

PSCI 2305-404: U.S. Political Behavior and Policy

SYLLABUS
5W1 Summer 2026
(May 18 – June 19, 2026)

Course Modality: 100% Online

Instructor and Teaching Assistant Contact Information

Instructor Name: Dr. Natasha Altema McNeely (she/her/hers)

UNT E-mail: natasha.altema@unt.edu

Office Location: WH 144

Office Hours: Tuesday, 11-1pm via zoom. Office hours will provide an opportunity for students to ask questions related to the course, topics discussed and any concerns. The discussions are confidential. Email me before you come to my office hours. If you are not able to meet with me during office hours, then request an appointment.

Zoom link for office hours: <https://unt.zoom.us/j/84692775392>

Teaching Assistants Contact Information

Diana Amaro

Email: DianaAmaro@my.unt.edu

Office hours: Mondays from 1 – 3

Zoom link: <https://unt.zoom.us/j/7229338762>

Catherine Chinchilla

Email: CatherineChinchilla@my.unt.edu

Office Hours: 10:00AM-12:00PM on Wednesdays.

Zoom link is: <https://unt.zoom.us/j/7968193439>.

Response Time:

Generally I will respond to emails sent through my university email address within **24 hours** of receiving them during weekdays. However, it may take me up to 48 hours during weekends. Any technical questions can be referred to Canvas Support. Please contact Meilin and Sezen using their university email addresses; they will respond without 24 hours during the week and 48 hours during the weekends.

I will update the online grades each time a grading session has been completed. You will see a visual indication of new grades posted on your Canvas page under the link to this course.

Welcome and Teaching Philosophy

Welcome to PSCI 2305-404: U.S. Political Behavior and Policy. My name is Dr. Natasha Altama McNeely. I am an Associate Professor in the department of Political Science. I started my career at UT-Pan American in 2013 and transitioned over to UTRGV in 2015. I am excited to be here. My teaching philosophy consists of three goals: first, I strive to present concepts in a manner that students understand. In all my courses I use strategies such as class discussions and reading assignments. I also engage students in discussions of current events in all my courses. My second goal has been to create an environment (both in person and online that inspired respect among the students. I encouraged the students to respect their peers' opinions, especially when they differed from their own. The third goal has been to push my students to move beyond their own expectations for the courses. Specifically, I encourage them to aspire for more than just "passing the class," to apply themselves to see how well they could do.

Course description

PSCI 2305 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. Satisfies one of the political science requirements of the University Core curriculum.

A note about the 5 week summer 1 course

This course is an accelerated course. In essence, 16 weeks of coursework are condensed into just 5 weeks of instruction. As such, please expect to have 3-hour lectures, readings, workbook assignments due on the same day, and tests posted and due within 24 hours. This class will require much of your attention throughout the day/week. Please make the necessary accommodations to your schedule for the next five weeks to give your full attention to this course.

Required Readings, Technology Needs, and Resource Materials

UNT 2305 Basic Bundle

By **Jocelyn Evans, Kristy Michaud**

Edition : 15TH, Publisher : **SOOMO CC**, ISBN 13 : **8220144129944**

Available through Soomo Publishing or the UNT bookstore:

[https://unt.bncollege.com/course-material-listing-page?utm_campaign=storeId=71237_langId=-1_courseData=PSCI_2305_404\(5122\)_A26&utm_source=wcs&utm_medium=registration_integration](https://unt.bncollege.com/course-material-listing-page?utm_campaign=storeId=71237_langId=-1_courseData=PSCI_2305_404(5122)_A26&utm_source=wcs&utm_medium=registration_integration)

Course Policies

Requirements

- Lectures should be viewed on or before the date assigned in the syllabus.
- Readings should be done before or on the date assigned in the syllabus.
- Students are required to submit ALL assignments to receive a passing grade, even if they are worth no points towards the final grade.
- All assignments and Extra Credit will be due at 11:59pm on the due date
- Exams will open Thursday at 12pm (NOON) until Friday 12pm (NOON)

Assessment of Grade

Component	Weight
Completion of Soomo workbook assignments (including the investigations)	40%
Exam 1	20%
Exam 2	20%
Final exam	20%
Total	100%

Exams aka “Quizzes” (60% of final course grade)

There are two exams and one final exam, each are worth 20% of your final course grade. All the exams will be taken online via Canvas. The format of each exam is 50 multiple choice questions. You will submit each exam at the end of the exam period. *Students will have a 24-hour window to take the exam. Exams will open online at 12pm (Noon) on Thursday and close at 12pm (Noon) on Friday.*

The use of any electronics (i.e., tablets, phones, or computers other than the one used to the exam) is prohibited. Please ensure other electronics are out of reach during the exam.

<i>Exam dates:</i>
Thursday, May 28
Thursday, June 11
Thursday, June 18 (final exam)

Reading Assignments

ALTHOUGH THEY ARE NOT GRADED, THE READING ASSIGNMENTS ARE VERY IMPORTANT. THE READING ASSIGNMENTS ARE FIXED AS PER THE SYLLABUS, UNLESS I ANNOUNCE OTHERWISE. I WILL MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO ANNOUNCE CHANGES AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BUT ULTIMATELY, STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR KEEPING IN TOUCH WITH ME REGARDING CHANGES. COMPLETE EACH READING ASSIGNMENT BY THE DUE DATE SHOWN ON THE COURSE SYLLABUS.

Canvas

Check the course page on Canvas frequently (at least once a day). Announcements and changes are communicated via Canvas. Written assignments and Extra Credit should be uploaded to Canvas. Students are responsible for checking UNT email/ Canvas for announcements, assignments, due dates, and changes.

Formatting and Submitting Assignments

Written assignments should be submitted in Times New Roman 12-point font, with 1-inch margins, be double-spaced, and paginated. Written assignments should be uploaded as a txt, rtf, doc or docx file to Canvas, unless otherwise noted. Do not include a cover page.

The upper right-hand corner of the first page in single space should include:

- Your full name
- Title of the assignment (i.e., Discussion EC)
- Course number (PSCI 2305) and section number (901)

Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities are made available to the entire class at the discretion of the Professor. They are offered for completing extra writing assignments by the deadline.

Extra Credit will not be accepted after the due date or offered to individuals/groups of students under any circumstances.

Extensions and Make-ups:

In general I do not allow extensions on assignments, alternate exam dates, or make-

up exams. However, should you find yourself in an unavoidable situation where you will not be able to turn an assignment in on time or complete an exam by the due date, please inform me of this as soon as you can, and not the day the exam is due or afterwards. In valid cases (such as events that count as university approved exceptions or where accommodations are requested) I will be happy to consider alternate arrangements.

IT Assistance

As this is an online course, students are expected to trouble shoot their own IT problems. The professor and the TA are not an IT resource, we defer to the school experts at the UNT Student Helpdesk.

If you experience any kind of technical problem with UNT resources (e.g., Canvas), please contact the UNT Student Helpdesk at 940-565-2324 or helpdesk@unt.edu

Please note UIT Helpdesk availability here: <https://it.unt.edu/helpdesk>

If you are having difficulty with the Soomo product, please contact the publisher directly at:

<http://soomolearning.com/support>

Special Accommodations

Students requiring special accommodations should contact the instructor for a confidential discussion of their academic accommodations. To receive accommodation services, contact the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA): 167 Sage Hall (940) 565-4323

Any student who has difficulty affording groceries or accessing sufficient food to eat every day, or who lacks a safe and stable place to live and believes this may affect their performance in the course, is urged to contact the Dean of Students for support. Furthermore, please notify the professor if you are comfortable in doing so. This will enable her to provide any resources that she may possess.

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.

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 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. [Insert specific sanction or academic penalty for specific academic integrity violation].
- 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.
- Course Safety Procedures (for Laboratory Courses)
 - While working in laboratory sessions, students enrolled in **[insert class name]** are required to follow proper safety procedures and guidelines in all activities requiring lifting, climbing, walking on slippery surfaces, using equipment and tools, handling chemical solutions and hot and cold products. Students should be aware that UNT is not liable for injuries incurred while students are participating in class activities. All

students are encouraged to secure adequate insurance coverage in the event of accidental injury. Students who do not have insurance coverage should consider obtaining Student Health Insurance. Brochures for student insurance are available in the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center. Students who are injured during class activities may seek medical attention at the Student Health and Wellness Center at rates that are reduced compared to other medical facilities. If students have an insurance plan other than Student Health Insurance at UNT, they should be sure that the plan covers treatment at this facility. If students choose not to go to the UNT Student Health and Wellness Center, they may be transported to an emergency room at a local hospital. Students are responsible for expenses incurred there.

- 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 the UNT Learning Management System (LMS) for contingency plans for covering course materials.
- Student records pertaining to this course are maintained in a secure location by the instructor of record. All records such as exams, answer sheets (with keys), and written papers submitted during the duration of the course are kept for at least one calendar year after course completion. Course work completed via the Blackboard online system, including grading information and comments, is also stored in a safe electronic environment for one year. Students have the right to view their individual record; however, information about student's records will not be divulged to other individuals without proper written consent. Students are encouraged to review the Public Information Policy and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) laws and the University's policy. See UNT Policy 10.10, Records Management and Retention for additional information.
- 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.
- Access to Information – Eagle Connect
 - Students' access point for business and academic services at UNT is located at: 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: eagleconnect.unt.edu/
- 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 [insert administration dates] 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) 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 spot.unt.edu or email 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 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.

Tentative Calendar of Activities

Important Note: Activity and assignment details will be explained in detail within each week’s corresponding content area. If you have any questions, please email me directly.

<i>Module 1</i>			
<i>Topic</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Written Assignments and Due dates</i>	<i>Reading assignments</i>
Public Opinion	May 18	<p>Public opinion investigations and workbook chapter (due May 20, 11:59PM)</p> <p>Public opinion written assignment (due May 20, 11:59PM)</p>	<p>Public opinion webtext chapter</p> <p>Lecture notes and power powerpoint slides</p>

Voting and Political Participation	May 21	Voting and Political participation workbook chapter (due May 23, 11:59PM)	Voting and Political Participation webtext chapter Lecture notes and powerpoint slides
MAY 25: MEMORIAL DAY; NO CLASSES			
The Media	May 26 (Tuesday)	The mass media workbook chapter (due May 27, 11:59PM)	The Media webtext chapter Lecture notes and power point slides
Exam #1: Online, Thursday, May 28 (12:00pm) until Friday, May 29 (12:00PM). It will include the public opinion, voting and political participation and the media chapters.			
<i>Module 2</i>			
Interest Groups	June 1	Interest groups workbook chapter (due June 3, 11:59PM)	Interest Groups webtext chapter Lecture notes and powerpoint slides
Political Parties	June 4	Political Parties workbook chapter (due June 6, 11:59PM)	Political Parties webtext chapter Lecture notes and powerpoint slides
Elections and Campaigns	June 8	Elections and Campaigns workbook chapter (June 10, 11:59PM)	Elections and Campaigns webtext chapter Lecture notes and powerpoint slides

Exam #2: Online, Thursday, June 11 (12:00pm) until Friday, June 12 (12:00PM). It will include the interest groups, political parties and elections and campaigns chapters.

Module 3

Public Policy	June 14	Domestic Policy workbook chapter (Due June 15, 11:59PM)	Public policy webtext chapter Lecture notes and powerpoint slides
	June 16	Foreign Policy workbook chapter (Due June 17, 11:59PM)	

Final exam: Online, Thursday, June 18 (12:00PM) until Friday, June 19 (12:00PM). It will include the public policy webtext chapter, foreign and domestic policy workbook chapters.

