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.

Instructor information: Melissa McKay, Ph.D.
Office: Hall Park A #125
Student Office Hours: Tuesday 6-8pm via Zoom and by appointment as needed
Email: melissa.mckay@unt.edu
(I will only email you on your university account)

Class Information: Meeting times: Tuesday and Thursday 9:00am-10:20am
Meeting place: Hall Park A #107
Online classroom: https://unt.instructure.com

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the roles of the United States and Texas governments in the American political system. We will study the institutions, processes, and decisions of political actors that define American and Texas government. We focus particular attention on the United States and Texas constitutions, civil rights and liberties, federalism, and the institutions that comprise the three branches of government.¹

Course Structure: This class is will be completed in a flipped format: students are expected to read and complete the assigned materials prior to our class meeting times, and most graded assignments and engagement activities will take place together in the classroom. This course relies heavily on the individual taking responsibility for their own learning and being accountable to oneself and their classmates.

¹ A portion of this syllabus is adapted from materials and simulations created by Dr. Wendy Watson and Dr. Jacqueline Demeritt, to whom I am grateful.
Class Communications: You can send me a note via Canvas, or email me directly at the address provided above. Please allow me around 24 hours to get back to you, but if it’s been longer and you haven’t heard back, don’t be shy about sending me a reminder. If you send a note on Friday-Sunday, please expect that I will not write you back until Monday.

Required Materials: *American Government – 3e*
https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e
- This is an open-source text book that is free for all students to use
- Assigned reading is linked directly from our Canvas LMS
- The textbooks is also available as a PDF file
- Students can purchase a printed version if preferred

**The Texas Constitution: The People, History, and Government of the Lone Star State**

- Access to a popular and reliable podcast app (Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Play, etc....)
- Consistent and reliable access to the internet
- Smart device (smart phone, tablet, laptop, etc.) needed for each class meeting
- iClicker student account: https://www.iclicker.com/students/apps-and-remotes/apps
  - If you do not have a smart device or laptop or do not feel comfortable using one in class, we have laptops available to check out on campus

- A laptop, desktop, or other reliable computer – our entire class is based on digital materials and you’ll need a reliable computer.
  - If you do not have one, you can check out a laptop on campus for daily use, or your home high school may also have laptops to loan to students.
  - Please reach out to me if you are having a hard time securing the use of a computer.

Technical Support
Part of working with digital content 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.

Please do not rely on me for technical support – trust me, I am not the person for that.

**UIT Help Desk:** UIT Student Help Desk site (http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm)
**Email:** helpdesk@unt.edu
**Telephone Availability:**
- Sunday: noon-midnight
- Monday-Thursday: 8am-midnight
- Friday: 8am-8pm
- Saturday: 9am-5pm
**Laptop Checkout:** 8am-7pm
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 on the basis 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 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 individual’s 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”
- Proofread and fact-check your sources.
- Keep in mind that online posts can be permanent, so think first before you type.

See these Engagement Guidelines for more information.

University and Class Policies:

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 Accommodation 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.

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.

**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.

**Sexual Assault Prevention**
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.

**Federal Regulation: Important Notice for F-1 Students taking Distance Education Courses**
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/). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

**COVID-19 & Attendance**
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.
Attendance at every class meeting is expected. I am required to take attendance at the beginning of every class for COVID contact tracing purposes.

While attendance is expected as outlined above, it is important for all of us to be mindful of the health and safety of everyone in our community, especially given concerns about COVID-19. Please contact me if you are unable to attend class because you are ill, or unable to attend class due to COVID-19 including symptoms, potential exposure, pending or positive test results, or if you have been given specific instructions to isolate or quarantine from a health care provider or a local authority. The strictest confidence will be placed on your privacy and I will never reveal any personal information to any other student or non-essential personnel. It is important that you communicate with me prior to being absent so I can make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class.

If you are experiencing any symptoms of COVID-19 please seek medical attention from the Student Health and Wellness Center (940-565-2333 or askSHWC@unt.edu) or your health care provider PRIOR to coming to campus.
UNT also requires you to contact the UNT COVID Hotline at 844-366-5892 or COVID@unt.edu for guidance on actions to take due to symptoms, pending or positive test results, or potential exposure. While attendance is an important part of succeeding in this class, your own health, and those of others in the community, is more important.

### Academic 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**

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*Dr. McKay reserves the right to change the terms and materials contained in this document at her discretion*
*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](https://canvas.unt.edu) 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?](https://example.com)
- [How do I use pronouns?](https://example.com)
- [How do I share my pronouns?](https://example.com)
- [How do I ask for another person’s pronouns?](https://example.com)
- [How do I correct myself or others when the wrong pronoun is used?](https://example.com)

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

**Academic Support Services**
- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu)

**Writing Lab** [http://writingcenter.unt.edu](http://writingcenter.unt.edu)

**Grading Policies:** Final grades are numerically based on the following weighted assignment types:

**Unit Quizzes: 25% of total grade.** In lieu of periodic exams, Unit Quizzes will be administered in class the week following the completion of a unit. These quizzes will be available via Canvas or via physical copy for those who prefer to handwrite (pending COVID restrictions). No outside materials will be allowed. Missed quizzes will be made up during my student office hours, and must be initiated and coordinated by student.
Zombie Apocalypse Group Project – 25% of total grade (divided). At the beginning of the semester, the class will be divided into groups to work through an applied semester-long project. Complete details of the project brief and expectations of each student and groups are found in Canvas. Students will be earn grades on this project type in three ways: the final product of their group’s effort, individual concurrent assignments, and peer reviews of individual efforts as evaluated by groupmates.

Homework/Embedded Assignments: 15% of total grade. Various assignments are embedded into each assigned learning module. Assignment types include “Recap Quiz” which is a brief evaluation of students’ comprehension of the material, “Edpuzzle” which requires students to watch a video and answer questions embedded therein, and other short online assignments tailored to the module topic. The Core Assessment writing assignment is included in this assignment group.

In-class Activities -15% of total grade. During in-class discussions, students will be expected to participate in simulations, polls, discussions, and other interactive engagement activities. These activities will be monitored, collected, and reported through mobile apps or other interactive tools such as iClicker. Some grades will be participatory while others could be to reinforce understanding and will be graded as correct/incorrect.

If a student is absent and unable to answer the in-class participation activities, it is the responsibility of the student to contact me to make arrangements for make-up work.

Engagement - 10% of total grade. This is an interactive class and it requires commitment and engagement from everyone involved. Your class attendance as well as in-class participation will be noted and contribute to your overall grade. Attendance will be recorded by utilizing the iClicker app.

- Students will begin the semester with 100 percent for participation grade. Points will be deducted when the student fails to meet expectations for participation in this class. This includes but is not limited to the following: participating in class discussions, arriving to class on time, remaining in class for the entire class period, abiding by classroom policies, treating others with respect, approaching assignments with a serious effort, etc.

North Texas Nowl Integrated Project – 10% of total grade. All of the North Texas Now dual credit courses are integrated around a themed project. This class will have assignments that tie directly into the project, as well as support concepts and skills from other classes. Crossover assignments and the final project contributes to 10% of the student’s grade in this class.

Letter grades are assigned based on standard grade scales:

- A – 90-100%
- B – 80-89%
- C – 70-79%
- D – 60-69%
- F – 59 - under
Important Notes:

- Final grades will be based on the weighted outcomes of the assignments above. I use standard mathematical rounding if necessary.
- Please do not request extra credit. If there is an activity that I feel would be relevant I will offer it to the entire class. I cannot and definitely will not provide extra credit opportunities for individual students.
- If you feel like your grades are slipping or you are falling behind, please reach out to me immediately. Too many students wait until their semester progress is a lost cause, but if we catch it early enough we can most likely work together on a plan of action.
### Class Schedule

**PSCI 2306 | Fall 2021**

Unless otherwise noted, all “At-home work” listed below is due **BEFORE** the class day indicated. Assignments for each week are due no later than 11:59pm on Sunday of the corresponding week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics Covered</th>
<th>At-home work (do before we meet)</th>
<th>In-class work</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 24</td>
<td><strong>Introduction to the class</strong></td>
<td>Read and complete the “Course Introduction and Overview” module (after we meet on 8/24)</td>
<td>• Preview semester and set expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The Social Contract</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>The Common Good</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Aug 26</td>
<td><strong>What Is Government</strong></td>
<td>Complete “Social Contract” module</td>
<td>• Discuss social contract</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Political Cultures</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Explore the common good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Aug 31</td>
<td><strong>Founding of American Government</strong></td>
<td>Read and complete “What is Government” module Complete Recap Quiz Complete “Political Cultures” module Read Davis pg. 56-62</td>
<td>• Class discussion about political cultures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sep 2</td>
<td><strong>Collective action problem</strong></td>
<td><strong>No pre-reading or assignments required</strong></td>
<td>• Unit Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sep 7</td>
<td><strong>Founding of American Government</strong></td>
<td>Read and complete “Founding of American Government” module Complete Recap Quiz</td>
<td>• Class discussion and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sep 9</td>
<td><strong>US Constitution</strong></td>
<td>Read and complete “US Constitution” module Complete Recap Quiz</td>
<td>• Class discussion and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Material/Activity</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Texas Constitution</td>
<td>Read Chapter 3 (Davis and Nelson)</td>
<td>Unit Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Texas Constitution and Amendments, continued</td>
<td>Texas Amendments Assignment</td>
<td>Class activities – Texas amendments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 21</td>
<td></td>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>Read and complete “Federalism” module Recap Quiz</td>
<td>Unit Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 23</td>
<td></td>
<td>Federalism, cont’d</td>
<td>Read pg. 69-78 (Davis and Nelson) Complete Recap Quiz</td>
<td>Federalism activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 28</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group Constitution Project Work</td>
<td>Continue work on individual worksheets: Preamble, Adoption/Amendments, and Federalism</td>
<td>Unit Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sep 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Group Constitution Project Work</td>
<td>Group responsibilities</td>
<td>Group Project Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Zombie Apocalypse Individual Worksheets</td>
<td>Due October 3 @ 11:59pm</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 5</td>
<td></td>
<td>US Congress</td>
<td>Read and complete “US Congress” module Complete Recap Quiz</td>
<td>In-class discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Texas Legislature</td>
<td>Read Chapter 6 (Davis and Nelson) Complete “Texas Legislature” Module</td>
<td>In-class discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 12</td>
<td></td>
<td>Executive Branch: US Presidency</td>
<td>Read and complete “Executive Branches</td>
<td>US Presidency” module Complete Recap Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Executive Branch: Bureaucracy</td>
<td>Read and complete “Executive Branches</td>
<td>Bureaucracy” module Complete Recap Quiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Day</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oct 19</td>
<td>Sept 9</td>
<td>Executive Branch: Texas Governor and Plural Executive</td>
<td>Read and complete “Texas Governor and Plural Executive” module Read Chapter 7 (Davis and Nelson)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 21</td>
<td>Oct 11</td>
<td>Texas Boards and Commissions</td>
<td>Canvas resources • In class discussion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 26</td>
<td>Oct 16</td>
<td>Judicial Branches: Federal Courts</td>
<td>Read and complete “Federal Court System” module Complete Recap Quiz Unit Quiz</td>
<td>Executive Branches • In class discussion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oct 28</td>
<td>Oct 18</td>
<td>Judicial Branches: Texas Judiciary</td>
<td>Read Chapter 8 (Davis and Nelson) • In-class discussion – Texas Criminal System</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 2</td>
<td>Nov 1</td>
<td>Group Constitution Project Work</td>
<td>Continue work on individual worksheets: Legislative, Executive, and Judicial Branches Unit Quiz</td>
<td>Judicial Branches • Work on individual worksheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>Zombie Apocalypse Individual Worksheets Due November 4 @ 11:59pm</td>
<td>Legislature Executive Judicial</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 4</td>
<td>Nov 3</td>
<td>Group Constitution Project Work</td>
<td>Group assigned responsibilities • Work on group constitution • Peer evaluation of group meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>Nov 7</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>Read and complete “Civil Liberties’ module • In class discussion and activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 11</td>
<td>Nov 9</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>Read and complete “Civil Rights” module • In class discussion and activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>Nov 14</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
<td>Read and complete “Local Government” module Read pg. 78-87 (Davis and Nelson) Zombie Individual Worksheet: Rights of Citizens due by 11:59pm Unit Quiz</td>
<td>Civil Rights and Civil Liberties • In class discussion and activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 18</td>
<td>Nov 16</td>
<td>Catch up and wrap up</td>
<td>Unit Quiz</td>
<td>Local Government</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Nov 23</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Week – no class</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>14 Nov 25</td>
<td>Core Assignment “Letter to Policymaker” due 11:59pm Sunday Nov. 28</td>
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<tr>
<td>15 Nov 30</td>
<td>NTN Project Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec 2</td>
<td>Constitution Group Finalization</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 Finals</td>
<td>Group Constitution due no later than 11:59pm Tuesday 12/7</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Final Peer Evaluations due no later than 11:59pm Tuesday 12/7</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Wrap up class activities and work on poster presentations*