

PSCI 3130: Interest Groups

Dr. Ashley English

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136 Wooten Hall

Virtual Office Hours: TR 3:30-5:00 PM

Fall 2020

TR

2:00-3:20 PM

Remote

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES

Participation is often cited as a crucial part of democratic citizenship, and since the founding, many have traditionally assumed that American citizens naturally join and form groups to advance their political interests. In the first half of this class, we will examine how these groups have developed and changed over time and how they influence policymakers in the legislative, executive, and judicial branches. Then, in the second half of the class, we will answer a series of questions about the role of interest groups in contemporary American politics. For example, how often do American citizens join interest groups and advocacy organizations? Are these groups biased in favor of some citizens rather than others? Who benefits the most from interest group activity? Altogether, this course is designed to encourage you to think critically about the role of interest groups and advocacy organizations in American politics. At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- Explain how and why interest groups and advocacy organizations form and why people do (or do not) join them.
- Explain how interest groups and advocacy organizations influence members of Congress, executive agencies, and the Supreme Court.
- Explain how interest groups and advocacy organizations differ from social movements.
- Understand the theory of pluralism (and critiques of it) and explain what it contributes to our understanding of the role of interest groups and advocacy organizations in American politics.
- Provide a written, critical analysis of an interest group or advocacy organization's lobbying strategy.

COURSE FORMAT AND REMOTE MEETINGS

Each class session will be a mixture of mini-lectures and class activities and discussions about the readings. This class is designed to teach you how to think critically and conduct your own research and analyses of interest group lobbying strategies.

Class will meet synchronously at our regular TR 2:00-3:20 PM time on Zoom. I am holding class meetings at our regular time to provide students with some opportunity have to interactions with each other and to ask questions in real time. Since class will meet synchronously online, my expectation is that students will "attend" class and participate in discussions using Zoom. To that end, if you have a webcam, I ask that you keep the webcam on during our class sessions. I also encourage you to familiarize yourself with Zoom's interactive features, including the chat

box, breakout rooms, and the “raise hand” option. If you are not familiar with Zoom, more information is available to help you get started with it at: <https://online.unt.edu/learn>. I recommend using Firefox to access Zoom, as it gets glitchy in Google Chrome and Safari.

Given the pandemic, I realize that many of you may need greater flexibility than usual right now, so I will record class sessions and post them on Canvas after class in case you cannot make our regular class meetings due to illness.

Lecture slides and recordings of class meetings will also be posted on Zoom after class. To access those, go to Canvas and click on “Zoom” in the menu to the left of the screen.

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.

COURSE MATERIALS AND READINGS

Required Books

Lowery, David and Holly Brasher. 2011. *Organized Interests and American Government*. ISBN: 9781577667292

Class Materials for Remote Instructions

Since our class will be meeting remotely, students will need a computer with reliable internet access for Zoom meetings. Though it is not required, I also encourage students to participate in class using a webcam and microphone if they have access to one. Your computer should also meet [Canvas's technical requirements](#).

Though our class will meet online, I’d encourage students to be aware that recent research shows that students retain more information when they take notes by hand. Therefore, I advise against using computers for notetaking, but it is up to you. Please make sure that all cell phones and other technological devices are turned off and stored away for the duration of class.

Assigned Readings

All of the readings in the syllabus are required. Because many of our class activities and discussions depend on them, it is extremely important that *you* complete *all* readings.

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 office 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 3130) in the subject line of your email along with a brief description of the class-related subject you would like to discuss. **As classes take place online, 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 on Zoom 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

This course has a Canvas site, which is available at <https://learn.unt.edu>. I encourage you to check the Canvas site regularly to make sure you have up-to-date information on this course.

Computer Skills and Digital Literacy

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
- Using Microsoft Office Programs

- Using Turnitin on Canvas to submit papers and review paper feedback

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](https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328)
(<https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10554-4212710328>)

IMPORTANT DUE DATES

- Tuesday, September 15: Reading Journal 1
- Tuesday, September 22: Final Paper Topics Due
- Thursday, October 1: Research Worksheet Set 1
- Thursday, October 13: Reading Journal 1
- Tuesday, October 15: Research Worksheet Set 2
- Tuesday, November 3: Rough Drafts and Feedback Memos
- Thursday, November 12: Reading Journal 3
- Thursday, November 19: Final Reflection Journal
- Thursday, December 3: Final Papers and Revision Memos

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grades and Assignments

Final course grades will be based on 4 reading journal assignments, completion of 7 research worksheets, and a final paper that is broken down into smaller assignments to be turned in throughout the semester. Each of these components will factor into your final grade as follows:

| | |
|---|--|
| Reading Journals (4) 1 from Part 1 of the course 1 from Part 2 of the course 1 from Part 3 of the course 1 final reflection assignment | 25% of final grade (Lowest grade dropped) |
| 7 Research Worksheets (Graded for Completion) | 25% of final grade (2 Lowest grades dropped) |
| Final Lobbying Strategy Paper Preliminary Proposal Rough Draft and Feedback Cover Sheet Final Paper and Revision Memo | 50% of total grade 5% of final grade 15% of final grade 30% of final grade |
| TOTAL | 100% |

Reading Journals (4 assignments, 25% of total grade, graded pass/fail)

Reading journal assignments are designed to help make sure you complete, understand, and apply the course readings to your analysis of an interest group's strategy in your final paper.

Each reading journal assignment will ask you to pick one day of class, summarize the day's readings, and explain how you will apply the readings to your final paper. **Reading journals will be graded pass/fail. To receive a pass, your reading journal assignment must provide answers to the questions that are at least 200 words long and they must contain substantive comments (more on that below). Reading journals should NOT only summarize the material that was presented during our class sections.**

There are many ways you can make your reading journal posts substantive. For example, you might:

- Describe what you think the most important idea of the reading is and explaining why you think this idea is significant or thought-provoking.
- Consider how the major arguments or ideas of the reading compare, contrast, or connect to the ideas or arguments raised by other class readings, and explaining your reasoning.
- Ask for clarification about a particular concept, idea, passage, or section of the reading and explaining what you find confusing about it.
- Describe any ideas or arguments that you find conflicting or unconvincing and explaining why you think the idea or argument is not sufficient or logical.
- Describe any ideas or arguments that you found particularly convincing and explaining why you found it convincing
- Describe any ideas or arguments that helped you think differently about a particular topic and explain how and why the reading helped change your perspective.
- Reflect on what you think is the major implication or outcome of the reading. What larger conclusions or insights can be drawn from the reading and how do they help you understand or think about other media texts or class readings?
- Use direct quotations from the readings to provide further support for your thoughts and arguments

You are required to complete one reading journal assignment for each part of the course. You may complete your journal assignment any time during each part of the course (e.g., you could complete the assignment for Part 1 anytime between August 27 and September 15), but journal assignments **MUST** be turned in by the last day of each part of the class. Thus, Part 1 assignments are due by September 15. See the schedule for more information on due dates. To give students flexibility during the covid crisis, your lowest reading journal grade will be dropped.

Research Worksheets (7 worksheets, 25% of final grade; graded for completion)

To help you complete the research for your final papers, students will also be required to complete 7 research worksheets throughout the semester. Those worksheets will be completed in 2 sets on 2 scheduled research days. On those 2 days, class will not meet so that students can use class time to complete these assignments.

To give students flexibility during the covid crisis, your lowest 2 worksheet grades will be dropped. However, you will still be responsible for including the material that is covered on those worksheets in your final paper.

Research worksheets will be available on Canvas and graded for completion.

Lobbying Strategy Paper (50% of final grade)

By the end of the semester, each student will complete a 15-page research paper that analyzes a national-level interest group or advocacy organization's lobbying strategy using the concepts you have learned in this course over the entire semester.

To complete this paper, you will:

- Select a specific organization that is operating at the national level
- Provide an overview of the organization's basic structure and characteristics (e.g. its size, location, number of staff members, membership, location, budget, funding sources, whether or not it has a PAC)
- Identify which policymakers your organization attempts to influence (e.g. members of Congress, federal agencies, the judicial branch, state-level policymakers, etc.) and explain how they tried to influence them (e.g. campaign contributions, mobilizing voters, sharing information and expertise, testifying in hearings, writing comments, writing amicus briefs, social media outreach, etc.).
- Cite 10 readings from the course syllabus to analyze why your organization targeted the policymakers it did and why it used the techniques it did.
- Explain whether your organization's strategy was successful or influential and provide recommendations for how it might be improved in the future.

You can select any organization you find interesting and exciting for this paper. If you need help finding organizations, Congressional Quarterly's Washington Directory and the Leadership

Library (<http://iii.library.unt.edu/record=b2249075~S12>) should both provide useful starting points.

To make this project more manageable and to provide you with the opportunity to receive feedback throughout the writing process, I have divided it up into the following smaller assignments with deadlines spread throughout the semester:

- Preliminary Paper Proposal– due Tuesday, September 22
- Rough Draft and Feedback Memo – due Tuesday, November 3
- Final Paper and Revision Memo – due December 3

Preliminary Proposal (5% of final grade, graded for completion)

The first portion of the research paper due is your proposed paper topic. For this assignment, you will be asked to identify which interest group or advocacy organization you plan to analyze in your final paper, and you should explain why you have selected that group and what you expect to find in terms of how they influence policymakers (e.g. what types of activities do you think they engage in; what types of policymakers do you think they lobby and why). This step of the final paper assignment will be graded on completion.

Rough Draft and Feedback Cover Sheet (15% of final grade, graded for completion)

Next, you will be asked to submit a first draft of your final paper at the beginning of November. Along with that draft, you should submit a one-page cover sheet that identifies one aspect of your paper that you would most like to receive assistance with and one aspect of your paper that you believe is its key strength.

This stage of assignment is designed to provide you with useful feedback on your writing before their final papers are due and to teach you how to respond to written feedback on your writing. Thus, you will be graded **on completion** of this assignment.

In order for this assignment to be considered complete, you must submit a first draft that is at least 7 pages long, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font, and that contains fully written sentences and paragraphs. First drafts that fall far short of the required page limit or that consist of little more than an outline or a bullet-pointed list will not be considered complete because they will not allow me to provide you with effective feedback.

Please note that scholarly sources include academic books, academic journal articles, textbooks, newspapers, official government websites. Wikipedia, social media, and blogs are **NOT** considered scholarly sources. All sources must be properly cited using **APSA's style guide** (<https://mk0apsaconnectbvy6p6.kinstacdn.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2020/07/Style-Manual-for-Political-Science-July-2020-Revision.pdf>). More information about citation styles and citation guides are available on Canvas. Brea Henson, the political science librarian, is also available to help you identify and properly cite scholarly sources. She can be reached at Brea.Henson@unt.edu or in Willis Library.

Final Paper and Revision Memo (30% of final grade, graded 0-100%)

Finally, you will be required to submit a final, 15-page paper for this class. Along with the final paper, you are also required to submit a one-page memo indicating how you choose to respond to the feedback you received on your rough draft. This memo will indicate which changes you made, and it may explain which recommendations you did not incorporate and why.

The final paper will be graded on the quality of the analysis, the degree to which you responded to feedback on your rough draft, the inclusion and proper citation of **10 sources from our class syllabus, 5-10 primary sources about your group's lobbying activities**, and effective use of spelling and grammar. The rubric detailing how your final paper will be graded is available on Canvas and it will be handed out in class.

Final papers should be double-spaced, use 12-point Times New Roman font, and 1-inch margins.

Please keep in mind that successful final papers will not simply provide a basic description of your organization and what it did. Instead, you will also need to use what you learned in class this semester to provide a critical analysis of why their strategy did or did not work and/or why it was or was not a good strategy for an organization like yours to pursue. You should also provide some clear recommendations for how it can improve its efforts in the future.

While students are not required to make all of the changes that were recommended to their rough drafts, students who do well will show that they have at least seriously considered all recommendations. Students who do well on the final papers also submit papers that are free from spelling and grammar mistakes.

COURSE POLICIES

Attendance Policy and UNT Excused Absences

Attendance for this class is expected. One of the best ways to take responsibility for your success in this class is to attend class regularly.

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 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 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.

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, and your rough drafts and final papers will be submitted using the Turnitin tool on 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.

Incomplete and Late Work Policy

Please make note of **all of the due dates** for the paper and reading journal assignments and the and **plan accordingly**.

Given the pandemic, each student may request one, 3-day extension no questions asked. Beyond that, no late work will be accepted unless the student has documented, extenuating circumstances and provides documentation within 48 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 a 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.

- 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/>)

COURSE SCHEDULE

Readings Marked *** are available on Canvas!

Tuesday, August 25: Course Introduction

- Read the entire syllabus.
- Complete syllabus quiz.

PART I: KEY CONCEPTS

Thursday, August 27: What is An Interest Group and Other Key Concepts

- Lowery & Brasher. *Organized Interests and American Government*, Chapter 1.

Tuesday, September 1: Early Interest Groups and Organizations

- ***Skocpol, Theda, Marshall Ganz, and Ziad Munson. 2000. "A Nation of Organizers: The Institutional Origins of Civic Voluntarism in the United States." *American Political Science Review* 94(3): 527-546.

Thursday, September 3: Contemporary Interest Groups and Organizations

- ***Skocpol, Theda. 2003. *Diminished Democracy: From Membership to Management in American Civic Life*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press, Chapter 4.

Tuesday, September 8: Forming Groups & Collective Action Problems

- Lowery & Brasher. *Organized Interests and American Government*, Chapter 2.

Thursday, September 10: Maintaining Groups

- ***Walker, Jack. 1983. "The Origins and Maintenance of Interest Groups in America." *American Political Science Review* 77(2): 390-406.
- ***Staggenborg, Suzanne. 1988. "The Consequences of Professionalization and Formalization in the Pro-Choice Movement." *American Sociological Review* 53: 585-605.

Tuesday, September 15: Social Movements and Contentious Politics

- ***Reading Journal 1 Due Today at 5:00 PM on Canvas***
- ***Tarrow, Sidney. 1998. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapter 1.

Thursday, September 17: Researching Interest Groups Workshop with Brea Henson

- No reading
- Class session will provide instruction on how to use library databases to research your interest groups

PART II: INFLUENCING POLICYMAKERS

Tuesday, September 22: Interest Groups, PACs, and Elections

- *****Final Paper Topics Due Today at 5:00 PM on Canvas*****
- Lowery & Brasher. *Organized Interests and American Government*, Chapter 4.
- *****Sides, John, Daron Shaw, Matt Grossman, and Keena Lipsitz. *Campaigns & Elections*, Chapter 7.**
- *****Campaign Finance Charts*****

Thursday, September 24: Identifying Key Members of Congress and Campaign Contributions

- Lowery & Brasher. *Organized Interests and American Government*, Chapter 5, pgs. 148-158 (Refresher on the legislative process).
- *****Hojnacki, Marie, and David Kimball. 1998. "Organized Interests and the Decision of Who to Lobby in Congress." *American Political Science Review* 92(4): 775-790.**
- *****Baumgartner, Frank, Jeffrey Berry, Marie Hojnacki, David Kimball, and Beth Leech. 2014. "Money, Priorities, and Stalemate: How Lobbying Affects Public Policy." *Election Law Journal* 13(1): 194-209.**

Tuesday, September 29: Lobbying as a Legislative Subsidy

- Lowery & Brasher. *Organized Interests and American Government*, Chapter 5, pgs. 158-188 (Refresher on the legislative process).
- **Optional: ***Hall, Richard and Alan Deardorff. 2006. "Lobbying as a Legislative Subsidy." *American Political Science Review* 100(1): 69-84. (This is a challenging piece to read, but we will discuss a simplified approach their idea of "Lobbying as a Legislative Subsidy" in class)**

Thursday, October 1: Paper Research Day #1

- *****Research Worksheet Set 1 Due Today at 5:00 PM on Canvas*****
- No reading or Zoom meeting today
- Complete research worksheet set 1 by 5:00 PM on Canvas

Tuesday, October 6: Influencing the Bureaucracy

- Lowery & Brasher. *Organized Interests and American Government*, Chapter 6.
- *****Yackee, Jason and Susan Yackee. 2006. "A Bias Towards Business? Assessing Interest Group Influence on the US Bureaucracy." *Journal of Politics* 128-139.**

Thursday, October 8: Iron Triangles and Issue Networks

- *****Heclo, Hugh. 1978. "Issue Networks and the Executive Establishment." in *The New American Political System*, edited by Anthony King. American Enterprise Institute.**

Tuesday, October 13: Influencing the Judicial Branch

- *****Reading Journal 2 Due Today at 5:00 PM on Canvas*****
- Lowery & Brasher. *Organized Interests and American Government*, Chapter 7.
- *****Collins, Paul. 2004. "Friends of the Court: Examining the Influence of Amicus Curiae Participation in Supreme Court Litigation." *Law and Society Review* 38(4): 807-823.**

- ***Caldeira, Gregory, Marie Hojnacki, and John Wright. 2000. “The Lobbying Activities of Organized Interests in Federal Judicial Nominations.” *Journal of Politics* 62 (1): 51-69.

Thursday, October 15: Paper Research Day #2

- ***Research Worksheet Set 2 Due Today at 5:00 PM on Canvas***
- No reading or Zoom meeting today

PART III: THE ROLE OF INTEREST GROUPS IN AMERICAN POLITICS

Tuesday, October 20: Early Understandings of Interests and Factions

- **de Tocqueville, Alexis. “Political Associations in the United States.”
- **Madison, James. “Federalist 10.”

Thursday, October 22: Pluralism

- **Dahl, Robert. 1956. “American Hybrid.” In *Preface to a Democratic Theory*.

Tuesday, October 27: Critiques of Pluralism – Who Has the Power?

- ***Mills, C. Wright. 1956. *The Power Elite*. London: Oxford University Press, Chapters 1 and 12.
- ***Brooks, David. 2010. “The Power Elite.” *The New York Times*, Feb 18.

Thursday, October 29: Critiques of Pluralism – Mobilizations of Bias

- ***Schattschneider, E.E. 1960. *The Semisovereign People: A Realist’s View of Democracy in America*. New York, NY: Harcourt Brace Jovanich, Chapters 1 and 2.

Tuesday, November 3: Rough Drafts and Feedback Memos Due

- ***Rough Drafts and Feedback Memos Due Today at 5:00 on Turnitin on Canvas***
- No reading or Zoom meeting today

Thursday, November 5: Critiques of Pluralism – Biases in Interest Groups System

- ***Schlozman, Kay Lehman, Sidney Verba, and Henry Brady. 2013. *The Unheavenly Chorus: Unequal Political Voice and the Broken Promise of American Democracy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, Chapters 11 and 12.

Tuesday, November 10: Critiques of Pluralism – Biases within Organizations

- ***Strolovitch, Dara. 2006. “Do Interest Groups Represent the Disadvantaged: Advocacy at the Intersections of Race, Class, and Gender.” *Journal of Politics* 68(4): 894-910.

Thursday, November 12: Critiques of Pluralism – Learned Powerlessness

- ***Reading Journal 3 Due Today at 5:00 PM on Canvas***
- ***Cramer, Katherine. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, Chapters 5 and 6.

Tuesday, November 17: Paper Feedback and Advice Session

- Dr. English will provide general comments, tips, and pieces of advice on final papers
- Prepare a list of questions/problems related to your paper that you could use some advice or help with!

Thursday, November 19: Pluralism and the Role of Interest Groups Today

- ***Final Reflection Journal Due Today at 5:00 on Turnitin on Canvas***
- No virtual Zoom class today
- Work on paper research using research guide activity related to your paper

Tuesday, November 24: NO CLASS FOR THANKSGIVING

Thursday, November 26: NO CLASS FOR THANKSGIVING

Tuesday, December 1: Final Paper Research and Writing Day

- No virtual Zoom class today
- Work on paper research using research guide activity related to your paper

Thursday, December 3: Final Papers and Revision Memos Due

- ***Final Paper and Revision Memo Due Today at 5:00 on Turnitin on Canvas***
- No virtual Zoom class today
- Work on paper research using research guide activity related to your paper