

PSCI 2306: US and Texas Constitutions and Institutions

Fall, 2026

Online - Asynchronous

Instructor: Dr. Yu-hsien Sung (she) Yu-hsien.Sung@unt.edu

Virtual Office Hours: by appointment only

Teaching Assistants:

Catherine (catherinechinchilla@my.unt.edu): students with last names A to J

María (marialara3@my.unt.edu): students with last names K to Z

Course Description and Objectives

This course introduces students to the political institutions, structures, and processes of American government, with particular emphasis on the Texas government. Course materials cover the U.S. and Texas Constitutions, the three branches of government, the separation of powers, federalism, and the protection of civil rights and civil liberties. In addition to learning how government functions, students will explore the importance of institutional rules and how public policy influences the issues and values they care about. By the end of the course, students will be equipped with analytical tools to understand better and actively engage with the political systems that shape their daily lives. This course fulfills the state's legislative requirement for instruction on the Texas Constitution.

Course Delivery: Online through Canvas, **no** in-person meetings and **no** Zoom lectures. The course is asynchronous, meaning there are no scheduled class meeting times.

Required Materials

There is one required text (webtext) for this course:

*U.S. and Texas Politics with 2306 Workbook(UNT 2306 Department Bundle),
Soomo Publishing.*

You must obtain this textbook before the class sessions begin. If you have trouble accessing the material, please contact your TA. There are two ways to purchase this textbook:

1. You can purchase the textbook directly from the publisher via a link in our Canvas shell (more affordable).
2. You can purchase an access code from the UNT Bookstore (either in person or online).

Course Format

This is an **online, asynchronous** class—that means there are **no** regularly scheduled classes or lectures. All of the required class material—readings and assignments—are accessible through the

class Canvas page. To access the class materials, you can click on either the "Home" or "Modules" links on the left-hand side of the Canvas page. Besides exams, all necessary class materials take the form of the above-mentioned webtext.

For each module, you will complete the following tasks:

1. Read the assigned chapter from the webtext and answer the questions embedded within the chapter.
2. Consolidate, synthesize, and rewrite your notes on the material.
3. Review your notes and complete the **Investigation** and **Workbook** assignments.

Canvas

This course has a Canvas site accessible at <https://canvas.unt.edu>. The site includes administrative details, assignments, and student grades. I encourage you to check it regularly.

Course Expectation

This course is an intensive, online asynchronous course. To be successful in this class, you must complete the assigned readings and coursework on time. As the instructor, I am responsible for providing clear, well-structured course materials to help you meet the learning objectives. As a student, you are responsible for completing the assigned readings and assignments. Please keep in mind that the pace of a summer course is very fast; missing even one or two days can result in late work, and I do not accept late work.

Deadlines in this course:

1. Module 1 is due on August 28th, by 11:59PM.
2. Module 2 is due on September 11th , by 11:59PM.
3. Module 3 & 4 are due on Oct 2nd, by 11:59PM.
4. Exam 1 is due on Oct 7th, by 11:59PM.
5. Module 6 & 7 are due on Oct 30, by 11:59PM.
6. Module 8 is due on Nov 30, by 11:59PM.
7. Module 9 is due on Dec 3rd, by 11:59PM.
8. Exam 2 is due on December 7th 2026, by 11:59PM

Office Hours

I will hold office hours on Monday and Wednesday from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm. Since this is an internet-delivered course, please sign up for office hours in advance using the Calendly link below.

Your TA is your first point of contact; their office hours are listed below. If you have questions about the class, please schedule an appointment with one of us during these times. Given the large number of students enrolled in this class, each meeting is limited to 20 minutes to help us maximize our availability.

- Dr. Yu-hsien Sung
 - Monday & Wednesday, 11:30 am - 1:00 pm
 - Link: <https://calendly.com/yhsien-sung/20min>
- Catherine Chinchilla: for students with last names A to J
 - Monday 3:30 - 5:30PM & Wednesday, 9:00 - 11:00AM
 - Link: <https://calendly.com/catherine-chinchilla-unt/new-meeting>
- María Alejandra Lara: for students with last names K to Z
 - Tuesday & Thursday, 2 - 4pm
 - Link: <https://calendly.com/marialara3-my/psci-2306-405-13672>

If you are unable to attend office hours or need additional time to talk, please email us, and we can arrange an alternate time. We are also available by email and am happy to answer any questions electronically, but remember your TA is your first point of contact. I will make every effort to respond to emails during weekdays.

Please note that we will **NOT** discuss grades over email. This policy is in accordance with federal laws protecting student information. You should regularly check your grades on the Canvas course site. If you need to discuss your grade, schedule a Zoom meeting with your TA or me.

Changes to the Syllabus

I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus as needed throughout the semester. Any adjustments to course requirements will be announced in class and on Canvas with at least 48 hours' notice. It is your responsibility to stay informed of any updates during the semester.

Assignments & Grading Policy

Grades will be weighted in the following way: Each of the webtext assignments —readings, investigations, and workbooks —is worth 100 points. Each exam is worth 400 points. In total there are 2600 points you can earn in this course. Your final grade will be calculated by dividing the number of points you have earned by 2700, and translating that percentage to a letter grade following the scale below.

Exams consist of 60 multiple-choice questions. You will have 60 minutes to complete the exam. All exams must be taken using **LockDown Browser**. If you have accommodations for extra time, this will automatically be reflected in the time you have to complete the exam. If this is not the

case, please contact me immediately. Once you open the exam, you cannot return to it at a later time. You can only attempt each exam once. The use of any electronics (i.e., tablets, phones, or computers other than the one used to the exam) is prohibited. Violating this rule will result in a grade of "F" for the course.

Grading Scale

The grading scale is as follows:

- A = 90 - 100
- B = 80 - 89.99
- C = 70 - 79.99
- D = 60 - 69.99
- F = 59 and below

Late Assignments

Assignments submitted after the posted due date and time will receive a late penalty of **5 points** per calendar day, or any portion thereof.

Please note that Soomo Webtext may continue to accept chapter submissions for a seven-day grace period after the due date. This grace period allows students to submit late work; it does *not* exempt those submissions from the late penalty. Late deductions will be calculated and applied in Canvas.

A new late day begins immediately after the deadline. For example, an assignment submitted five minutes after midnight will be considered one day late and will receive a five-point deduction. Students are responsible for submitting their work before the posted deadline to avoid late penalties.

Important: The late policy and seven-day submission grace period described above apply only to textbook chapter assignments and **do not apply to exams**. All exams must be taken on the scheduled date. No grace period or late submissions will be permitted for exams unless prior arrangements have been approved by the instructor.

In the event of extenuating circumstances (e.g., a family emergency, hospitalization), students may be eligible for a short extension for exams. All such requests must be processed through the Dean of Students' Office (<https://studentaffairs.unt.edu/dean-of-students/contact.html>). That office is responsible for verifying the nature of the circumstances and will communicate directly with me if accommodations are warranted. I do not grant make-up exam opportunities unless I receive official notification from the Dean of Students.

Please follow the module structure in Canvas or refer to the assignment list in the syllabus to stay on track. You are expected to complete all assignments by their posted deadlines. Since this is an online, asynchronous course without lectures, the assignments are the core of the learning experience and cannot be submitted late. For this reason, it is essential that you purchase the required course materials on **day 1** of the semester.

UNT Policies

Academic Integrity and Honesty

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.

<https://vpaa.unt.edu/ss/integrity>

Americans with Disabilities Act 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 <http://disability.unt.edu/>.

Emergency Notification and 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.

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>.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault

The University has procedures in place that aim to be aware of the needs of those who make an institutional report of sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. Procedures include informing individuals about their right to file criminal charges as well as the availability of counseling, health, mental health, victim advocacy, legal assistance, visa and immigration assistance and other services on and/or off campus, as well as additional remedies to prevent contact between a complainant and a respondent, such as housing, academic, transportation and working accommodations, if reasonably available. The University will make such accommodations, if the victim requests them and if they are reasonably available, regardless of whether the complainant chooses to report the crime to the UNTPD or local law enforcement.

Anyone can report prohibited conduct by notifying the Dean of Students Office (940.565.2648), the Title IX Coordinator (940.565.2759) or the UNT Police Department (940.565.3000). The online reporting form is found at <http://report.unt.edu>.

Course Reading and Assignment Schedule:

Module 1: Constitution

- Chapter 1: The Founding and the Constitution
- Chapter 2: Texas: The Constitution
- Chapter 3: The U.S. Constitution

Module 1 is due August 28 by 11:59 p.m. CST.

Module 2: Federalism

- Chapter 4: Federalism
- Chapter 5: Workbook Federalism

Module 2 is due September 11th by 11:59 p.m. CST.

Module 3: Congress

- Chapter 6: Congress
- Chapter 7: Workbook Legislatures

Module 4: The Presidency

- Chapter 8: The Presidency
- Chapter 9 Workbook: The Presidency

Modules 3–4 are due Oct 2nd by 11:59 p.m. CST.

Module 5: Exam 1 on Oct 7th

- Exam 1 includes topics from Modules 1–4.
- Exam 1 will take place on **Oct 7th**.
- The online exam will be available from 7:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. CST.

Module 6: Texas Government

- Chapter 10 Texas: The Legislature
- Chapter 11 Texas: The Executive Branch

Module 7: Bureaucracy

- Chapter 12 Bureaucracy
- Chapter 13 Workbook The Bureaucracy

Modules 6–7 are due Oct 30 by 11:59 p.m. CST.

Module 8: Judiciary

- Chapter 14 The Judiciary
- Chapter 15 Workbook The Courts

Module 8 is due Nov 13 by 11:59 p.m. CST.

Module 9: Civil Liberties & Rights

- Chapter 16 Civil Liberties
- Chapter 17 Workbook: Civil Liberties
- Chapter 18 Civil Rights
- Chapter 19 Workbook: Civil Rights

Module 9 is due Dec 3rd by 11:59 p.m. CST.

Module 10: Exam 2 on December 7th

- Exam 2 includes topics from Modules 6–9.
- Exam 2 will take place on **December 7th**.
- The Online Exam 2 will be available from 7:00 AM to 11:59 PM CST.