

GOVERNMENT 2305.HN1.20F: AMERICAN NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

WEDNESDAY 4:00-6:45, FALL 2020; REMOTE LEARNING

Instructor: Dr. Banks Miller

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Office Hours: Tuesday 2-3, and by appointment, via MS Teams

Course Webpage: <https://elearning.utdallas.edu/>

Welcome to Honors American National Government. Over the course of the semester, we will be concerned with several major themes. First, we will consider the basic structural and theoretical underpinnings of the American system of government, including the U.S. Constitution. Second, we will examine the key components of political behavior in the American system. In examining political behavior we will focus on concepts like public opinion, the mass media, political parties, interest groups, and electoral participation.

Course Goals:

This course seeks to develop the following capabilities in students:

1. Understanding of how the structure and operation of American government affects citizens' daily lives.
2. Recognition of the role of politics and strategy in the operation of government.
3. The ability to synthesize material from the course to produce a nuanced opinion of the proper role of government and politics in society.

Course Materials:

1. *The Logic of American Politics* (9th ed.). CQ Press. Samuel Kernell, Gary C. Jacobson, Thad Kousser, and Lynn Vavreck. ISBN: 9781544322995. The book has been ordered at the campus bookstore and you may also find electronic versions of the book available from the publisher.

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade will be based on following assignments:

1. Twelve chapter quizzes worth a total of 30% of your grade. I will drop the lowest quiz grade (including any that you miss). Therefore, this component of your grade will be comprised of the highest 11 quiz grades. Quizzes must be taken before the beginning of the class in which we

cover the chapter on which quiz questions are based. Quizzes are typically 10-15 multiple choice questions and are meant to evaluate your comprehension of the assigned material. Quizzes are open-book. Once you begin a quiz you will have 90 minutes to complete it. It will be automatically submitted for grading at the conclusion of the 90-minute period. There are no retakes of quizzes and no late quizzes will be accepted. Quizzes will open soon after we cover the previous assignment in class.

2. Participation comprise 25% of your grade. Participation will be gauged using participation blogs (listed as such on a tab in the course's eLearning website). I will post a question covering the material we are covering on a given day well before that material is covered. So, for example, blog question 1 will be posted shortly after class on August 19th and will be due no later than the start of class on August 26th. You will be graded on the thoroughness of your response to the questions, not your opinion. Thorough responses are likely to include at least 100 words. Excellent participation in class discussion will be used to boost participation scores, at the instructor's discretion.

3. Take Home exams are worth 30% of your final grade. There are two such exams, each worth 15%. These exams are open-note and open-book, but they are not group projects and must be the result of individual effort. Working with a group to complete these exams constitutes academic dishonesty. These exams will be open for 24 hours and you will 2 hours to complete them once you begin. Exams will open at 9 am on the day indicated in the syllabus and close at 9 am the following day. Please ensure that your technology is working adequately before beginning the exam.

4. There is a written assignment worth 15% of your final grade. Details of this assignment can be found on the eLearning page for the course. The paper will be assigned September 9th and due on September 23rd by the beginning of class. No late papers will be accepted.

4. Final grades in the class will be determined based on the following scale:

A = 93% or higher

A- = 90-92%

B+ = 86-89%

B = 83-85%

B- = 80-83%

C+ = 78-79%

C = 74-77%

C- = 70-73%

D = 65-69%

F = below 65%

Please note, I expect you to adhere to standards of academic honesty.

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Teaching Modality:

This course will be taught under the “remote learning” modality. This means that we will have regularly scheduled, face-to-face classes at the designated times (W 4-6:45). Typically, I will lecture during these courses and solicit questions and discussion. Lectures will be delivered using Microsoft Teams, which is available from the University here:

<https://www.utdallas.edu/oit/howto/microsoft-teams/#installing-teams-for-mac-pc>.

Course sessions will be recorded and posted to the eLearning website for the course after each class meeting. All live class lectures can be accessed through the course’s eLearning site. On the left-hand side menu you will see a module called “Course Link.” Inside that folder is a persistent link to the live lectures in Teams. In addition, you will find a folder for all recorded lectures within the Course Link area. Recordings of the live sessions will be close captioned. More guidance on asynchronous access is available here: <https://www.utdallas.edu/fall-2020/asynchronous-access-for-fall-2020/>.

For each class, I will provide you with a skeletal outline to aid you in note taking. These will be located under the “Note Outline” tab in eLearning. Typically, class sessions are broken down in to two separate lectures. We will time in between these lectures for discussion based on responses to blog questions.

Attendance at live class sessions is not required, but is highly recommended. I have posted a guide on the homepage for the course on eLearning which describes the best way to approach learning in a “remote learning” environment.

I cannot over-emphasize the importance of staying on schedule. Use the regular class meetings to help you stay accountable.

Class Recordings:

Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

Technical Difficulties:

The University is committed to providing a reliable learning management 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 provide an appropriate accommodation based on the situation. Students should immediately

report any problems to the instructor and also contact the online eLearning Help Desk. The instructor and the eLearning Help Desk will work with the student to resolve any issues at the earliest possible time.

Class Schedule:

Week	Assignment	Topics	Quiz	Participation
19-Aug	Course Introduction	---	---	---
26-Aug	Ch. 1--The Logic of American Politics	Logic of collective action//Representative Government	quiz 1	blog question 1
2-Sep	Ch. 2--The Constitution	Prelude and Design of Constitution//Fight for Ratification & Modern Constitution	quiz 2	blog question 2
9-Sep	Ch. 3--Federalism//Paper assigned	Development of federalism//Modern federalism	quiz 3	blog question 3
16-Sep	Ch. 4--Civil Rights & Ch.5--Civil Liberties	Civil Rights//Civil Liberties	quiz 4	blog question 4
23-Sep	Ch. 6--Congress//Paper due	Congressional Basics//Congressional Org	quiz 5	blog question 5
30-Sep	Ch. 7--The Presidency	Development of the presidency//Going public and the institutional presidency	quiz 6	blog question 6
7-Oct	Take Home Exam 1	---	---	---
14-Oct	Ch. 8--The Bureaucracy	Bureaucracy//Control of the bureaucracy	quiz 7	blog question 7
21-Oct	Ch. 9--The Judiciary	Judicial review and structure//Judicial decision making	quiz 8	blog question 8
28-Oct	Ch. 10--Public Opinion	What is public opinion//Does public opinion matter	quiz 9	blog question 9
4-Nov	Ch. 11--Voting, Campaigns, & Elections	Logic of elections//Campaigns	quiz 10	blog question 10
11-Nov	Ch. 12--Political Parties & Ch. 13--Interest Groups	Parties//Interest Groups	quiz 11	blog question 11
18-Nov	Ch. 14--The Media	Understanding the media//Demand for and effect of the media	quiz 12	blog question 12
25-Nov	Take Home Exam 2	---	---	---

Additional UT DALLAS Policies may be found at:
<http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies>

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.