Instructor information: Melissa McKay, Ph.D.
Office: Hall Park #125C
Virtual – Tuesday 6:00-7:00pm and by appointment
Email: melissa.mckay@unt.edu
(I will only email you on your university account)

Class Information:
Meeting times: Monday 9:30am -10:50am
Wednesday 9:30am -10:50am via Zoom (link in Canvas)
Meeting place: Hall Park A #112
Online classroom: https://unt.instructure.com

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.

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.

Course Objectives:
Students who complete this course will be able to:

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

Class Overview:
This class will be delivered in a blended format. Unless arrangements are made otherwise, Monday classes are held in-person and Wednesday classes will all be conducted online as collaborative Zoom meetings or group projects.

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. I have a handful of other classes, so my off-hours vary throughout the week. If you send a note on Friday-Sunday, please expect that I will not write you back until Monday.

**Required Materials:**
- Central Ideas in American Government 2305 Soomo Publishing.
  - This is an ONLINE book and workbook combination. You can purchase this directly through the link in our Canvas classroom –OR– purchase a code from the UNT bookstore.
- Access to a popular and reliable podcast app (Apple Podcasts, Spotify, Google Play, etc.)
- Consistent and reliable access to the internet
- A Packback student account ($15)
- A Google Drive account (Gmail) to access collaborative documents
- 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 Resources:**
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:** [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
For additional support, visit [Canvas Technical Help](#)

**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” 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.

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).

**Face Covering Requirement**
Face coverings are required in all UNT facilities. Students are expected to wear face coverings during this class. If you are unable to wear a face covering due to a disability, please contact the Office of Disability Access to request an accommodation. UNT face covering requirements are subject to change due to community health guidelines. Any changes will be communicated via the instructor.
Please do not let a lack of access to clean masks keep you from attending class. I will always have masks with me, and I will try to keep them at the back of the classroom for you to grab if you need one.

**COVID-19 & Attendance**

Attendance at every class is expected for this class. 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. It is important that you communicate with me prior to being absent so I may make a decision about accommodating your request to be excused from class.

If you know you are not going to be in class, please let me know via email. There is NO NEED for you to share details at all, but with our unique policies centered on COVID-19, *ALL* absences will be marked and reported every week. If you are absent and I do not know better, the University may assume that you’re quarantining or self-isolating. Please keep this in mind if you have to miss a 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.

**Class Instruction Policy:**

**Remote Instruction**

This class is a blended class format which means of the two class times we have per week, only one of those days is currently planned to be conducted in-person, or face-to-face. For the sake of consistency with other classes, the in-person weekly class will be held on Monday of each week. Thus, our Wednesday classes will all be held online via Zoom or other remote platform (the only reason that will change is if I ask you all to conduct individual work on your own during that class period, but we’d still most likely meet for a few minutes first, via Zoom).

Students will need access to a webcam and microphone to participate in fully remote portions of the class.

The UNT fall schedule requires this course to have fully remote instruction beginning November 28th. Additional remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine due
to COVID-19. Learn more about how to be successful in a remote learning environment.

Class Recordings
Synchronous (live) sessions in this course will be recorded for students enrolled in this class section to refer to throughout the semester. Class recordings 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.

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)
- Counseling and Testing Services (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/counseling-and-testing-services)
- UNT Care Team (https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/care)
- 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/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/)

Grading Policies: Final grades are numerically based on the number of points achieved on the following weighted assignment types:

Unit Quizzes: - 30% of total grade
Upon completion of a unit topic, there will be in-class quizzes throughout the semester. Each quiz will be taken by students in person and are to be completed and turned in within the time parameters provided by the instructor. Quizzes are closed book/closed resource. There will be no make up opportunities for missed quizzes unless arrangements have been made with the instructor PRIOR to quiz date. If you’re not in class that day, you will not be able to make up the missed quiz.

Get the Gist Assignments - 10% of total grade
Your online textbook has two types of chapters: (1) Central Ideas in American Government (CIAG) chapters and (2) 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. (Please note: If you attempt to game
the system and enter gibberish or one-word responses to these questions, I will change your grade for the entire chapter to 0).

Investigation Assignments – 15% of total grade
In the CIAG chapters, you will also find breakout assignments called “Investigations.” These assignments allow you to dig deep and apply what you know to different problems or issues. You only get one crack at investigation questions; you cannot repeat them to try to do better. The lowest three grades will be dropped, and the remaining will constitute 10% of your final grade.

Packback Questions – 15% of total grade
Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications. Your participation on Packback will count toward 15% of your overall course grade. In order to receive your points per week, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

• 1 response to the instructor’s posted question with a minimum Curiosity score of 60, worth 33.33% of each assignment grade
• 1 open-ended Question per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 60, each worth 33.33% of each assignment grade
• 1 responses per week to a classmate’s original question with a minimum Curiosity Score of 60, worth 33.33% of each assignment grade

Writing Assignments and other Uncategorized Homework – 10% of total grade
All students enrolled in PSCI 2305 are required to complete the signature assignment “Letter to the Editor” in addition to several short planned essays and other homework that may be assigned at the instructor’s discretion.

Campaign Project – 20% of total grade
Throughout the semester we will be learning about the elements of political behavior and students will have the opportunity to carry out the lifecycle of policy execution and campaign management. The class as a whole will vote on an issue to be the focus of the semester and students will be randomly assigned roles for which they will be responsible for submitting assignments and presentations based on that role. Full details are found on Canvas. These assignments will be both individual assignments and group work.

Letter grades are assigned based on standard grade scales:
A – 90-100%
B – 80-89%
C – 70-79%
D – 60-69%
F – 59 - under
Grading 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.

**Attendance Requirements:** We’re all adults, and I can’t make you come to class, nor can I force you to pay attention while you’re here. Your reasons for attending or not attending are your own, and the consequences of missing a class, if any, lie with you.

Because I will be recording attendance for COVID-tracing purposes, I will turn attendance into an extra credit opportunity for those who would like to utilize it. At the end of the semester, any student with more than 90% attendance will have the option to drop their lowest Unit Quiz grade and Packback discussion grade.
### Course Schedule Spring 2021
#### PSCI 2305

**All assignments are due Sunday by 11:59am unless otherwise indicated***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week #</th>
<th>Canvas Module</th>
<th>Readings</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Jan 11-17</td>
<td>Introduction and catch-up on current events</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Make sure you have purchased the textbook and Packback license</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| 2 Jan 18-24 | Public Policies | Chapter 1 & Canvas resources | • Chapter 1 Get the Gist  
• Bombing for Peace Investigation  
• Health Care Quality Investigation |
| 3 Jan 25-31 | Public Policies, pt. 2 | Chapter 1 & Canvas resources | • Packback Question #1 |
| 4 Feb 1-7 | The Media | Chapter 2 & Canvas resources | • Public Policies Unit Quiz – in class 2/1  
• Chapter 2 Get the Gist  
• Making the News Investigation  
• #Divide Investigation  
• Packback Question #2 |
| 5 Feb 8-14 | The Media pt.2 | Chapter 2 & Canvas resources | • Short Essay #1  
• Packback Question #3 |
| 6 Feb 15-21 | Interest Groups | Chapter 3 & Canvas resources | • Media Unit Quiz – in class 2/15  
• Chapter 3 Get the Gist  
• Evil Lobbyists Investigation  
• The American Pizza Community Investigation |
| 7 Feb 22-28 | Interest Groups pt. 2 | Chapter 3 & Canvas resources | • Short Essay #2  
• Packback Question #4 |
| 8 Mar 1-7 | Political Parties | Chapter 4 & Canvas resources | • Interest Groups Unit Quiz - in class 3/1  
• Chapter 4 Get the Gist  
• Third Wheels Investigation |

*Dr. McKay reserves the right to change the terms and materials contained in this document at her discretion*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Resources</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
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</table>
| Mar 8-14  | Political Parties pt .2       | Chapter 4 & Canvas resources| • Packback Question #5  
• Short Essay #3                                                                 |
| Mar 15-21 | Public Opinion                | Chapter 5 & Canvas resources| • Political Parties Unit Quiz – in class 3/8  
• Chapter 5 Get the Gist  
• Am I Blue.. Investigation  
• Exit Poll Controversies Investigation  
• Packback Question #6                                                  |
| Mar 22-28 | Campaigns and Election        | Chapter 6 & Canvas resources| • Public Opinion Unit Quiz – in class 3/15  
• Chapter 6 Get the Gist  
• The Year of the Woman Investigation  
• Getting into the Electoral College Investigation                      |
| Mar 29 - Apr 4 | Campaigns and Election pt. 2 | Chapter 6 & Canvas resources| • Short Essay #4  
• Packback Question #7                                                  |
| Apr 5-11  | Voting and Political Participation | Chapter 7 & Canvas resources| • Campaigns and Elections Unit Quiz – in class – 3/29  
• Chapter 7 Get the Gist  
• We the Protesters Investigation  
• License to Vote Investigation  
• Packback Question #8                                                  |
| Apr 12-18 | Presentations                 | Interest Groups Media      | • Voting and Participation Quiz – in class 4/12  
• In-class presentation – be prepared to present  
• Packback Question #9                                                  |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15 April 19-25</th>
<th>Presentations</th>
<th>Political Parties Campaigns</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>• In-class presentation – be prepared to present</td>
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<td>• Writing Assignment Due April 23</td>
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<td>• Packback Question #10</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

ALL GET THE GIST, WORKBOOK, AND INVESTIGATION ASSIGNMENTS FOR WEEKS 8–15 DUE BY 11:59PM ON APRIL 24

*All assignments, due dates, and resources are subject to change at Dr. McKay’s discretion.*