

PSCI 2306 Section 007 American Government: Laws and Institutions

Dr. Ashley English

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In-Person Office Hours: M 3:30-5:00 (WH 125)

Zoom Office Hours: W 3:30-5:00 PM

Spring 2022

MWF

ENV 110

12:00-12:50 PM

TEACHING ASSISTANT

Mr. Shelby Jackson

ShelbyJackson2@my.unt.edu

In-Person Office Hours: T 10:30 AM-12:30 PM (WH 131)

Zoom Office Hours: R 10:30 AM-12:30 PM

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Whose voices do American politicians and policymakers listen to and consider when they design policies? How do our rules and laws have an impact on whose interests are represented and how public policies are designed at the federal and state levels? This course will answer these questions by introducing you to the United States and Texas governments and institutions. We will explore topics including the nation's founding and constitutional framework, Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, the courts, civil liberties, and civil rights.

As with any political science course, this course is designed to encourage you to become a critical and active participant in American politics and your community. Specifically, by the end of this course, you will:

- Develop an in-depth understanding of the structure and function of American and Texan political institutions, including Congress, the presidency, the bureaucracy, and the courts;
- Develop an understanding of how the 3 branches of government and federal and state governments have separate and shared powers;
- Develop the ability to critically reflect on the degree to which the American political system lives up to its democratic ideals;
- Produce coherent, convincing written and oral arguments about important issues in American politics; and
- Develop the ability to discuss controversial issues and share your thoughts with others, including those you disagree with, in a thoughtful, respectful manner.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Critical Thinking – students will demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
- Communication – students will effectively develop, interpret, and express ideas through written, oral, and visual communication

- Personal Responsibility – students will be able to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
- Social Responsibility – students will demonstrate increased intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

IMPORTANT DUE DATES AND EXAM DATES

| Due Date | Assignment |
|-----------------------------|--|
| January 24, 11:59 PM | Syllabus Quiz |
| January 31, 11:59 PM | Constitution (Ch. 1) Workbook Assignment |
| February 9, 11:59 PM | Federalism (Ch. 2) Workbook Assignment |
| February 14, 12:00-12:50 PM | Exam #1 |
| February 25, 11:59 PM | The Legislative Branch (Ch. 3) Workbook Assignment |
| March 4, 11:59 PM | The Presidency (Ch. 4) Workbook Assignment |
| March 11, 11:59 PM | Policymaker Letter |
| March 25, 11:59 PM | The Bureaucracy (Ch. 5) Workbook Assignment |
| April 1, 12:00-12:50 PM | Exam #2 |
| April 8, 11:59 PM | The Courts (Ch. 6) Workbook Assignment |
| April 15, 11:59 PM | Civil Liberties (Ch. 7) Workbook Assignment |
| April 22, 11:59 PM | Civil Rights (Ch. 8) Workbook Assignment |
| April 29, 12:00-12:50 PM | Exam #3 |
| May 11, 10:30-11:20 AM | Final Exam |

COURSE FORMAT, ATTENDANCE, AND RECORDED LECTURES

This class is primarily designed as an in-person lecture. Unless noted on the syllabus or public health conditions change, we will meet at our regularly scheduled time in our regularly scheduled classroom.

Because I expect that some students will encounter covid-related disruptions and/or need to quarantine or isolate, I will also record each lecture and post it on Canvas after class. Lecture slides will also be posted on Canvas after class.

Participating in lectures in some format is important for success in this class. However, attendance at in-person lectures will not factor into your grades, so I strongly encourage you to watch the recordings or livestreams if you are sick. Please participate in class in ways that will keep you and your classmates safe.

To account for any potential covid-related attendance issues, ALL EXAMS WILL OCCUR REMOTELY ON CANVAS. THE EXAMS WILL BE DURING OUR REGULAR CLASS MEETING TIMES. PLEASE MAKE NOTE OF THOSE EXAM DATES NOW!

COVID PROTOCOLS

With cases of the omicron variant of COVID continuing to rise in Denton County, it is important that we establish some norms to keep one another safe:

1. If you are exposed to COVID or test positive for COVID, you should start watch the class recordings or livestreams. Please do not come to class if you are symptomatic or believe you may be infected. Prioritize your health and the health of all of your classmates.
2. UNT encourages everyone to wear a face covering 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.
3. While vaccination is not mandatory, I strongly encourage you to protect yourself and others by taking the vaccine. The vaccine is offered for free through UNT Student Health and Wellness. Call 940-565-2333 to schedule an appointment. In addition, Denton County Public Health has pop-up vaccine clinics; for more information, call 940-349-2585.
4. COVID Testing
 1. If you are symptomatic or have been in close contact with someone with COVID, you should obtain a test from Student Health and Wellness Center by registering through their portal or by calling 940-565-2333. More information is available at: <https://healthalerts.unt.edu/covid-19-testing>.
 2. If you are asymptomatic but want to verify your COVID status, UNT is offering testing in 120 Chestnut Hall from 9:00 - 11:30 and 1:30 - 3:00, Tuesdays through Fridays. You will need to set up the blue NAVICA app in advance of testing.
5. While UNT is starting the semester fully in-person, remote instruction may be necessary if community health conditions change or you need to self-isolate or quarantine due to COVID-19. Students will need access to a webcam, microphone, and reliable internet service to participate fully in remote portions of the class. Information on how to be successful in a remote learning environment can be found on [the online learning page for UNT](#).

A personal note from Dr. English: I am fully vaccinated and boosted, but I also have health and personal concerns that require extra caution. Therefore, I will be wearing a mask for our in-person meetings. I will also have a microphone to make it easier to hear me. If it is difficult to hear (even with the microphone), please let me know so I can address the issue.

I also think it is important to recognize that this is an extremely challenging time for many people, as the omicron variant is reigniting fears of infection and/or frustrations and stress about when the pandemic will end and we can go back to normal. I will do my best to try to help us all learn productively despite those challenges. I ask that you also extend patience and understanding to your classmates, TAs, and professors as we all try to get through the pandemic together. Please remember it is important to take time to take care of yourself and others.

Because of my concern about possible infection, I ask that all students remain at least six feet away from me (whether masked or not). If you have a sensitive question that you do not want other students to overhear, please contact me via email or set up a Zoom appointment. Please do not take it personally if I step away from you or refuse to take something you offer me. I am simply trying to be safe.

CLASS RECORDINGS AND LIVE STREAMS

Lectures for this course will be livestreamed and 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.

COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Required Workbook (Online)

Eshbaugh-Soha, Matthew, ed. 2021. *PSCI 2306 Workbook*. Asheville, NC: Soomo Learning. ISBN # 9781949164978 (This is an online textbook that you access through Canvas).

Recommended Book (Available in electronic and print versions)

Abernathy, Scott. 2022. *American Government: Stories of Nation. Essentials Second Edition*. Brief Edition. Washington, DC: Sage. ISBN# 9781071816899.

- If it is cheaper, you may use previous editions of the textbook, but the page numbers for the readings will not line up exactly with the assignments listed in the syllabus; info on the most recent elections will also be out-of-date.
- This book provides background information to supplement the lectures.

Class Materials for Remote Instruction

Since our class may need to shift to a remote delivery if public health conditions change and all the exams and assignments will be submitted using Canvas, students will need a computer with reliable internet access for Zoom meetings. Your computer should also meet [Canvas's technical requirements](#). **All exams will occur on Canvas during our regularly scheduled class periods. To that end, please make note of those dates and make sure you will have access to a computer that meets Canvas's requirements and has reliable internet access on exam days.**

Though it is not required, if we do need to shift to remote/Zoom lectures, I also encourage students to participate in class using a webcam and microphone if they have access to one.

Communications and Email

Throughout the semester, I will primarily communicate with the class using our Canvas site and email. I will keep the class updated on upcoming activities and provide other timely notifications using the “Announcements” feature on Canvas. If you have substantive questions about the course or the material, American politics more broadly, or any concerns about the class or other situations that are bothering you, I strongly encourage you to come see me during my “virtual” office hours (listed above) or make an appointment if you have a conflict with my office hours. I am happy to help!

Email is also an excellent way to reach me, but please note that it is often more effective to discuss substantive questions and concerns in-person during office hours. **If you contact me by**

email between Monday and Friday, I will do my best to respond within 24 hours. When you send emails, please include the course number (PSCI 2306-007) in the subject line of your email along with a brief description of the class-related subject you would like to discuss. **As covid continues to cause disruptions, I expect I will receive a large number of emails from students, so including this information will help me respond to you!** CLEAR has also developed a website (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) with online communication tips that you may find helpful.

If you need to get in touch with me about a grade, please be aware that **I will not discuss grades over email, so you will need to meet with me to discuss any issues with your grade.** If you wish to dispute a grade, please be aware that a significant amount of time and effort are dedicated to grading student assignments. That being said, if you would like to dispute a grade, you must set up a meeting with me and provide, in writing, a clear explanation as to why a different grade is in order and what grade you believe is appropriate prior to our meeting. All grade dispute requests **must be submitted within one week** of the date that grades are made available to the class and grade disputes will not be considered past the one-week dispute period. Please be advised that I will not change grades simply because students believe they “want” or “need” a higher grade. Also, when I review work for grade disputes, I reserve the right to leave the grade unchanged, raise the grade, or lower the grade.

Canvas, Computer Skills, and Digital Literacy

This course has a Canvas site, which is available at <https://canvas.unt.edu>. The Canvas site contains administrative information about the course, lecture recordings, course assignments, student grades, and lecture slides (posted after class). I encourage you to check the it regularly.

To succeed in this course, you should be familiar with:

- Using Canvas to access course materials and submit assignments
- Using email with attachments
- Using the UNT library website to access research databases

Technical Assistance

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) (<http://www.unt.edu/helpdesk/index.htm>)

Email: helpdesk@unt.edu

Phone: 940-565-2324

In Person: Sage Hall, Room 130

Walk-In Availability: 8am-9pm

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](#)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Final course grades will be based on **4 exams, 8 workbook assignments, 1 syllabus quiz, and 1 policymaker letter.**

| | |
|---|--|
| Exams Exam 1 Exam 2 Exam 3 Exam 4 | 50% of final grade Your lowest score from all 4 exams (including the final) will be dropped. |
| Workbook Assignments Workbook Assignment 1 Workbook Assignment 2 Workbook Assignment 3 Workbook Assignment 4 Workbook Assignment 5 Workbook Assignment 6 Workbook Assignment 7 Workbook Assignment 8 | 35% of final grade |
| Policymaker Letter | 10% of final grade |
| Syllabus Quiz | 5% of final grade |

Canvas Exams (4)

The first three exams will be non-cumulative exams that are given in class and each one will cover roughly one-third of the course material. The fourth exam will be given during finals and it will be cumulative, covering material from the entire semester. Each exam will consist of 50 multiple choice and true/false questions. The exams will test your comprehension of the course materials and your understanding of the underlying concepts. You are expected to be familiar with the major themes and ideas that have been covered in *all* required class readings, lectures, activities, and discussions. The best way to prepare for the exams is to attend class, take good notes, and complete all of the readings and workbook assignments. Exams will be open notes.

Make up exams will not be given unless you have a **documented** university-excused absence. If you will miss an exam for a university-excused absence, you should arrange for a make-up exam **BEFORE** your excused absence. In other words, if you will miss an exam due to participation in UNT activities, religious holidays, or any of the other reasons that are considered excused absences, you should arrange to take the exam prior to your excused absence. If you do not have written documentation of your excused absence, you must take the exam as scheduled. **If you do have an excused absence and you need to take a make-up exam, you must do within one week of the original test date.** If you miss an exam for a non-documented, non-excused absence (e.g., you skipped class, overslept, got stuck in traffic, had car trouble, had the exam time wrong, etc.), you will not be able to make up the test.

Online Workbook Assignments (8)

Students are required to complete the **multiple choice questions** associated with each of the eight assigned chapters in the PSCI 2306 Workbook. There are eight workbook chapters and

each one is organized around the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board's 4 learning objectives: (1) critical thinking skills, (2) social responsibility, (3) communication skills, and (4) personal responsibility.

Workbook assignments provide an opportunity to apply the material covered in the textbook and lecture. The multiple choice questions will be graded based on whether or not they are correct. Students should note that the workbook will provide you with multiple opportunities to get the "right" answer for each multiple choice question, so students have a number of opportunities to receive full credit on these assignments.

Each workbook assignment will be **due at 11:59 PM on the day** we finish each topic. For example, if we complete a topic on a Tuesday, the associated workbook assignment will be due at 11:59 PM on Tuesday night. If you do not complete the workbook assignment by the deadline, you will have an additional 48 hours to complete the assignment for half credit. After 48 hours, no late assignments will be accepted (no exceptions).

If financial issues are preventing you from purchasing the workbook, you should come see me BEFORE THE FIRST WORKBOOK ASSIGNMENT IS DUE so that we can address those issues and make arrangements for you to complete your homework on time. I am more than happy to help students figure out how to address these issues if they come up!

However, to be fair to everyone in the class, due dates will not be extended for financial reasons, so it is important to see me before the assignments are due so that we can come up with a solution to the issue without it negatively impacting your grade.

Please also be aware that the workbook provides a free trial, which can buy you some more time to get the money together to purchase the workbook. The free trial period lasts 3 weeks, but it will not allow you to complete all 8 assignments during that 3 week period. Thus, the free trial will give you some extra time to buy the workbook, but it will only allow you to complete the first couple of assignments before it runs out.

Policymaker Letter

One of the overarching themes of PSCI 2306 is the division of policy-making power among the various branches and levels of government. Another is the importance of representation and having a government that reflects the will of the people. This assignment requires you effectively demonstrate core competencies of critical thinking, communication, social responsibility, and personal responsibility within the context of civic engagement in the U.S. political process.

In this assignment, you will

1. Identify a current political issue that affects you and your community.
2. Educate yourself about the issue by reading at least three articles from reputable news sources about the issue.

3. Determine which policy-maker is in the best position to represent your interests with respect to that issue. That could be your representative in the U.S. House of Representatives, your representative in a state legislature, or some member of the executive branch. The key is that you identify a person who has some policy-making authority with respect to the issue you have chosen and a person who might listen to your position (for example, choosing your own representative to the U.S. House rather than some other representative).
4. Draft a letter to your legislative or executive-branch policymaker in which you
 - a. identify yourself as one of the politician's constituents;
 - b. identify the political issue about which you are concerned;
 - c. clearly state a position on that issue (what should the policymaker do or not do); and
 - d. provide an explanation for your position that will persuade the policymaker to agree with you.
5. After you draft your letter and feel comfortable with both the content and format of your letter, submit the letter as the body of an e-mail addressed to your policymaker.

You will turn in

1. a .doc, .docx, or .pdf version of your letter; and
2. a .doc, .docx, or .pdf document listing the three articles you read; and
3. a screenshot (.jpg, .png, .pdf) of a sent e-mail to your policymaker

For tips on writing a letter to Congress, visit <https://www.thoughtco.com/write-effective-letters-to-congress-3322301>

Your score for this assignment will be out of 100 points and the rubric that will be used to grade it is available on Canvas.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance and Excused Absences

Students will not be graded on attendance in this course. However, I do expect all students to stay up-to-date with the class lectures, either by attending in person or watching recordings/livestreams if they are sick and/or in quarantine or isolation.

Exams must be taken online on Canvas during our regular class time, and make ups will only be available for students who have a UNT excused absence as defined below. If you are ill or unavailable for a scheduled exam, you need to contact me to determine whether or not you have an excused absence that will allow you to make up the exam. Please note that work conflicts are not included in UNT's list of excused absences.

In accordance with UNT's attendance policy, absences will be excused for religious holy days, active military service, participation in official university functions, illness or other extenuating circumstances, pregnancy and parenting under Title IX, and when the University is officially closed by the President. As the policy states, students are required to request and document their

excused absences with me. If you have an excused absence, please provide me with notice and documentation for that absence as soon as possible. More information on UNT's attendance policy is available at:

http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/15.2.5_StudentAttendance_May2016.pdf.

COVID-19 Impact on Attendance

While attendance is not 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 participate in class or complete assignments on time because you are ill, or unable to participate in class or complete assignments on time 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. 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.

Exam Policy

Students will take four exams in this course. All four exams will be given on Canvas according to the schedule listed in the syllabus. I will drop the lowest of each student's four exam grades when I calculate final course grades at the end of the semester. All exams will be open notes, and students must complete their exam on their own (no working with classmates).

Exams must be taken online on Canvas during our regular class time, and make ups will only be available for students who have a UNT excused absence as defined above. If you are ill or unavailable for a scheduled exam, you need to contact me to determine whether or not you have an excused absence that will allow you to make up the exam.

If you lose access to the internet during the exam, you will need to provide documentation that you did not have access to the internet (e.g. evidence you contacted your internet service provider or a text or other message from your internet service provider that the internet went out). You must also provide evidence that you attempted to contact the UIT help desk as soon as the issue occurred. Without such documentation, you will not be able to make-up the exam. Like everyone else in the class, any students who have internet issues during an exam, but who lack documentation of the issue will be able to drop their lowest test grade.

Grading Scale

Grades will follow the standard scale listed below and will be posted on Canvas. As you can see from the chart below, grades will be rounded to the nearest tenth.

| | |
|---|------------|
| A | 100-90.0% |
| B | 89.9-80.0% |
| C | 79.9-70.0% |
| D | 69.9-60.0% |
| F | Below 60% |

Online Assignment Submissions

All course assignments will be submitted using Canvas. Due dates are all listed on the syllabus and on Canvas. I strongly recommend that you plan to begin uploading all assignments 30 minutes before the final deadline (to give yourself a buffer in case you encounter any technical issues).

That being said, the University is committed to providing a reliable online course system to all users. However, in the event of any unexpected server outage or any unusual technical difficulty which prevents students from completing a time sensitive assessment activity, the instructor will extend the time windows and provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should **immediately** report any problems to the instructor and contact the UNT Student Help Desk: helpdesk@unt.edu or 940.565.2324 and obtain a ticket number. The instructor and the UNT Student Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time. If you are having technical issues, I also strongly encourage you to take timestamped screen shots or photos with your phone (if possible) to help document any problems you encounter and/or to help the tech team resolve your issues. If you cannot provide documentation of the issue, you will not have the opportunity to turn in the assignment.

Incomplete and Late Work Policy

Please make note of **all of the due dates** and **plan accordingly**. **Workbook assignments and the policymaker letter will be accepted late for ½ credit for 48 hours after the original due date.** After that, assignments will not be accepted for credit unless the student has documented, extenuating circumstances and provides documentation within 24 hours of the missed deadline.

Extra Credit

I do not provide individual opportunities for extra credit because I have never found a way to provide them that is fair to other members of the class. To be successful in this class, students should focus on completing the required assignments to the best of their ability.

If you do not do well on your assignments, I encourage you to see me for assistance as soon as possible. We will be happy to work with you to improve your grades, but it is your responsibility to seek out help if you need it.

UNT POLICIES

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 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 Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

Prohibition of Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation

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.

Sexual Discrimination, Harassment, and Assault

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.

Mandatory Reporter

As a UNT faculty member, I am required to share information regarding sexual assault and retaliation and sexual harassment with the university. Therefore, I want to be transparent that while I will seek to keep information that you share with me about your life in classroom discussions, your written work, one-on-one meetings, and/or emails private, I am required to disclose information about sexual misconduct to UNT's Office of Equal Opportunity. For more information on reporting sexual misconduct at UNT, please see: <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/sexual-misconduct/reporting-sexual-misconduct>.

Retention of Student Records

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 Canvas 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.

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 [Eagle Connect \(https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect\)](https://it.unt.edu/eagleconnect).

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 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 \(http://spot.unt.edu/\)](http://spot.unt.edu/) or email spot@unt.edu.

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](http://www.ecfr.gov/) (<http://www.ecfr.gov/>). The specific portion concerning distance education courses is located at Title 8 CFR 214.2 Paragraph (f)(6)(i)(G).

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.

Student Verification

UNT takes measures to protect the integrity of educational credentials awarded to students enrolled in distance education courses by verifying student identity, protecting student privacy, and notifying students of any special meeting times/locations or additional charges associated with student identity verification in distance education courses.

See [UNT Policy 07-002 Student Identity Verification, Privacy, and Notification and Distance Education Courses](https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002) (<https://policy.unt.edu/policy/07-002>).

ETHICS AND CONDUCT

Academic Misconduct: Cheating and Plagiarism

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. <http://facultysuccess.unt.edu/academic-integrity>.

The Political Science Department adheres to and enforces UNT's policy on academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and sabotage). Students in this class should review the policy, which is located at: http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/7-Student_Affairs-Academic_Integrity.pdf.

Violations of academic integrity in this course will be addressed in compliance with the penalties and procedures laid out in this policy. Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16 "Student Standards of Academic Integrity."

Students should note that according to the UNT policy, "cheating" includes, but is not limited to: "1) the use of any unauthorized assistance to take exams, tests, quizzes, or other assessments; 2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments; 3) the acquisition, without permission of tests, notes, or other academic materials belonging to a faculty or staff member of the University; 4) dual submission of a paper or project, or re-submission of a paper or project to a different class without express permission from the instructor; 5) any other act designed to give a student an unfair advantage on an academic assignment." According to UNT policy, plagiarism is defined as the "use of another's thoughts or words without proper attribution in any academic exercise *regardless of the student's intent*" (emphasis mine). It includes, but is not limited to: "1) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement or citation; 2) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in selling term papers or other academic materials."

Rules of Engagement and Classroom Conduct

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](https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips) (<https://clear.unt.edu/online-communication-tips>) for more 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 form at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable and disruptive behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer to the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities 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 classrooms, labs, and discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>.

As an instructor, I believe that students learn best when they are able to engage with each other (and the professor!) in a respectful and open-minded manner. So, please practice the Golden Rule and treat others as you would like to be treated. Specifically, I ask that you avoid disruptive behaviors by:

- Silencing all disruptive electronic devices;
- Refraining from texting, tweeting, checking email, surfing the internet, or reading irrelevant materials during class;
- Having side conversations with others during class;
- Falling asleep.

Since the topics in this course will encourage lively and energetic discussions and debates, it is also important for you to show respect for others’ opinions and points of view, even when you disagree.

In addition, please follow some simple, but important guidelines for “virtual” classroom conduct if we need to meet remotely.

- Please remember that the chat features in Zoom are designed to facilitate class participation. They should not be used to make disruptive/off topic comments, hold side conversations, or disparage other students in the class. If this becomes an issue and students are not using the chat features in a respectful manner, I will disable the chat.

- Please attend class sessions and be prepared to participate virtually using Zoom’s interactive features (chat, hand raising) and/or your computer’s webcam and microphone.
- If possible, please plan on participating in class in a relatively quiet, distraction free-room.
- Please familiarize yourself with how to turn the “mute” function on and off to minimize distractions for your classmates during class.

ACADEMIC SUPPORT & STUDENT SERVICES

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

Academic Support Services

- [Academic Resource Center](https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources) (<https://clear.unt.edu/canvas/student-resources>)
- [Academic Success Center](https://success.unt.edu/asc) (<https://success.unt.edu/asc>)
- [UNT Libraries](https://library.unt.edu/) (<https://library.unt.edu/>)
- [Writing Lab](http://writingcenter.unt.edu/) (<http://writingcenter.unt.edu/>)

Political Science Librarian

Brea Henson is the librarian for the Department of Political Science, Latina/o and Mexican American Studies, and Peace Studies. If you have questions about library resources and research methods for your course assignments, please email Brea.Henson@unt.edu or [schedule an appointment](#) for either an in-person or virtual research consultation. Her office is in Willis 083a on the Lower Level of Willis Library.

COURSE SCHEDULE

All reading assignments should be completed before class, on the day that they are listed.

Wednesday, January 19: Course Introduction

- Read the entire syllabus.
- Purchase the **required** *PSCI 2306 Workbook*. This is a digital textbook that you will access on Canvas. To get to the workbook, click on Assignments, and then navigate to any of the workbook chapters to purchase the workbook directly through Canvas or to enter the access code you received from the UNT Bookstore. You will need to purchase this workbook to complete required, graded homework assignments.
- *Optional*: Purchase the **recommended** *American Government* textbook. This is a traditional textbook that is available in both print and digital formats. I am recommending, but not requiring students to purchase it. The readings in this textbook will supplement the information provided in lectures. It may be particularly helpful for students who have limited prior coursework in American government and American history.

PART I: AMERICAN FOUNDATIONS, POLITICAL CULTURE, AND THE CONSTITUTION

Friday, January 21: Key Concepts

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 1 (pages 1-12)
- Before class, take the Pew Research Center's Political Typology Quiz available at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/quiz/political-typology/>

Monday, January 24: American Political Culture

- ***Due Date: Syllabus Quiz Due Today at 11:59 PM***
- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 1 (pages 12-26)

Wednesday, January 26: American Foundations

- Read the Declaration of Independence: <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration-transcript>
- Read the Constitution of the United States: <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/constitution-transcript>

Friday, January 28: The US Constitution

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 2

Monday, January 31: The US Constitution

- ***Due Date: PSCI 2306 Workbook, The Constitution (Chapter 1) due at 11:59 PM***

Wednesday, February 2: Texas Constitution

- No Reading for Today

Friday, February 4: Federalism

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 3

Monday, February 7: Federalism

- Read *PSCI 2306 Workbook*, Federalism (Chapter 2)

Wednesday, February 9: Contemporary Federalism

- *Due Date: PSCI 2306 Workbook, Federalism (Chapter 2) due at 11:59 PM*

Friday, February 11: Review for Exam 1

- No reading

Monday, February 14: Exam 1 on American Foundations, Political Culture, and The Constitution

- Exam will ONLY be open on Canvas during our regular class meeting time. You will have 50 minutes to complete the test. Plan accordingly.

PART II: THE LEGISLATIVE AND EXECUTIVE BRANCHES**Wednesday, February 16: Congressional Powers and Responsibilities**

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 10 (pages 291-296)

Friday, Friday 18: Congressional Organization (Parties and Committees)

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 10 (pages 296-305)

Monday, February 21: The Legislative Process

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 12 (pages 340-353)

Wednesday, February 23: Influences on the Legislative Process

- Read *PSCI 2306 Workbook*, The Legislative Process (Chapter 3)

Friday, February 25: Congressional Elections and Representation

- *Due Date: PSCI 2306 Workbook, The Legislative Process (Chapter 3) due at 11:59 PM*

Monday, February 28: The Presidency in the Constitution

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 11

Wednesday, March 2: Presidential Powers

- Read *PSCI 2306 Workbook*, The Presidency (Chapter 4)

Friday, March 4: Presidential Establishment and Presidential Influence

- *Due Date: PSCI 2306 Workbook, The Presidency (Chapter 4) due at 11:59 PM*

Monday, March 7: Texas Legislative and Executive Branches

- No reading

Wednesday, March 9: Policymaker Letter Tutorial

- Class will not meet today; Complete the Policymaker Tutorial Module on Canvas on your own time instead

Friday, March 11: Policymaker Letters Due

- Class will not meet; work on your policymaker letter
- *Policymaker Letters Due Today at 11:59 PM*

Monday, March 14: No Class for Spring Break**Wednesday, March 16: No Class for Spring Break****Friday, March 18: No Class for Spring Break****Monday, March 21: What is The Bureaucracy?**

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 12

Wednesday, March 23: Bureaucratic Power and Accountability

- Read *PSCI 2306 Workbook*, The Bureaucracy (Chapter 5)

Friday, March 25: The Bureaucracy and Rulemaking

- *Due Date: PSCI 2306 Workbook, The Bureaucracy (Chapter 5) due at 11:59 PM*

Monday, March 28: Public Policy

- No reading

Wednesday, March 30: Review for Exam 2

- No reading

Friday, April 1: Exam 2 on the Legislative and Executive Branches

- Exam will ONLY be open on Canvas during our regular class meeting time. You will have 50 minutes to complete the test. Plan accordingly.

PART 3: THE COURTS, CIVIL LIBERTIES, AND CIVIL RIGHTS**Monday, April 4: The Courts in the Constitution**

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 13

Wednesday, April 6: Supreme Court Cases and Nominations

- *Due Date: PSCI 2306 Workbook, The Courts (Chapter 6) due at 11:59 PM*

Friday, April 8: Supreme Revenge Extra Credit Activity

- Class will not meet today; watch the *Supreme Revenge* Documentary and complete the extra credit activity. The extra credit is due at 11:59 PM.
- *Due Date: Supreme Revenge Extra Credit due at 11:59 PM*

Monday, April 11: Civil Liberties

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 4

Wednesday, April 13: Civil Liberties

- Read *PSCI 2306 Workbook*, Civil Liberties (Ch. 7)

Friday, April 15: No Class**Monday, April 18: Civil Liberties**

- *Due today: PSCI 2306 Workbook, Civil Liberties (Ch. 7) due at 11:59 PM*

Wednesday, April 20: Civil Rights

- Recommended Reading: *American Government*, Chapter 5

Friday, April 22: Civil Rights

- Read *PSCI 2306 Workbook*, Civil Rights (Ch. 8)

Monday, April 25: Civil Rights

- *Due today: PSCI 2306 Workbook, Civil Rights (Ch. 8) Assignment*

Wednesday, April 27: Review for Exam 3

- No reading

Friday, April 29: Exam 3 on the Courts, Civil Liberties, and Civil Rights

- Exam will ONLY be open on Canvas during our regular class meeting time. You will have 50 minutes to complete the test. Plan accordingly.

Monday, May 2: Review for Final Exam

- No reading

Wednesday, May 4: Review for Final Exam

- No reading

Wednesday, May 11: Final Exam from 10:30 AM to 11:20 AM

- Exam will ONLY be open on Canvas during assigned final exam time. You will have 50 minutes to complete the test. Plan accordingly.