

American Government: Process and Policies

PSCI 1050 section 001

2013 Summer 5W2 (July 8 - Aug 9, 2013)

Time: MTWR 2-3:50p

Place: 222 Wooten Hall (WH)

Instructor: Mr. Evan M. Lowe

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Office Hours: TW 12p-1:30p & by appt

Teaching Assistant: Mrs. Emily Stull

Office: 173 Wooten Hall

Email: EmilyStull@my.unt.edu

Office Hours: MTWR: 4-5p

Supplemental Instructor (SI): Sue Olusanya

Office: BLB 060

Email: sulieolu@yahoo.com

Office Hours: T 8-10a

SI Sessions: MWR 8-10a, Tu 4-6p in BLB 090

Course Objectives: This course will serve as an introduction to the processes of American and Texas politics, and the impact of those processes on policy making. The material will address *how* “politics” works. We will cover the role of the media, the presidential selection process, political parties and linkage institutions, political culture, participation, policy making, and related topics. At the end of the course, students should:

1. Have an understanding of linkage institutions, policy making, and electoral processes as they relate to American and Texas governments.
2. Recognize the various elements that contribute to why American government functions the way that it does.
3. Have sufficient knowledge of how “politics” works to think critically about historical and current events, and to be meaningfully civically engaged.

Blackboard: Our course will have a Blackboard (Bb) site located at <http://learn.unt.edu>. Relevant course information will be located on Bb and students should check it frequently. In addition to lecture slides and some readings, any changes to the syllabus will be reflected in the syllabus posted on Bb. Your syllabus is the authority for readings and what is due on any given day.

Required Texts:

- Fiorina et al. *New American Democracy with Texas Chapters*, Volume II

Resources:

- Texas politics website, hosted by UTexas: <http://texaspolitics.laits.utexas.edu/index.html>

Each student must purchase the textbook. No exceptions. This is a custom edition, so selecting from the two options below is the surest way to get the correct material.

- Option 1 *recommended* (print copy):

The textbook (Fiorina et al.) is available from the university bookstore. Purchasing the text from the bookstore is the simplest way to ensure you get the correct material. Having the book in print means there are no technical issues that prevent you from doing the reading. These

technical issues are not rare with option 2 and will not compel due date extensions for assignments. Purchase of the printed edition should give you online access as well.

NEW: 84.65, USED: 63.50 (if avail.)

- Option 2 (online):

You may purchase an e-textbook that is less expensive than option 1. Should you wish to buy *only* e-access (*ie.* no print copy text), instructions are located on our blackboard page. This option will get you the e-text and access to MyPoliSci Lab.

COST: \$53.20

Registering for Pearson (online access only):

There is no Pearson course number. You should select “self study” when setting up your Pearson account. Detailed instructions for Pearson registration can be found on our Blackboard page. This registration will gain you access to the online textbook and the MyPoliSci Lab activities.

Technical Assistance (online access only):

Please bring any registration or access problems to my attention so that we are on the same page. I am not, however, the best resource to help you *resolve* these problems. Our department representative, Michael Galvan, works closely with Pearson and is well-suited to assist with technical difficulties. Michael encourages students with issues to text him during the summer semesters since he can respond more quickly than via email. Please do not abuse this.

We will also have one **tech help session**, to address registration and other problems you may have, on **July 8, 2013 from 12:00-1:30p in GAB 550A**. Please attend if you're having any trouble at all.

Michael Galvan contact info:

Email: michaelgalvan@my.unt.edu
Cell: 214.336.1683
Office: Wooten 147
Office Hours: By Appointment

Course Assignments

Tests (3x): 600 points total (200 points each)

(optional) Cumulative final: 200 points (to serve as replacement for lowest test grade)

Assignments (3x): 300 points (100 points each)

Reading quizzes (10x): 150 points (15 points each)

*** This does add up to a possible 1,050 points out of 1,000. For this reason, no extra credit will be offered*

Grading: The standard university grading scale will apply ($\geq 900 = A$, $800-899 = B$, $700-799 = C$, $600-699 = D$, $< 600 = F$).

Grades will neither round up nor be changed unless I make a computation error. The grade you earn is the grade you receive.

Any grade disputes on assignments/exams must be addressed within two weeks of receiving the grade. After two weeks grades may not be disputed.

Communication: I will not discuss grades via email or telephone. This is to protect *your* privacy, in accordance with [FERPA](#). Grading questions must be addressed during my office hours. If my office hours are in direct conflict with your course schedule, please contact me to set up an appointment.

Exams (200 points each): Exams will be a combination of multiple choice, matching, true/false, and short answer questions. Regular exams are not cumulative.

Scantron forms will be provided with the exam. Students are responsible for bringing a #2 pencil.

During exams all bags, bottles, pencil cases, cell phones, laptops, iPads, etc. *must* be put away, either against the wall or under your chair. Hats and hoods are not to be worn. No exceptions. Failure to follow these rules may result in receiving a zero for the exam.

No exams will be distributed once the first exam is turned in. Be on time.

Optional cumulative final (200 points): Should you perform poorly on an exam, you have the option of taking a cumulative exam on the day scheduled for the class final. This exam will cover all of the information from the course and will be slightly longer than the non-cumulative exams. If you take this exam, I will drop the lowest exam grade and calculate your grade with your top three (cumulative included) exam scores. **Students must inform me beforehand if they wish to take this exam.** Students who show up to take this test who have not informed me of their intent to take it will be turned away.

Make up policy: Requests for make up exams must be made in person and for a valid reason. No request will be heard after one week past the exam date. University sponsored events will be excused, but the student must bring written record of participation in the event prior to the exam.

The decision to grant make up exams will be at the instructor's discretion. Make up exams will *not* be the same questions as the missed exam, and may be in a different format.

No assignments or reading quizzes may be made up.

Assignments: Your assignments will generally involve an activity (either in class or online) and a short writing assignment that accompanies this activity. You will be asked to apply the course concepts to which the exercise relates to your experience. Each assignment will have more detailed instructions available on Blackboard.

Reading quizzes: Prior to covering a chapter in class, there will be an online reading quiz in Bb. You will have one attempt at this quiz, and 15 minutes to complete it once it has been opened. This means that you should read the chapter *before* opening the quiz. The quizzes will not be long, but you will have had to have read (not merely skimmed) the reading(s) to be successful.

Miscellaneous Information:

Email Etiquette: Email is the preferred means of contact for the instructor and teaching assistant. When emailing either the instructor or teaching assistant, you need to follow a few rules:

1. Include the course and section number (PSCI 1050.001) in the subject line of the email. We have multiple courses and including this information will help ensure a prompt and accurate response.
2. Do not use text/instant message language. Emails that lack punctuation, or are spelled such that your instructor or TA cannot be sure what question you are asking will not receive responses.
3. Clearly identify yourself. This means you should use the name you have registered with the university. If the course roster says that your name is Eugene Smith but you go by your middle name, we do not know this and will not know who Ben Smith is.
4. Check the syllabus. If you are asking a question about the course, it is likely that the answer is to be found on the syllabus.

PowerPoint Slides: Lecture slides will be made available on the Blackboard site. These slides are *not* a substitute for active note taking. The lecture slides provide an outline for the material covered in lecture. Simply printing off, or copying down the material from the slides will be of little to no help when reviewing for exams.

Attendance: Attendance will not be taken but is highly encouraged. Regular attendance is strongly related to better performance on exams and assignments and even more so when material is being covered as quickly as it is in this shortened summer semester. Lectures will supplement and, at times, correct material from the textbook. You will be expected to know what was taught *in class*. If you miss class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a fellow student.

Classroom Conduct: There will be little tolerance for disruptive behavior. Students are to be attentive and awake in class. Texting, online chatting, surfing the internet, carrying on conversation with those around you, etc. will not be tolerated as these things are a distraction to other students. Students not displaying appropriate conduct will be asked to leave class. Coffee and other beverages are fine, but please do not eat in class.

Class will begin and end on time. I will not hold you late. Therefore, do not begin shuffling papers and loading your bags prior to the end of class. This is rude and distracting to other students.

Academic Integrity (cheating): No form of cheating will be tolerated. The UNT catalogue states that cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) depending on sources that are unauthorized and/or without proper citation, (2) unauthorized assistance on exams/workbook assignments, (3) possession of faculty or staff's academic material. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to: (1) a direct quotation or paraphrase of uncited material, whether intentional or owing to neglect; (2) use of work done by another individual, even if done expressly for you. Cheating and/or plagiarism will be treated severely. Cheating or plagiarism may result in failure of the course and the filing of a report with the [Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities](#), who may impose further penalties.

Religious Observances: I will be happy to recognize and excuse religious holidays and observances that conflict with class assignments and/or meetings. However, it is the student's responsibility to bring these to my attention ahead of time -- notification after the fact will not suffice for excuse.

ADA Statement: Students with a disability who wish to be accommodated should see the instructor by the end of the first week of class so that the appropriate material can be filed with the [Office of Disability Accommodation](#) (ODA). Students with disabilities are welcome to participate without special accommodation, but filing paperwork leaves the option open should accommodation be desired later. ODA makes final recommendations regarding what constitutes "reasonable accommodation," the standard established by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Date	Subject	Reading*	Due**
Jul,08	Foundations of Government	Fiorina Ch. 1	
Jul,09	American Democracy & Political Culture	Fiorina ch. 1, 4, and Huntington 1981 ch. 1 (online)	Quiz 1 (ch. 1)
Jul,10	Public Opinion	Fiorina ch. 5	Quiz 2 (ch. 4, Huntington)
Jul,11	Public Opinion	Fiorina ch. 5, Ch.TX-1 (pp. TX-3-37)	Quiz 3 (ch. 5)
Jul,15	Media	Fiorina ch. 9	Quiz 4 (ch. 9)
Jul,16	Media		
Jul,17	Exam 1		
Jul,18	Nominations & Elections	Fiorina ch. 10, 11	
Jul,22	Nominations & Elections	Fiorina ch. 10, 11, ch. TX-2 (pp. TX43-76)	Quiz 5 (ch. 10, 11)
Jul,23	Participation	Ch. 6	Quiz 6 (ch. 6), Assignment 1
Jul,24	Interest Groups	<i>**In-class activity today. Must be present on time. Points awarded for participation**</i>	
Jul,25	Interest Groups	Fiorina ch. 7	Quiz 7 (ch. 7)
Jul,29	Parties	Fiorina ch. 8	Quiz 8 (ch. 8), Assignment 2
Jul,30	Parties		
Jul,31	Exam 2		
Aug,01	Policy Process	Fiorina ch. 18	Quiz 9 (ch. 18)
Aug,05	Domestic & Economic Policy	Fiorina ch. 19	
Aug,06	Domestic & Economic Policy		Assignment 3
Aug,07	Foreign Policy	Fiorina ch. 20	Quiz 10 (ch. 19, 20)
Aug,08	Exam 3		
Aug,09	Final Exam (OPTIONAL)		

* Readings should be completed *before* class on the day listed. For example, chapter 20 should be read *before* class on 8/07. All chapters listed refer to the chapter in the assigned text (Fiorina et. al.) unless otherwise indicated.

** Assignments and quizzes are due *before* the class next to which they are listed. For example, Quiz 10 must be completed *before* class on 8/07. Assignment dropboxes (on Bb) and quizzes will close at the start of class and become unavailable.