity, Emotions, and Attitudes in Political Psychology, pp.48-81.

### **Week 4 (Tu 9/9; Th 9/11\*):**

Read: Chapter 4 The Political Psychology of Groups, pp.82-122.

Quiz 1: Thursday, September 11

### **Week 5 (Tu 9/16; Th 9/18): III. Leadership**

Read: Chapter 5 The Study of Political Leaders, pp.123-167.

### **Week 6 (Tu 9/23; Th 9/25): IV. The masses and the media**

Read: Chapter 6 The Political Psychology of Mass Politics: How Do People Decide Who to Vote For? Pp.168-216.

Paper 1: due Friday, September 26, by 11:59pm (Canvas upload).

### **Week 7 (Tu 9/30; Th 10/2):**

Read: Chapter 7 The Political Psychology of the Media in Politics, pp.217-235.

### **Week 8 (Tu 10/7; Th 10/9): V. Political psychology of race**

Read: Chapter 8 The Political Psychology of Race, pp.236-279.

Quiz 2: Thursday, October 9

**Week 9 (Tu 10/14; Th 10/16): VI. Political psychology of ethnic conflict**

Read: Chapter 9 From Ethnic Conflict to Genocide, pp.280-321.

**Week 10 (Tu 10/21; Th 10/23): VII. Political psychology of nationalism**

Read: Chapter 10 The Political Psychology of Nationalism, pp.322-361.

Paper 2: due Friday, October 24, by 11:59pm (Canvas upload).

**Week 11 (Tu 10/28; Th 10/30): VIII. Political psychology of social movements**

Read: Chapter 11 The Political Psychology of Social Movements, pp.362-397.

**Week 12 (Tu 11/4; Th 11/6): IX. Political psychology of terrorism**

Read: Chapter 12 The Political Psychology of Terrorism, pp.398-431.

Quiz 3: Thursday, November 6

**Week 13 (Tu 11/11; Th 11/13): X. Political psychology of conflict**

Read: Chapter 13 The Political Psychology of International Security and Conflict, pp.432-459.

**Week 14 (Tu 11/18; Th 11/20): XI. Political psychology of conflict resolution**

Read: Chapter 14 Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation, pp.460-478.

**Thanksgiving Break (11/24-11/28) – no class**

**Week 15 (Tu 12/2; Th 12/4): XII. Political psychology and the future**

Read: TBA

**Finals week (12/8 – 12/12):**

Exam: Tuesday, December 9, 10:30am – 12:30pm, see the official finals schedule:  
<https://registrar.unt.edu/exams/final-exam-schedule/fall.html>

### **Texas Education Code 51.3525, a.k.a. Texas Senate Bill 17**

Texas Education Code 51.3525, which went into effect January 1, 2024, outlaws diversity, equity, and inclusion programs at public colleges and universities in Texas. However, this law does not in any way affect content, instruction or discussion in a course at public colleges and universities in Texas. Expectations regarding academic freedom for teaching and class discussion have not been altered, and students should not feel the need to censor their speech pertaining to topics pertaining to race and racism, structural inequality, LGBTQ+ issues, or diversity, equity, and inclusion.

#### **Course Policy on**

#### **Academic Integrity, Plagiarism, Cheating, and Generative AI/Chatbots**

This policy pertains to *all* assignments in this course that require writing. That includes – but is not limited to – papers and examinations. All written work you submit in this course must be your own, original work. In other words:

The use of generative AI is not permitted in this course. Any attempt to represent generative AI output as your own work will be considered fabrication, cheating, and/or academic dishonesty as determined on a case-by-case basis.

The use of a tool such as Grammarly or a comparable system to improve your writing must be disclosed in writing on the first page of any paper for which you used it.

#### **What does that mean?**

- You give appropriate credit to each and every source, and do so each and every time you use that source, irrespective of whether you paraphrase or quote that source. Failure to give appropriate credit means you present the work as your own.
- You do not use any material written by someone else or by generative AI – including, but not limited to chatbots such as ChatGPT – and present it as your own work.

#### **Why?**

- According to the UNT Academic Integrity Policy ([UNT Policy 6.003](#)), any form of “unauthorized assistance” constitutes cheating. As a result, use of any artificial intelligence is not authorized for completion of assignments or exams in this course, unless specifically authorized by the instructor.
- Academic integrity is defined in [UNT Policy 6.003](#) and indicates that the following constitute violations of academic honesty: a student has another person/entity do the work of any substantive portion of a graded assignment for them, which includes purchasing work from a company, hiring a person or company to complete an assignment or exam, and/or using generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT).
- For additional information, consult [UNT Policy 6.003](#).

#### **What are the consequences?**

- Violations will not be tolerated. Any suspected case of academic dishonesty will be handled in accordance with current University policy and procedures, as described at <https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/integrity>.

- If this is your first academic integrity violation, you can expect a failing grade on the assignment, and you will be reported to the university's Academic Integrity office.
- Repeat violations will lead to stronger sanctions up to and including expulsion from UNT.
- These penalties will apply even if you did not knowingly intend to plagiarize or cheat. You must familiarize yourself with the rules of academic integrity and do your own original work – whether at UNT or later in your career – and ignorance is no excuse.

### **University of North Texas -- Department of Political Science 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. For additional information see the next segment (Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism and <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>).

### **POLICY ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM**

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying others' tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one's own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.

Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of "F" in the course. In the case of graduate departmental exams, the minimum penalty shall be failure of all fields of the exam. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the field faculty in the case of departmental exams.

Cases of cheating or plagiarism on graduate departmental exams, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary coursework may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Undergraduate Studies Committee in the case of undergraduate students, or the Graduate Studies Committee in the case of graduate students. These committees, acting as agents of the department Chair, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

### **ADA 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 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 Office of Disability Access website at <https://disability.unt.edu/>.

### **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.

### **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 <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>.

### **ACCESS TO INFORMATION – EAGLE CONNECT**

Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: [my.unt.edu](http://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: <http://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](mailto: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 at [www.spot.unt.edu](http://www.spot.unt.edu) or email [spot@unt.edu](mailto:spot@unt.edu).

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:oeo@unt.edu) or at (940)-565-2759.

### **CLASS RECORDINGS & STUDENT LIKENESSES**

Synchronous (live) sessions in this course may be recorded for students enrolled in this class to refer to throughout the semester. The instructor may also offer occasional recorded lectures.

Class recordings and pre-recorded lectures are the intellectual property of the university or instructor and are reserved for use only by students in this class and only for educational purposes.

Students may not post or otherwise share the recordings outside the class, or outside the Canvas Learning Management System, in any form. Failing to follow this restriction is a violation of the UNT Code of Student Conduct and could lead to disciplinary action.