PSCI 1040.001, American Government: Laws and Institutions, Summer 5W-1, 2015

MTWR 10:00 am – 11:50 am, MATT 311

Instructor: 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 & W: 1:00 pm – 3:00 pm\*

\*I will not be in the afternoons of June 17th and July 6th

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: Jinrui “Ben” Xi

Office: Wooten Hall

Office Phone: (940) 891-6805

Political Science Department Office: Wooten Hall 125

Political Science Department Phone: (940) 565 - 2276

E-mail: JinruiXi@my.unt.edu

Office Hours: 9:00am to 10:00am MTWR

Required Items:

Text: *We The People: Introduction to American Politics/State of Texas* (V1), 10/e, Thomas E. Patterson. **Your book is your friend. Buy a copy and read it!**

This is an introductory American government course designed to examine the theoretical and constitutional foundations of U.S. and Texas political systems and their respective institutional structures. 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. Students will also be able to identify and explain basic principles of civil rights and civil liberties. Student learning objectives include:

* 1. Demonstrate, identify, and explain constitutionalism.
  2. Identify and define principles of Federalism.
  3. Synthesize the roles of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of government.
  4. Demonstrate an awareness and recognition of the scope of democratic theory.
  5. Differentiate between civil rights and civil liberties.

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

Class Procedure: This class will be conducted in a lecture/discussion format. Students are encouraged to actively participate in class discussions. **READ THE ASSIGNED CHAPTERS PRIOR TO CLASS!**  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 you say something.

Assessment components:

* **Online Assignments:** Every chapter will have a LearnSmart assignment (LSA) that corresponds to the assigned chapters in the textbook. Every chapter may have additional online assignments that you will be able to complete in Blackboard.
  + **IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MONITOR ASSIGNMENT STATUS (POSTINGS & DUE DATES) REGULARLY IN BLACKBOARD!** You get two attempts at taking each assignment, but keep in mind the second score is the one that is recorded. Be careful what you ask for in trying again. If you get an 85 on the first attempt and you think you can do better and retake the assignment and end up with a lower score of 75, the 75 is counted.
  + **ALL ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE ELECTRONICALLY SUBMITTED BY THE DUE DATE AND TIME. FAILURE TO DO SO WILL RESULT IN A SCORE OF 0 FOR THAT ASSIGNMENT. LATE WORK IS NOT ACCEPTED!** The earlier you get your assignments in the better. As with all things online, the system may crash when you have a looming deadline. That is not an excuse to miss deadlines.
  + If there is a scoring question about your assignment, please bring this to the attention of the instructor **NO LATER THAN** 24 hours after the grade is posted in Blackboard Since assignments are automatically graded at the due date and time, the 24 hour clock will usually start at the due date and time. Failure to notify me of a problem within a timely manner constitutes your waiver of the right to appeal the score assigned. Do not wait until the end of the term to question an assignment score from earlier in the term.
* **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. If there is a grading question about your exam, please bring this to the attention of the instructor **NO LATER THAN** 24 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 if 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.***

Student Success: If you are struggling with the class, feel free to discuss course issues either with the instructor or the TA during office hours. Additional resources may be found at: <http://success.unt.edu>

* Supplemental Instructor: 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 been successful with 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. On average, students who attend supplemental instruction once a week, earn a significantly higher course grade than those who do not attend. 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/si>

Supplemental Instructor: Victor Musasia II

E-mail: vmusasia10@yahoo.com

Disabled Students: The University of North Texas 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 you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You 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 Accommodation website at http://www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565 - 4323.

Final Exam: The final is scheduled for Friday, July 10 from 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. It will not be comprehensive! Please do not ask to take the final early.

Grades (earned and not given). Your grade will be determined based on your scores on the following activities:

Exams: 75%

Online assignments 25%

**Grades are not discussed by phone or in e-mails. See the instructor during office hours for questions!**

Academic Integrity, Plagiarism and Cheating:

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POLICY ON CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM

Perish the thought and do not give in to temptation and the easy way. 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.

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POLICY ON 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 (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. 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

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 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 classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr).

Miscellaneous Poop:

**PLEASE TURN CELL PHONES OFF (or at least silence) 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 TEXTING OR WEB SURFING! PAY ATTENTION IN CLASS!**

**Bonus Opportunity**: since the missed homework and quiz policy is a bit harsh, you may participate in two (2) community service projects during the semester. Please check the volunteer center website, <http://www.unt.edu/volunteer/>, for service opportunities. Service opportunities do not need to be affiliated with UNT. Complete the service, show written proof of your completion (if obtainable), 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 on **July 6th** 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 24 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: June 8- June 11

Ch. 1, Political Culture

Ch. 10, Introduction to Texas Politics

Ch. 2, Constitutional Democracy

Ch. 11, the Texas Constitution

Week 2: June 15- June 18

Ch. 3, Federalism

Ch. 15, Local Government in Texas

**Exam I on the 17th! (First hour of class)**

Ch. 6, Congress

Ch. 12, the Texas Legislature

Week 3: June 22 – June 25

More Congress and the Texas legislature

Ch. 7, the Presidency

Ch. 13, the Texas Executive branch

Week 4: June 29 - July 2

Ch. 8, the Bureaucracy

**EXAM II on the 1st (First hour of class)**

Ch. 9, the Federal Courts

Ch. 14, the Texas Judiciary

Week 5: July 6 – July 10

Ch. 4, Civil Liberties

Ch. 5, Civil Rights

**FINAL EXAM on the July 10th; 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM, MATT 311**

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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: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_