Instructor Contact

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Course Description
This course explores the connection between the will of the people and the policies implemented by government by focusing on individual political values and attitudes, the mechanisms that connect individual beliefs to government action (parties, interest groups, the media, and elections), and the outcomes of government policy.

This is a course about action. In the political science world, we call it “political behavior”: how the behavior (actions) of individuals and groups come together to form the political landscape. It’s exciting, but it can sometimes be complex. Even though this is an online class, there will be opportunities for you to ask questions and engage in discussion; I urge you to take advantage of those opportunities.

Pre-requisites
There are no prerequisites for this course

Course Objectives
Students who complete this course will be able to

1. Explain the development and origin of the American democratic institutions
2. Analyze and explain the creation of the separation of powers between American democratic institutions
3. Explain the development and measurement of individual values, attitudes, and opinions about politics.
4. Interpret the role of individuals in the political process;
5. Explain the roles of linkage institutions (parties, interest groups, and media) in connecting individuals to institutions of government
6. Demonstrate the relationship between electoral rules/institutions and outcomes
7. Explain the connection between the political process and the policies generated by that process
Required Materials

There is one required text for this course:

Central Ideas in American Government + 2305 Workbook, published by Soomo Publishing

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

You can purchase a code for this text from the OFFICIAL CAMPUS bookstore or you can purchase it directly from the publisher by clicking on the textbook link in our course Canvas site. If you are waiting for financial aid, please access the text through Canvas and choose the free trial of the text (three chapters). If you 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.

Technical Support

Unfortunately, I am absolutely no help when it comes to technical support issues, especially when it comes to online resources. Luckily, UNT has an entire department dedicated to this. If you experience any kind of technical problem, please contact:

Student Helpdesk:
UIT Helpdesk
Sage Hall 130
940-565-2324
helpdesk@unt.edu

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

Please note: If you experience a loss of internet connection, WIFI signal, or your browser freezes up on you during an assignment or exam, you must contact the UNT resources first, then send me an email with the problem you experienced and how you’re addressing it. If you fail to complete an assignment or exam because of technical issues, there is nothing we can do if you do not tell me right away.

Technical Skill Requirements

While this is an online course, the necessary technical requirements are minimal. You will need to navigate our Canvas webpage, follow the link to our online textbook, complete multiple choice and short answer questions in the online textbook, follow links to videos and some external websites, upload/download Word and pdf documents, and post to/comment on discussion boards (in Canvas). In addition, you will need Adobe Flash on your computer, and you will need the ability to take screen shots (screen captures) of websites or your work that can be saved an uploaded to the course Canvas site.

Netiquette

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

Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get the Gist Assignments (6)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Investigation Assignments (10)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workbook Assignments (6)</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Board Posts (6)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short Essays (4)</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unit Exams (2)</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
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Grading

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

A  90 - 100%
B  80 - 89%
C  70 - 79%
D  60 - 69%
F  Below 60%

I use standard mathematical rounding, but I will make no other adjustment of grades. Please remember that your final grade is the culmination of work that you have done over the course of the semester. It is not the product of bargaining at the end of the term. Moreover, I cannot make an exception for one student without making it for all students, and that is never practical.

With respect to all homework, late work will be accepted up to one week late with a 50% penalty. **After one week, it will not be accepted.** It does not matter why the work is late; this policy is uniform. If you DO have an issue such as a family emergency or illness, your grade will not necessarily suffer; at least one grade is dropped for each type of homework at the end of the semester, so having a penalized grade or even a missing grade is not the end of the world.

Course Expectations

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

As the instructor in this course, I am responsible for

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

As a student in this course, you are responsible for

- reading and completing all requirements of the course in a timely manner,
- working to remain attentive and engaged in the course and interact with your fellow students,
Course Components

Get the Gist Assignments: Your online textbook has two types of chapters: Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) chapters and Workbook chapters. The CIAG chapters have “study questions” or “Get the Gist” questions at the end of each page. You need to complete these questions for each chapter. You can reset and repeat the questions until you get them all correct, so you should aim to get a perfect score! (Once the due date passes, though, don’t reset the questions because it will override your good score with a late score.) The lowest grade gets dropped, so the highest 6 grades will constitute 15% of your final grade.

Investigation Assignments: In the CIAG chapters, you will also find some breakout assignments called “Investigations.” These assignments allow you to dig deep and apply what you know to tougher problems. You only get one crack at investigation questions; you cannot repeat them to try to do better. The lowest four grades get dropped, so the highest 7 grades will constitute 15% of your final grade.

Workbook Assignments: The other type of chapter in your online textbook is called a workbook chapter. Each workbook chapter consists of four essays that explore some facet of the topic of the module, and the essays are followed by questions (usually multiple choice, but sometimes a “poll” (where you can see the summary results of the class) or a short answer question). An “assignment” involves completing all of the questions for all four essays. There are 8 workbook assignments. The lowest grade gets dropped, so the highest 7 will constitute 15% of your final grade.

Discussion Board Posts: You will be posting in a discussion board throughout the semester. You will be prompted (and required) to post 5 times during the semester. An acceptable post will respond specifically to the prompt, will be written in at least five full sentences, and will be respectful. Each week, you must respond to at least one post from one of your classmates’ post. Your response must engage the original post on a substantive level (no “I agree” or “good point”), consist of at least three full sentences, and be respectful. Because we all understand that things happen, you may miss one post and one response without suffering a grade penalty. Accordingly, your top 4 grades will constitute 10% of your final grade.

Unit Exams: There are three exams in this course. They are multiple choice; they are not cumulative (in other words, it only covers material from the second half of the course). The exams are closed-book and will be made available on Canvas for 24 hours on the specified day, and will require Respondus Lockdown Browser to complete. Each exam will constitute 15% of your total grade.

Policies
Academic Integrity: https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/academic-integrity

ADA Policy
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 Accommodation (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 the student. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

**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 at http://ecfr.gpoaccess.gov. The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at "Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G)" and can be found buried within this document: http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/get-cfr.cgi?TITLE=8&amp;PART=214&amp;SECTION=2&amp;TYPE=TEXT

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.
# Syllabus

## PSCI 2305

### Calendar *

*All assignments are due at 11:59pm on **Sunday** unless otherwise specified.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Module by Week</th>
<th>Due Dates</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1:                     | 09/1/2019 | Canvas Module 1 | • Discussion post 1  
                        |            |             | • Videos and readings on Canvas |
| Introduction/Expectations  |           |            |                                                           |
| Establishing our Democracy |           |            |                                                           |
| 2: United States Constitution | 09/08/2019 | Canvas Module 2 | • Videos and readings on Canvas  
                        |            |             | • Assignment on Canvas |
| 3: Constitutional Amendments | 09/15/2019 | Canvas Module 3 | • Videos and readings on Canvas  
                        |            |             | • Assignment on Canvas |
| 4: Exam 1 And Public Opinion | 09/22/2019 | Soomo Chapters 1,2 | **Exam 1 THIS WEEK**  
                        |            |             | • Chapter 1 Get the Gist  
                        |            |             | • Discussion Board post 2  
                        |            |             | • Am I Blue … Investigation  
                        |            |             | • Chapter 3 Get the Gist  
| 5: Voting and Participation | 09/29/2019 | Soomo Chapters 3,4 | • Chapter 4 Workbook  
                        |            |             | • Discussion Board post 3  
| 6: Mass Media | 10/06/2019 | Soomo Chapter 5,6 | • Chapter 5 Get the Gist  
                        |            |             | • We the Protesters Investigation  
                        |            |             | • Chapter 6 Workbook  
| 7: Interest Groups | 10/13/2019 | Chapter 7,8 | • Chapter 7 Get the Gist  
                        |            |             | • Chapter 8 Workbook  
                        |            |             | • Evil Lobbyists Investigation  
                        |            |             | • The American Pizza Community Investigation  
| 8: Political Parties | 10/20/2019 | Chapter 9 | • Chapter 9 Get the Gist  
                        |            |             | • 2016 Party Platform Investigation  
| 9: Political Parties AND Exam 2 | 10/27/2019 | Chapter 10 | **Exam 2 THIS WEEK**  
                        |            |             | • Chapter 10 workbook  
                        |            |             | • EXAM 2 (Chapters 1-10)  

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapters</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Sections/Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10: Elections 1</td>
<td>11/03/2019</td>
<td>Chapter 11 • Chapter 11 Get the Gist • The of the Woman Investigation • Getting into the Electoral College Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11: Elections 2</td>
<td>11/10/2019</td>
<td>Chapter 12 • Chapter 12 Workbook • Discussion post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12: Public Policy</td>
<td>11/17/2019</td>
<td>Chapter 13 • Chapter 13 Get the Gist • Health Care Quality Investigation • Bombing for Peace Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13: Domestic Policy</td>
<td>11/24/2019</td>
<td>Chapter 14 • Chapter 14 Workbook • Discussion post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14: Foreign Policy</td>
<td>12/01/2019</td>
<td>Chapter 15 • Chapter 15 Workbook</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FINALS WEEK</td>
<td>Week of 12/09/2019</td>
<td>Chapters 7-15 • FINAL EXAM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*subject to change per instructor’s discretion*