Welcome to Constitutional Foundations and Political Behavior in the U.S and Texas. 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. Third, we will discuss boarder issues in understanding the social foundations of government.

Course Goals:

This course seeks to develop the following capabilities in students:


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:


These two books have been packaged together by the publisher at a discount on both. The package is available at the bookstore (and potentially off-campus bookstores) under the ISBN: 978-0-393-14337-9. Feel free to purchase the books separately if you so desire.

Assignments and Grading:

Your grade will be based on following assignments:

1. Four exams, none cumulative, worth 22% of your grade each. The four exams combined are worth 88% of your final grade.

The exams will be a mixture of multiple choice, matching, and true/false in format. They will be given on the days designated in the syllabus. NO MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE GIVEN. If you are missing class for an excused absence you must let me know in advance. All students missing class for excused UTD related activities must turn in the form from your organization with the excused dates before September 1. For exams, you must bring your UTD photo ID with you to class and keep that on the desk in front of you. You will need to show this ID when you turn in your exams. This means you should leave purses and back packs in the car or at home. If you bring them to class you will be required to leave them in the aisle and we are not responsible for loss or theft.

Some exam review will occur in class and review guides will likely be made available on the course website. I encourage you to study in groups to prepare for the exams.

2. Nine quizzes of which the highest six will count toward your final grade. The six highest scoring quizzes will be worth 2% of your grade each, for a total of 12% of your final grade.

THERE ARE NO MAKEUP QUIZZES. Recall that the three lowest quiz grades will be dropped.

Quizzes are open-book and open-note, so you may refer to your textbook and your class notes when taking the quizzes. A quiz will typically cover one or two of the substantive topics on the syllabus. As noted, the quizzes are available on the eLearning course website under the Assignments tab. Please note the following:

- It is your responsibility to access and complete the quizzes before they expire, typically you will have 5-7 days to complete a quiz once it opens.
- Deadlines for completing the quizzes are available under the Calendar tab. Failure to take a quiz in the allotted time means receiving a zero for that exam.
- Once you open a quiz you will have two hours to complete it. If you begin a quiz and do not complete it in the allotted time then you will be scored based on the questions you have answered in the time given.
- The questions within a quiz are presented in a randomized order so taking the quiz with someone else will not be helpful. You should take the quizzes on your own and use them as an assessment of your mastery of the material.
• I am not responsible for your inability to access eLearning. Please give yourself plenty of
time to complete the quizzes, as failure to take the quizzes before they expire will result
in a zero.

3. There is no extra-credit in this class. Further, all grades are final unless challenged before the
end of the semester. Any challenge to a grade requires that the student provide the requisite
materials in support of the challenge. Further, I may adjust the grade up or down depending on
the re-examination initiated by the student.

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

   A+ = 96% or higher  
   A= 93-95%  
   A- = 90-93%  
   B+ = 87-89%  
   B=83-86%  
   B- = 80-83%  
   C+ = 77-79%  
   C = 73-76%  
   C- = 70-73%  
   D = 65-69%  
   F = below 65%

**Attendance and Classroom Behavior:**

Attendance is expected. I will randomly take attendance throughout the term. In borderline grade
cases, the instructor reserves the right to raise the final grade of students who have exhibited
exemplary attendance. Further, it is in your best interest to attend lectures, as large components
of the exams will be based solely on materials delivered during lectures.

Please silence your cell-phones before coming to class. Do not talk or text on your phone will in
class—this kind of behavior is extremely disruptive to students around you and to me.
Furthermore it is disrespectful. If I notice ringing cell phones or other disruptive behavior I
reserve the right to dock points from a student’s final grade. Cell phones and lap top computers
are not allowed in class during exam days. If you are caught with either during an exam you will
receive a zero on the exam. Do not sleep in class—bring caffeine if you need it.

Finally, you have responsibilities in this class. Please plan accordingly, including being on time.
Falling behind in this class is the easiest way to do poorly in it.

**Email Policy:**

Please correspond with me via email using only your UT Dallas provided email address. I will
not respond to inquiries that do not come from UT Dallas email addresses.
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December 1st: Interest Groups in Texas  
December 6th: EXAM 4

UTD Policies

Technical Support

If you experience any problems with your UTD account you may send an email to: assist@utdallas.edu or call the UTD Computer Helpdesk at 972-883-2911.

Field Trip Policies

Off-campus Instruction and Course Activities

Off-campus, out-of-state, and foreign instruction and activities are subject to state law and University policies and procedures regarding travel and risk-related activities. Information regarding these rules and regulations may be found at the website address http://www.utdallas.edu/BusinessAffairs/Travel_Risk_Activities.htm. Additional information is available from the office of the school dean. Below is a description of any travel and/or risk-related activity associated with this course.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University of Texas System and The University of Texas at Dallas have rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of their business. It is the responsibility of each student and each student organization to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations which govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the UTD printed publication, A to Z Guide, which is provided to all registered students each academic year.

The University of Texas at Dallas administers student discipline within the procedures of recognized and established due process. Procedures are defined and described in the Rules and Regulations, Series 50000, Board of Regents, The University of Texas System, and in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities of the university’s Handbook of Operating Procedures. Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations (SU 1.602, 972/883-6391) and online at http://www.utdallas.edu/judicialaffairs/UTDJudicialAffairs-HOPV.html

A student at the university neither loses the rights nor escapes the responsibilities of citizenship. He or she is expected to obey federal, state, and local laws as well as the Regents’ Rules, university regulations, and administrative rules. Students are subject to discipline for violating the standards of conduct whether such conduct takes place on or off campus, or whether civil or criminal penalties are also imposed for such conduct.
Academic Integrity

The faculty expects from its students a high level of responsibility and academic honesty. Because the value of an academic degree depends upon the absolute integrity of the work done by the student for that degree, it is imperative that a student demonstrate a high standard of individual honor in his or her scholastic work.

Scholastic Dishonesty, any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.

Plagiarism, especially from the web, from portions of papers for other classes, and from any other source is unacceptable and will be dealt with under the university’s policy on plagiarism (see general catalog for details). This course will use the resources of turnitin.com, which searches the web for possible plagiarism and is over 90% effective.

Copyright Notice

The copyright law of the United States (Title 17, United States Code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted materials, including music and software. Copying, displaying, reproducing, or distributing copyrighted works may infringe the copyright owner’s rights and such infringement is subject to appropriate disciplinary action as well as criminal penalties provided by federal law. Usage of such material is only appropriate when that usage constitutes “fair use” under the Copyright Act. As a UT Dallas student, you are required to follow the institution’s copyright policy. For more information about the fair use exemption, see http://www.utsystem.edu/ogc/intellectualproperty/copypol2.htm

Email Use

The University of Texas at Dallas recognizes the value and efficiency of communication between faculty/staff and students through electronic mail. At the same time, email raises some issues concerning security and the identity of each individual in an email exchange. The university encourages all official student email correspondence be sent only to a student’s U.T. Dallas email address and that faculty and staff consider email from students official only if it originates from a UTD student account. This allows the university to maintain a high degree of confidence in the identity of all individual corresponding and the security of the transmitted information. UTD furnishes each student with a free email account that is to be used in all communication with university personnel. The Department of Information Resources at U.T. Dallas provides a method for students to have their U.T. Dallas mail forwarded to other accounts.

Withdrawal from Class

The administration of this institution has set deadlines for withdrawal of any college-level courses. These dates and times are published in that semester's course catalog. Administration procedures must be followed. It is the student's responsibility to handle withdrawal requirements from any class. In other words, I cannot drop or withdraw any student. You must do the proper paperwork to ensure that you will not receive a final grade of “F” in a course if you choose not to attend the class once you are enrolled.

Student Grievance Procedures
Procedures for student grievances are found in Title V, Rules on Student Services and Activities, of the university’s *Handbook of Operating Procedures*.

In attempting to resolve any student grievance regarding grades, evaluations, or other fulfillments of academic responsibility, it is the obligation of the student first to make a serious effort to resolve the matter with the instructor, supervisor, administrator, or committee with whom the grievance originates (hereafter called “the respondent”). Individual faculty members retain primary responsibility for assigning grades and evaluations. If the matter cannot be resolved at that level, the grievance must be submitted in writing to the respondent with a copy of the respondent’s School Dean. If the matter is not resolved by the written response provided by the respondent, the student may submit a written appeal to the School Dean. If the grievance is not resolved by the School Dean’s decision, the student may make a written appeal to the Dean of Graduate or Undergraduate Education, and the deal will appoint and convene an Academic Appeals Panel. The decision of the Academic Appeals Panel is final. The results of the academic appeals process will be distributed to all involved parties.

Copies of these rules and regulations are available to students in the Office of the Dean of Students, where staff members are available to assist students in interpreting the rules and regulations.

**Incomplete Grade Policy**

As per university policy, incomplete grades will be granted only for work unavoidably missed at the semester’s end and only if 70% of the course work has been completed. An incomplete grade must be resolved within eight (8) weeks from the first day of the subsequent long semester. If the required work to complete the course and to remove the incomplete grade is not submitted by the specified deadline, the incomplete grade is changed automatically to a grade of **F**.

**Disability Services**

The goal of Disability Services is to provide students with disabilities educational opportunities equal to those of their non-disabled peers. Disability Services is located in room 1.610 in the Student Union. Office hours are Monday and Thursday, 8:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m.; Tuesday and Wednesday, 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.; and Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

The contact information for the Office of Disability Services is:
The University of Texas at Dallas, SU 22
PO Box 830688
Richardson, Texas 75083-0688
(972) 883-2098 (voice or TTY)
disabilityservice@utdallas.edu

If you anticipate issues related to the format or requirements of this course, please meet with the Coordinator of Disability Services. The Coordinator is available to discuss ways to ensure your full participation in the course. If you determine that formal, disability-related accommodations are necessary, it is very important that you be registered with Disability Services to notify them of your eligibility for reasonable accommodations. Disability Services can then plan how best to coordinate your accommodations.

It is the student’s responsibility to notify his or her professors of the need for such an accommodation. Disability Services provides students with letters to present to faculty members to verify that the student has a disability and needs accommodations. Individuals requiring special accommodation should contact the professor after class or during office hours.

**Religious Holy Days**
The University of Texas at Dallas will excuse a student from class or other required activities for the travel to and observance of a religious holy day for a religion whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20, Tax Code, Texas Code Annotated.

The student is encouraged to notify the instructor or activity sponsor as soon as possible regarding the absence, preferably in advance of the assignment. The student, so excused, will be allowed to take the exam or complete the assignment within a reasonable time after the absence: a period equal to the length of the absence, up to a maximum of one week. A student who notifies the instructor and completes any missed exam or assignment may not be penalized for the absence. A student who fails to complete the exam or assignment within the prescribed period may receive a failing grade for that exam or assignment.

If a student or an instructor disagrees about the nature of the absence [i.e., for the purpose of observing a religious holy day] or if there is similar disagreement about whether the student has been given a reasonable time to complete any missed assignments or examinations, either the student or the instructor may request a ruling from the chief executive officer of the institution, or his or her designee. The chief executive officer or designee must take into account the legislative intent of TEC 51.911(b), and the student and instructor will abide by the decision of the chief executive officer or designee.

*These descriptions and timelines are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.*