PSCI 1050.008, *American Government: Processes and Policies*

W: 6:30 pm – 9:20 pm; ENV 130

Host: Eddie L. Meaders, J.D., M.A.

Office: Wooten Hall 141

Office Phone: (940) 565 – 2310

Political Science Department Office: Wooten Hall 125

Political Science Department Phone: (940) 565 - 2276

E-mail: meaders@unt.edu

Office Hours:

M: 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm

T, R: 10:00 am – 11:00 am; 1:00 pm -3:00 pm

W: 2:00 pm – 5:00 pm

Feel free to drop by. No appointment is needed during office hours. If the posted hours are no good, let me know and we’ll set something else up.

Teaching Assistant:

Office: Wooten Hall

Office Phone:

Political Science Department Office: Wooten Hall 125

Political Science Department Phone: (940) 565 - 2276

E-mail:

Office Hours:

Required Texts:

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Lowi, Weir, et al. *We the People: an Introduction to American Politics,* 7th Texas Edition. (GLW).

Cox & Ruderman, Processes and Policies in American and Texas Politics, 8th

Edition. (Workbook)(WB)

Required Newspaper: The *New York Times* (subscription information to be sent around the first week of class) If you are destitute, the UNT Library does maintain a subscription and you may read it rather than pay for a subscription. Current events are important and give practical applications and examples of what we discuss in class. The paper will be the source for bonus questions on exams and current events quizzes dealing with U.S. and Texas politics. For those of you electronically inclined the *Times* web-site is: http://www.nytimes.com.

Course Topics: This is an introductory American government course emphasizing two major areas. The first area involves an examination of various aspects of American style political process including public opinion, the role of the media in politics, political participation, political parties, interest groups, and campaigns & elections. The second area involves an examination of the policy making process and various public policies including economics, social welfare, healthcare, education, and national security/international relations.

Course Goals:

1.1. Explain the methods and process of political behavior and American and Texas politics.

1.2. Explain and recognize the importance of examining political behavior and ideology.

1.3. Survey key components of political behavior by examining the dynamics of public opinion, the media, interest groups, and the campaign and election process.

2.1. Explain the process of political socialization in American and Texas politics.

2.2. Explain the role of public opinion in a democratic society

2.3. Provide critiques about non-scientific and scientific methods of public opinion measurement.

3.1. Explain the process and dissemination of information by the media in American and Texas politics.

3.2. Analyze the process of media regulation.

3.3. Examine the relationship between the roles of the media in American democratic society.

4.1. Explain the dynamics of interest group formation in American and Texas politics.

4.2. Explain the influence interest groups and lobbyists have on governments.

5.1. Explain the role of political parties in American and Texas politics.

5.2. Analyze key components of political participation.

5.3. Analyze key components of elections and campaigns.

5.4. Examine the voting process and voter participation in American and Texas politics.

6.1. Analyze and critically assess the policymaking process in American and Texas politics and examine salient public policy issue areas.

6.2. Analyze the evolution and current role of the U.S. in the global arena in terms of both the economic and foreign policy domains.

Class Procedure: This class will be conducted in a lecture/discussion format. Students are encouraged to actively participate in class discussions. **READ AND PREPARE FOR THEM IN ADVANCE!** Your views, opinions, and questions are valued no matter how insignificant or controversial you may feel them to be. Politics being controversial, I ask that you keep your comments on point as they pertain to the lecture material. Still, I like to know what you think about things. Please do not feel inhibited by the size of the class in expressing your views. Warm bodies only fill up space and are not very exciting unless they say something.

Assessment components:

* Workbook Assignments: The workbook provides you with additional resources for your individual learning experience. Each chapter corresponds with the topic under discussion in class. Assignments will be collected in class on the designated nights **NO LATER THAN 6:45 pm!** If you will not be in class when assignments are due, you may turn them in early. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES (EVEN DEATH) WILL LATE HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS BE ACCEPTED!** If there is a grading question about your assignment, please bring this to the attention of the teaching assistant or instructor **NO LATER THAN** 48 hours after the grade is posted in Blackboard. Failure do so constitutes your waiver of the right to appeal the grade assigned.
* *NY Times* Quizzes: *NY Times* quizzes will cover current events as they relate to local, state, and national politics. This may be an individual activity with team discussion of the correct answer after the quiz. **Missed quizzes cannot be made up!** If you know you will be absent on a quiz day, please inform the instructor of this at least 24 hours in advance to schedule a time to take the quiz**!** If there is a grading question about your quiz, please bring this to the attention of the teaching assistant or instructor **NO LATER THAN** 48 hours after the grade is posted in Blackboard. Failure do so constitutes your waiver of the right to appeal the grade assigned.
* Examinations: There will be THREE (3) of them. Exams, which are closed book/notes, will consist of multiple choice and true-false questions. The exams are non-cumulative in the sense that they focus on the specific topics and reading assignments delineated by each section as well as various classroom team activities. Exam questions will **NOT** be taken from workbook readings**!** If there is a grading question about your exam, please bring this to the attention of the teaching assistant or instructor **NO LATER THAN** 48 hours after the grade is posted in Blackboard. Failure do so constitutes your waiver of the right to appeal the grade assigned.

Attendance: **ATTEND CLASS**! Why pay all this tuition money of you are not going to come to class?

***Specifically for 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.***

Disabled Students: If you are physically challenged, every attempt will be made to accommodate your educational needs. Talk to the instructor no later than the end of the first week of class so that we can make appropriate arrangements. This class operates in accordance with the UNT Office of Disability Accommodation guidelines and pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (1990).

Final Exam: The final is scheduled for Wednesday, December 15th, from 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm. It will not be comprehensive! Please do not ask to take the final early.

Grades: A necessary evil. Your grade will be determined based on your scores on the following activities:

* Exams (3): 60 %
* Workbook assignments and NY Times Quizzes 40%

I reserve the right to add or subtract up to a total of three (3) points to or from your final average based upon participation and general attitude. This is where good attendance and asking/answering questions can pay off.

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism and Cheating : Perish the thought and do not yield to temptation! 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 (UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16), which may be 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 addressed in compliance with the penalties and procedures laid out in this policy.

Please sign the last sheet of the syllabus when you return your information sheet to indicate you have read the policy.

Miscellaneous Poop:

**PLEASE TURN CELL PHONES OFF DURING CLASS! RINGING, BEEPING, CHIRPING, AND OBNOXIOUS MELODIOUS TUNES CAUSE DISTRACTIONS. IF THIS HAPPENS, I MAY ANSWER YOUR PHONE FOR YOU, OR AT LEAST CONFISCATE IT FOR THE DURATION OF THE CLASS PERIOD! NO WEB SURFING!**

**Bonus opportunity:** since the missed homework and quiz policy is a bit harsh, you may participate in two (2) community service projects either individually or as a team. Please check the volunteer center website, <http://www.unt.edu/volunteer/>, for service opportunities. Complete the service, show written proof of your completion, and write a paper (no longer than 2 pages long, typed, 12 point font, double spaced, standard margins, Chicago or APA manual of style compliant) about your experience and how it contributes to the common good. Each project is worth 100 points credit to replace a missing quiz or homework assignment. Projects, documentation, and papers must be completed and turned in **NO LATER THAN** December 8th

at the start of class. No exceptions!

Schedule Changes: I reserve the right to change any of the exam times or assignments by providing you with at least a 48 hour notice of such changes. You are responsible for any changes that may occur during the course of the semester. Any changes will be announced at the beginning of each class and posted in Blackboard.

Coming Attractions

(More or Less)

Week 1 August 31

Ch. 6, Public Opinion

Week 2 September 8

Ch. 7, the Media

WB assignments 1-1, 1-2, 1-4, 1-6 AND 3-1, 3-2, 3-3, 3-4 due!

Week 3 September 15

Ch. 8, Political Participation and Voting

NY Times Quiz # 1; WB assignments 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 2-4 due!

Week 4 September 22

**Exam 1 (first hour);** Ch. 9, Political Parties

Week 5 September 29

Political parties continued; Ch. 11, Groups & Interests

WB assignments 4-1, 4-2, 4-3, 4-4, 4-6 due!

NY Times Quiz # 2

Week 6 October 6

More on groups and interests

WB assignments 5-1, 5-2, 5-4, 5-6 due!

Week 7 October 13

Ch. 10, Campaigns and Elections

NY Times Quiz # 3

Week 8October20

WB assignments 6-1, 6-2, 6-3, 6-4, 6-5 due!

Week 9 October 27

Ch. 21, Parties and Elections in Texas; Ch. 22, Interest Groups, Lobbying, and Lobbyists.

NY Times Quiz # 4

Week 10 November 3

**EXAM 2 (first hour)**

Midterm elections autopsy; Ch. 16, Government and the Economy

Week 11 November 10

Ch. 16, Government and the Economy

WB assignments 7-1, 7-3, 7-5 due

NY Times Quiz # 5

Week 12 November 17

Ch. 17 Social policy; Ch. 27 Public Policy in Texas

WB assignments 8-1, 8-2, 8-4, 8-5 due!

Week 13 November 24

Class will not meet, but we there will be an online assignment due by 6:30 pm.

Week 14 December 1

Ch. 18, Foreign Policy and Democracy; WB Ch. 10

WB assignment 9-1, 9-3, 9-4 due!

NY Times Quiz # 6

Week 15 December 8

More on foreign policy

WB assignments 10-2, 10-3, 10-4, 10-5 due!

Community service extra credit due!

Week 16 December 15th

**FINAL EXAM;** 6:30 pm – 8:30 pm**,** ENVR 130

PSCI 1050.008, Fall 2010

Student Information Sheet

(Please Print)

Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Phone:( )\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hometown:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Year in School:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Transfer (if so, which school):\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Major:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Minor:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Hobbies and interesting things you like to do:

This certifies that I have read the syllabus and understand the requirements for the course, including the Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism. I agree to abide by the academic integrity policy. As such, I verify that all work done in this class will be my own.

Signature:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_