

Political Science (PSCI) 2306.008, Fall 2018

American Government: Laws and Institutions

ESSC 255

TR 12:30- 1:50 pm

Instructor:

Dr. John Ishiyama

Office: 166 Wooten Hall

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00-12:15 p.m. and by appointment

Office Phone: 940-565-4326

E-mail: john.ishiyama@unt.edu

	Mahdi Amirisefat	Ibrahim Shliek	Meredith Winn
Office:	Wooten Hall 173a	Wooten Hall 110	Wooten Hall 167
Office Hours:	2:00 pm- 5:00 pm Thursdays	1:00-3:00 pm Monday 10:00 am-12:00 pm Tuesdays	12-1:30 pm Mondays 9:00 10:30 am- Tuesdays
E-mail:	mohammad.amirisefat@my.unt.edu	ibrahimshliek@my.unt.edu	MeredithWinn@my.unt.edu
Assigned Students (If your last name falls in this range your initial point of contact is this Teaching Assistant):	Abuwayida-Fuqua	Gallemore-New	Nguyen-Zihuatanejo

Student Supplemental Instructors: Nick Luciano and Cassidy Wray

YOUR FIRST POINT OF CONTACT WITH THE COURSE IS YOUR ASSIGNED GRADUATE TEACHING ASSISTANT- IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, FIRST CONTACT YOUR TA, BEFORE CONTACTING THE PROFESSOR

BEFORE WRITING THE PROFESSOR PLEASE READ <http://m.wikihow.com/Email-a-Professor>.

There is a Canvas site for this course where text and workbook assignments can be accessed. (<https://unt.instructure.com/login/ldap>) In addition copies of some other documents will be placed there as well (e.g. the syllabus).

I. Course Goals: This is an introductory American government course designed to examine the development of the institutional structures of the U.S. and Texas political systems. To be able to analyze the US political system, we will be adopting an explicitly **Comparative Perspective, i.e. how does the US political system compare with the political system of other countries.** There are two reasons for this. First, being able to understand the development and operation of the political systems of other countries, helps us understand why the American political system developed in the way it did. Further, comparison offers potential alternatives to consider if one were interested in effecting improvement in the US system. The second is more practical: the instructor is primarily trained as a comparative political scientist, and has extensive experience studying other political systems, particularly in Europe, Russia, the former Soviet Union, and Africa. Thus, every effort will be made to understand the US political system in comparison with other political systems.

By the end of the semester, students will be able to identify, analyze, and evaluate the national institutions of government—Congress, the Presidency, the Bureaucracy, the Judiciary, and related state level institutions. Student learning objectives include:

- 1.1 Demonstrating the ability to identify and explain constitutionalism.
- 1.2 Comprehending the principles of Federalism.
- 1.3 Synthesizing the roles of the executive, legislative, and judicial branches of government.
- 2.1 Demonstrating an awareness and recognition of the scope of democratic theory.
- 2.2 Differentiating between civil rights and civil liberties.

This course satisfies state mandated requirements for a course emphasizing the U.S. and Texas constitutions.

II. Required Texts:

There are two books for the course required for purchase.(the text AND the workbook) AND access to the Packback platform.

1) American Government and Politics (Custom Edition for UNT (online textbook available via Canvas site) – this is based on excerpts from different textbooks from Sage/CQ press (you purchase access passkey from bookstore)

Samuel Kernell, Gary Jacobson, Thad Kousser and Lynn Vavrek *The Logic of American Politics* University of North Texas PSCI 2306.008 American Government Laws and Institutions Custom Electronic Edition (readings indicated in syllabus as **KJKV**)

A set of instructions for download of this text should appear on the product key you purchase from the bookstore or from the publisher.

2) Matthew Eshbaugh-Soha ed (2013) 1040 workbook Laws and Institutions, First Edition. (available via Canvas) (readings indicated in syllabus as **MES**)

Instructions to purchase workbook appear in Canvas—click on workbook link OR click on first assignment and it will prompt you with purchase instructions.

3) Also required is purchase of access to the Packback platform. Class participation will be assessed via “Packback”. The Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you will be asked to devise questions about how what we’re studying relates to life and the world around you.

Writing questions and answers on Packback will:

- Help you develop writing skills necessary for any career path
- Reinforce the imperative skill of justifying thoughts and claims with credible evidence- and then citing the evidence!
- Enhance critical thinking sought out by employers
- Deepen your understanding of the course content by gaining diverse insights and perspectives from your peers

Course goals for using Packback are for all students to actively learn, critically think, and move past regurgitation of the course content. The goal is for each student to gain interest & *informed* opinions on the subject matter.

Your participation on Packback will count towards **135 points** of your final grade (about 10%)
.There are nine (9) Packback assignments each will be worth 15 points each

In order to receive your points per week, you must post **1 Question and 2 Answers relevant to our class subject matter** per week.

Before you start posting, be sure to read the [Community Guidelines](#) found in the tutorial on Packback. If your post doesn't follow the Packback Community Guidelines, there is a chance it will be removed and you won't receive points for that post.

There will be a **Sunday 11:59 PM deadline** for submissions in your community each week. This will not begin until week 2

Note: it takes 24 hours for the Packback team to moderate a post and send a coaching email. If by any reason your post is moderated because it does NOT meet the Community Guidelines, you will need to edit and re-publish your post to receive credit for the week. This is why it is important that you complete your Packback questions and responses far before the deadline in case your post is moderated

You will receive a welcome email from holla@packback.co prompting you to finish registration and payment. Packback has already created an account for you with your school email, *all you need to do is reset your password*. This email may be directed to spam or filtered out, so make sure you do a thorough scan of your inbox if you can't find the email.

If you search your inbox and still can't find the welcome email, or if you are new to the course, you may manually register by following the instructions below:

1. Navigate to <https://Packback.co/questions> and click "Register as a new student".
Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can login with your credentials.
2. Make sure to register with your SCHOOL email address and real first name and last name.
3. Enter our class community's access code into the "Join a new Community" module on your dashboard.

Our Community access code: C69C391D-C59D-731C-93D9-5FD7EECB0480

4. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

If you have ANY questions or concerns regarding Packback throughout the semester, please contact the customer support team at holla@packback.co

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions

III. Policy on attendance: I do not take regular attendance. Whether you choose to attend or not is entirely up to you. However, much of what appears on the exams will be taken directly from lectures, and the pop quizzes will help you prepare for the examinations, so it is very much in your interest to attend on a regular basis, so please try to do so.

IV. TAMS Students: If you are absent for any reason, you are required to file an absence report with the TAMS Academic Office. In addition, as your professor, I will send periodic attendance reports to the TAMS Academic Office. TAMS specifically prohibits the use of laptop computers or other electronic devices (head phones and cell phones, for example) during the class lecture. Audio recorders are OK as well as electronic tablets.

V. Course Requirements: There are several graded items for this course. **THE FINAL GRADE IS BASED ON A CURVE THAT WILL BE CALCULATED AT THE END OF THE TERM.**

- 1) On September 6, there will be a syllabus quiz (in class). Be prepared by reading carefully the syllabus. This is worth 30 points.
- 2) In addition there will six (6) unscheduled “pop” quizzes during the term. Each is worth 25 points apiece. Two will occur before the first examination. Two will occur between the first and second examination; and two will occur between the second and final examination. These quizzes will act, in part, as your review sheets for the examinations, and the questions that appear on the quizzes will appear verbatim on the examinations. **THERE WILL BE ABSOLUTELY NO MAKEUPS FOR MISSED POP QUIZZES FOR ANY REASON. HOWEVER YOUR LOWEST QUIZ GRADE WILL BE DROPPED FROM THE TOTAL POINTS AT THE END OF THE TERM**

THUS ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO OFFICIAL ATTENDANCE REQUIRED IT IS IN YOUR INTEREST TO ATTEND CLASS REGULARLY.

- 3) There will also be three major exams scheduled for this term. The first is scheduled for October 4 and is worth 200 points. The second is scheduled for November 1 and is worth 200 points. The third is the final examination (scheduled for December 13, 10:30 am-12:30 pm) is worth 250 points and is a comprehensive examination.
- 4) In addition workbook assignments are worth a total of 320 points. These assignments are also designed to help you prepare for the examination All workbook assignments are due on the due date, **no later than 11:59 pm.**
- 5) Nine Packback assignments will be worth a total of 135 points and are due on Sundays at 11:59 pm weekly as indicated in the schedule below.

Grades: Your final percentage will be calculated based on 1260 total points as the denominator (because I will drop the lowest quiz grade)

******PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE NO EXTRA CREDIT OFFERED TO INDIVIDUALS FOR THIS COURSE. IT IS FUNDAMENTALLY UNFAIR TO OFFER EXTRA CREDIT TO INDIVIDUALS AND NOT TO THE ENTIRE CLASS. SO PLEASE DO NOT ASK FOR EXTRA CREDIT.**

Anything in the lectures, class discussion, and assigned readings is fair game for exam questions. However, the majority of questions will be taken directly from the pops quizzes, with the remainder from the workbook assignments.

The workbook provides you with additional resources for your learning experience. Each chapter corresponds with the topic under discussion in class. Assignments will be turned in on the Canvas site. If you complete the workbook assignment by the assigned due date **BY 11:59 PM** on the syllabus, you can earn up to 100% of the points. If you turn the workbook assignment late, after the due date, you can earn up to 50% of the points, up until **TWO WEEKS AFTER THE DUE DATE**.

If you have a question about how your assignment is graded or you think there is an error in the grade assignment, please contact the teaching assistant assigned to prior to the next class meeting after the grade is posted. **FAILURE TO DO SO WAIVES YOUR ABILITY TO APPEAL THE ASSIGNMENT GRADE.**

VI. Miscellaneous: If you miss class, it is incumbent on you to be responsible for the notes. You should ask one of your classmates for notes in the unlikely event that you miss class. Do not ask either the TA or me for notes from the class.

YOUR FIRST POINT OF CONTACT WITH THE COURSE IS YOUR ASSIGNED TEACHING ASSISTANT- IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS, FIRST CONTACT YOUR TA.

I do not mind if you use a laptop or recording devices during lectures. However do not distract your fellow students with the device (e.g. by watching movies or something irrelevant to class)

I will post the power point slides on the Canvas site. They will appear after the lecture. Powerpoint slides are not meant as a substitute for class attendance. The lectures will also appear in PANOPTO slide captures which will allow you to hear the lecture as well.

Other things to note

PLEASE TURN CELL PHONES OFF DURING CLASS!

ALSO, ABSOLUTELY NO ELECTRONIC DEVICES OF ANY KIND (e.g. computers, phones, ipads, etc) WILL BE ALLOWED DURING AN EXAM.

NO DARK GLASSES DURING THE EXAMINATION TIME.

BATHROOM BREAKS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED DURING EXAMINATIONS.

NO ONE WILL BE ALLOWED IN THE ROOM TO TAKE THE EXAM AFTER THE FIRST PERSON COMPLETES AND LEAVES.

FAILURE TO COMPLY WILL RESULT IN THE ASSIGNMENT OF AN IMMEDIATE FAILING GRADE FOR THAT EXAMINATION.

VII. Supplemental Instruction

A Supplemental Instruction (SI) component is provided for all students who want to improve their understanding of the material taught in this course. SI sessions are led by a student who has already mastered the course material and has been trained to facilitate group sessions where students can meet to compare class notes, review and discuss important concepts, develop strategies for studying, and prepare for exams. Attendance at SI sessions is free and voluntary. Students may attend as many times as they choose. SI sessions begin the second

week of class and continue throughout the semester. A session schedule will be announced in class. For information about the program, and session schedule/updates, visit:

<http://learningcenter.unt.edu/>

VIII. Schedule of lecture topics and readings:

Topic 1 August 28-
Introduction to the class
No readings

NO CLASS THURSDAY August 30 (I will be away at a meeting out of town)

Topic 2 September 4-11 the Development of American Democracy
Readings: American Government and Politics Textbook with Workbook
SYLLABUS QUIZ SEPT 4
Readings: KJKV Chapters 1 and 2
MES Chapter 1 – Workbook: The Constitution (DUE 9/13)
First Packback assignment due Sunday, September 9

Workbook assignments from Chapter 1 due September 11 by midnight

Topic 3 September 13-18 Constitutionalism and Constitutionalism in Comparative Perspective: US, Texas, and other constitutions
Readings: KJKV Texas Legend E.J. Davis and The Current System pp. 398-412
KJKV Texas State Constitution 413-426
(pay particular attention to powerpoint slides on comparative constitutions of Britain and Russia)
Packback assignment due Sunday, September 16

Topic 4 September 20-25 –Federalism and American Political Development
Readings:
KJKV Chapter 3 – Federalism
MES Chapter 2 – Workbook: Federalism (DUE 9/27)

Workbook assignments from Chapter 2 due September 25 by midnight
Packback assignment due Sunday, September 23

Topic 5 September 27-October 2- Federalism in Comparative Perspective
(pay particular attention to powerpoint slides on comparative federalism)

EXAM 1 October 4

Topic 6 October 9-11 The Legislature
Readings: KJKV Chapter 6 – Congress
MES Chapter 3 – Workbook: The Legislative Branch (DUE 10/13)
Workbook assignments from Chapter 3 due October 11 by midnight
Packback assignment due Sunday, October 14

Topic 7 October 16 The Legislature: Comparative Perspectives
(pay particular attention to powerpoint slides on comparative legislatures, especially the Texas and British cases)

Topic 8 October 18-23 The Executive

Readings: KJKV Chapter 7 – The Presidency

MES Chapter 4 – Workbook: The Presidency (DUE 10/23)

Workbook assignments from Chapter 4 due October 23 by midnight

Packback assignment due Sunday, October 21

NO CLASS OCTOBER 25

Topic 9 **October 30** The Executive: Comparative Perspectives

(pay particular attention to powerpoint slides on comparative executives)

EXAM 2 November 1

Topic 10 November 6-8 The Federal Bureaucracy

Readings: KJKV Chapter 8 – Federal Bureaucracy

MES Chapter 5 – Workbook: Bureaucracy (DUE 11/8)

Workbook assignments from Chapter 5 due Nov 8 by midnight

Packback assignment due Sunday, November 11

Topic 11 November 13-15 The Courts

Readings: **KJKV** Chapter 9 – The Federal Courts

MES Chapter 6– Workbook: The Courts (DUE 11/15)

Workbook assignments from Chapter 6 due Nov 15 by midnight

Packback assignment due Sunday, November 18

Topic 12 November 20- November 27 Civil Liberties

Readings: KJKV Chapter 5 – Civil Liberties

MES Chapter 7 – Workbook: Civil Liberties (DUE 11/27)

Workbook assignments from Chapter 7 due November 27 by midnight

Packback assignment due Sunday, November 25

Thanksgiving Break November 22- November 26

Topic 13 December 4-6 Civil Rights

Readings: KJKV Chapter 4 – Civil Rights

MES Chapter 8 – Workbook: Civil Rights (DUE 12/6)

Workbook assignments from Chapter 8 due TUESDAY December 6 by midnight

Packback assignment due Sunday 2

Prefinal day review December 6

FINAL EXAM : Thursday December 13, 10:30 am-12:30 pm.

IX. Additional information

University of North Texas -- Department of Political Science

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STANDARDS AND CONSEQUENCES

According to UNT Policy 06.003, Student Academic Integrity, academic dishonesty occurs when students engage in behaviors including, but not limited to cheating, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, forgery, plagiarism, and sabotage. A finding of academic dishonesty may result in a range of academic penalties or sanctions ranging from admonition to expulsion from the University. For additional information see the next segment (Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism and <https://policy.unt.edu/policy/06-003>).

POLICY ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying others' tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one's own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.

Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of "F" in the course. In the case of graduate departmental exams, the minimum penalty shall be failure of all fields of the exam. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the field faculty in the case of departmental exams.

Cases of cheating or plagiarism on graduate departmental exams, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary coursework may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Undergraduate Studies Committee in the case of undergraduate students, or the Graduate Studies Committee in the case of graduate students. These committees, acting as agents of the department Chair, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

ADA ACCOMMODATION STATEMENT

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking reasonable accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Access (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you 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 Office of Disability Access website at <https://disability.unt.edu/>.

EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION & PROCEDURES

UNT uses a system called Eagle Alert to quickly notify students with critical information in the event of an emergency (i.e., severe weather, campus closing, and health and public safety emergencies like chemical spills, fires, or violence). In the event of a university closure, please refer to Blackboard/Canvas for contingency plans for covering course materials.

ACCEPTABLE STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the

classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Dean of Students to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>.

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: <http://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 at www.spot.unt.edu or email spot@unt.edu.

SEXUAL ASSAULT PREVENTION

UNT is committed to providing a safe learning environment free of all forms of sexual misconduct. Federal laws and UNT policies prohibit discrimination on the basis of sex as well as 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. The Survivor Advocates can be reached at SurvivorAdvocate@unt.edu or by calling the Dean of Students Office at 940-565-2648.