

POLS 5311: Graduate Seminar in American Politics

SPRING 2022

Mark Owens

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Course Time: 6:00 p.m. – 8:45 p.m.
Mondays
Classroom: CAS 104

Office Hours: 1:30 p.m. – 2:30 p.m. Mon
4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m. Wed
Office: CAS 123

Key Reminders: Above the Fold

SARS-CoV-2 is transmitted in local areas (6 feet from the source) when water droplets enter an individual's mouth, eyes, or nose. It is also possible for some virus particles to stay on plastic or metal surfaces for 3 days. Here's what you can do as we meet in person:

- 1) When you are healthy, study together with a small group of students you see often.
- 2) If you are ill, hunker down where you can. Send Dr. Owens a note to set a plan.
- 3) Dust off your work space, because the public has used that desk today.
- 4) Round-up a face covering.
- 5) If you work with a lot of people indoors or travel on public transportation, get tested 3-5 days after you think you were exposed.

Course Description

This course is designed to provide a survey of the institutions within the American government and the behavioral trends in American Politics. Each week examines, in detail, the scholarly arguments over the complexities of each topic and how to use the literature to identify details necessary when analyzing a question. Upon completion of this class, students should be prepared to take an advanced seminar on a subfield of American politics and evaluate arguments in American politics that are worth of appearing on a comprehensive exam.

Learning Objectives

Identify the components used to develop a political science theory.

Translate the applied implications of an empirical or theoretical study (recognize, interpret, interact).

Evaluate if theories in political science are valid.

Justify how individuals in government achieve powers beyond the direct authority of an office.

Synthesize the needs of individuals to participate in politics.

Raise, and recognize, questions that political science has still not answered.

Produce works that systematically analyze political phenomenon.

Required Books

Baumgartner, Frank and Bryan Jones. 2009. *Agendas and Instability in American Politics*, 2nd edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Albertson, Bethany and Shana Kusher Gadarian. 2015. “*Anxious Politics: Democratic Citizenship in a Threatening World.*” Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bullock, Charles III. 2021. “*Redistricting, The Most Political Activity in America*, 2nd Edition.” Roman Littlefield Press.

Additional required readings can be found on the course web page.

Student Evaluation

Expectations for all work

All work must be original - including only direct quotes without any analysis will result in a 0. Work that largely summarizes or only paraphrases work from other sources will not receive more than a B-. A paper must synthesize arguments and facts to build justifications for the author’s main point (or argument).

All missed class activities will be counted as a zero, *if not excused beforehand*.

Should it be necessary for a student to make up either of the exams, that will be done toward the end of the term.

All out of class assignments are due on the date specified. Failure to turn in an assignment on time will result in a penalty of one letter grade per day. Assignments not received within four days of the deadline will no longer be accepted.

All readings are expected to be completed before discussion of the topic. Although not all readings will be discussed in class, this does not negate your responsibility to know the assigned material.

Class Assignments & Participation, 100 points

A graduate seminar is a place to engage with a topic and share ideas with peers on how studies of American politics could be better. Certain weeks, you will be asked to complete assignments in class that utilize tools of social science. Another component of your class participation is being part of the conversation and sharing what you learned from the week’s readings. Offer a favorable proportion of the high-quality contributions in each class meeting. Note: *incorrect answers during class discussion will not count against you, but you should not expect points in those cases*. Points are lost by distracting others or clearly ignoring the class. Course participation will follow the Texas Education Association’s rubric for evaluating participation (See the attached page at the end of the syllabus).

Survey Research & Analysis: 150 points

During the 2022 election we have the opportunity to engage with voters across the state when they are paying the closest attention to their representation. In collaboration with the UT Tyler Center for Opinion Research, we are able to conduct two large statewide polls to analyze attitudes of the public about candidates and policy during the primary election. This large project is structured through four assignments.

Requirements of Service Learning

IRB Certification in Social Behavioral Research

Question design

Reflection Journal of outstanding observations of 20 hours of research (1 - 2 pages).

Analysis paper of Texas Trends (10 - 15 pages).

Alternatives to Survey Research - If approved...

If you choose not to participate in the survey work, then request an alternative assignment.

Options include:

1. Local Campaign Finance Study
2. Meta-analysis of a theory/hypothesis

Assessments of Academic Works, 150 points

The seminar's course readings touch on subfields within the discipline to understand the aspects of American politics that are studied most and the theories used to explain. Moreover, the topics in the course provide an initial foundation in preparation for the comprehensive exams. With that motivation, select weeks of articles in the semester in which you are to critically assess each reading based on the value of its academic contribution (teaching something new, providing a different perspective...).

The submission will be due on the week we discuss the reading in class. In class you will lead the initial discussion of the article as we talk about the week's readings.

Each submission is worth 50 points each and would cover all of the readings that week. See the template for more information on what questions to think about and how to structure your submission.

Research Presentation, 100 points

UT Tyler offers two ways for graduate students to publicly present their research Grad School 180 and the Lyceum. These are also opportunities for your work to win awards.

Grad School 180: Across graduate schools there is a competition where Masters students prepare a three minute (180 second) presentation that describes an important question to study and how social science can help us better understand the problem. State your theory and the findings from your research that add to our larger knowledge of American Politics.

This presentation will occur in the context of our class, but it will follow the same format as UT Tyler's Grad School 180, <https://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/180>. To learn more consult with the orientation slides provided:

<https://www.uttyler.edu/graduate/files/gradschool180.pdf>

Lyceum: Student from across campus prepare posters or oral presentations to share their research with the university. Projects are judged by faculty and the event occurs on one day. For more info, visit: <https://www.uttyler.edu/honors/lyceum/>

Grading

Class Discussion & Leadership	100 points
Assessments of Academic Works	150 points
Survey Research & Analysis	150 points
Research Presentation	100 points
<hr/> TOTAL	<hr/> 500 points

Rubric for Classroom Discussion

Task Description: Be a part of the conversation and share what you learned from the week's readings. Offer a favorable proportion of the high-quality contributions in each class meeting. Note: incorrect answers during class discussion will not count against you. Points are lost by distracting others or clearly ignoring the class					
Criteria	weight	Exemplary	Effective	Minimal	Unsatisfactory
Level of Engagement	50%	<input type="checkbox"/> Contributes to class activities by offering quality ideas and asking appropriate questions on a regular basis <input type="checkbox"/> Actively engages others in class discussions by inviting their comments <input type="checkbox"/> Constructively challenges the accuracy and relevance of statements made <input type="checkbox"/> Effectively identifies and summarizes main points	<input type="checkbox"/> Contributes to class activities by offering ideas and asking questions on a regular basis <input type="checkbox"/> Often engages others in class discussions by inviting their comments <input type="checkbox"/> Challenges the accuracy and relevance of statements made <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies and summarizes main points	<input type="checkbox"/> Occasionally contributes to class activities by offering ideas and asking questions <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes engages others in class discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes has an understanding of main points <input type="checkbox"/> Identifies and summarizes some of the main points	<input type="checkbox"/> Fails to contribute to class activities <input type="checkbox"/> Fails to invite comment/opinions from other students <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrates little understanding of main points <input type="checkbox"/> Does not identify or summarize main points
Preparedness	25%	<input type="checkbox"/> Always prepared for class with assignments and required materials <input type="checkbox"/> Accurately expresses foundational knowledge pertaining to issues raised during the discussion	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually prepared with assignments and required materials <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses basic foundational knowledge pertaining to class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/> Seldom prepared with assignments and required materials <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses limited foundational knowledge pertaining to class discussions	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistently unprepared for class <input type="checkbox"/> Expresses no relevant foundational knowledge
Attitude	25%	<input type="checkbox"/> Consistently positive, cooperative attitude during class <input type="checkbox"/> Always supportive of other students' ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> Usually positive and cooperative with classroom projects and discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Often supportive of other students' ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> Seldom actively participates in classroom projects and discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Sometimes supportive of other students' ideas	<input type="checkbox"/> Rarely if ever participates in classroom projects and discussions <input type="checkbox"/> Occasional disruptive behavior

Assignment Score _____ + Beyond/Bonus _____ = Final Score _____

Assessment of Academic Work

Complete course reading assessments/brief for each of the assigned articles during three weeks of the semester. Print your brief and bring it to class. Also, feel free to share your brief with the whole class on the Canvas Forum “Assessments of Academic Work” so we can build a repository of resources to have on hand for the comprehensive exam. *Note these will be three separate entries this semester that include assessments for each article that week.*

1. Identify the article by following the [APSR Citation](#).
 - a. This is important so we do not always refer to the Smith article. In political science there is more than one Steve Smith that has been a prominent author and more than two Michael McDonald’s (not the singer).

2. Create a Reading Assessment Sheet by answering the questions on the following page. Be sure to organize your thoughts into each of the six different categories. Some repetition may be necessary, but if that happens be clear in how you are taking a new perspective to make the point.
 - a. To create a page in Word, adjust the setting to PAGE LAYOUT “Landscape” and insert a 3x4 table.
 - b. The chart should become a way to manage information and provide you with informed notes that will help you recall important details from each article as you study.

3. Expand on your Assessment by answering three free response questions:
 - a. What would you do to validate/improve the study?
 - b. Are there applications from this article that will help us learn about politics in other contexts?
 - c. What politician/historical example is the best fits as an example for what you learned from this article? *Note: Do not pick an example that was provided by the author in the article.*

Questions	Past Literature	Method and Unit of Analysis
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the central question the author is concerned with? 2. How relevant is the question to American politics? 3. What is the motivation for addressing this question? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is it to understand a specific process, how a process affects something else, etc? 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does this article agree with the larger literature (at the time it was written)? 2. How does this article disagree with the larger literature? <p><i>To answer this question you will need to read the entire article and then unpack known knowledge from the literature review.</i></p> <p><u>Bonus:</u> Do you know of any research after this work that has continued to prove/challenge the findings of this paper?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How did the author conduct their research? 2. Is there a central analogy that can be used to simplify how the study works? 3. How is the dependent variable measured? 4. Will the dependent variable be affected by time? <i>Example: The price of a stock today can most often be explained by the price of a stock yesterday, because we continue to base future expectations on past performance. Therefore time is important and you would include a lag term (or measure of previous amount).</i> 5. What model was used?
Model's Finding	Contributions	What subfield within American Politics should this research be identified with?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the results of this study? 2. Is there a mechanism by which we can understand how the author's answer affects politics? <p>Here I am asking for the theoretical link. For example, if people like policies promoted by popular politicians then it is important to understand how popular a politician is. Or, because the president can veto legislation, we should not expect Congress to ignore the preferred policy of the president.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Given the initial set up of the article, what contributions were made? 2. Do you believe that each contribution is justified by evidence or logic that is supported by some example? 	<p>Choose between:</p> <p>Behavioral Studies Legislative Studies</p> <p>Comparative Politics Political Psychology</p> <p>Electoral Studies Presidential Studies</p> <p>Judicial Studies Regional Politics</p> <p><i>Or identify a subfield not listed.</i></p>

Class Schedule¹

- Jan 12** **Online:** Goal Setting & A Check on Identifying Political Behavior and Institutions in the US: What do you know?
- Jan 19** **Survey Week in Lab, CAS 151**
- Jan 26** Representative Democracy
Readings: *Agendas and Instability*, Ch. 1-3.
Aldrich, John. 1993. "Rational Choice and Turnout." *American Journal of Political Science* 37: 246-78.

Azari, Julia R., and Jennifer K. Smith. 2012. "Unwritten rules: Informal institutions in established democracies." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(1): 37-55.

Citrin, Jack, Eric Schickler, and John Sides. 2003. "What if everyone voted? Simulating the impact of increased turnout in senate elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 47(1): 75-90.
- Feb 2** Studying the Electorate
Readings: Palfrey, Thomas and Keith Poole. 1987. "The Relationship between Information, Ideology, and Voting Behavior." *American Journal of Political Science* 31(3): 511-530.
MacKuen, Michael B., Robert S. Erikson, and James Stimson. 1989. "Macropartisanship." *American Political Science Review* 83(4): 1125-1142.

Kuklinski, James H., Paul J. Quirk, Jennifer Jerit, David Schweider, and Robert F. Rich. 2000. "Misinformation and the Currency of Citizenship." *Journal of Politics* 62: 790-816.

Herron, Michael and Jasjeet Sekhon. 2005. "Black Candidates and Black Voters: Assessing the Impact of Candidate Race on Uncounted Vote Rates." *Journal of Politics* 67(1): 154-177.
Schaffner, Brian and Cameron Roche. 2017. "Misinformation and Motivated Reasoning: Responses to Economic News in a Politicized Environment." *Political Opinion Quarterly* 81(1): 86-110.
- Feb 9** **Survey Week in Lab, CAS 151**
- Feb 16** Anxious Politics
Readings: Albertson & Gadarian (2015)
- Feb 23** Opportunities for Change
Readings: Baumgartner & Jones (2009)
- Mar 2** **Develop Your Research**
- Mar 9** **No Class, Enjoy Spring Break**

¹Should the class schedule need to be amended, I will advise the class in advance by email and via the Canvas page

- Mar 16** Information & Opinion
Readings: Kahn, Kim Fridkin and Patrick J. Kenney. 1999. "Do Negative Campaigns Mobilize or Suppress Turnout? Clarifying the Relationship between Negativity and Participation." *American Political Science Review* 93: 877-889.
- Stone, Walter and Elizabeth Simas. 2010. "Candidate Valence and Ideological Positions in U.S. House elections." *American Journal of Political Science* 54(2): 371-388.
- Prior, Marcus. 2012. "Who Watches Presidential Debates: Measurement Problems in Campaign Effects Research." *Public Opinion Quarterly* 76(2): 350-363.
- Gibson, James, Milton Lodge, and Benjamin Wilson. 2014. "Losing, but Accepting: Legitimacy, Positive Theory, and the Symbols of Judicial Authority." *Law and Society Review* 48(4): 837-866.
- Lupton, Robert and Seth McKee. 2019. "Dixie's Drivers: Core Values and the Southern Republican Realignment." *Journal of Politics*.
- Mar 23** Voting Rights & Redistricting
Readings: Bullock, 2021
- Mar 30** Coalitions in Congress
Readings: Carson, Jamie, Michael Lynch, and Anthony Madonna. 2011.
 Schickler, Eric, Kathryn Pearson, and Brian D. Feinstein. 2010. "Congressional Parties and Civil Rights Politics from 1933 to 1972." *Journal of Politics* 72(3): 672-689.
- Binder, Sarah, Eric Lawrence, and Steven Smith. 2002. "Tracking the Filibuster, 1917 to 1996." *American Politics Research* 30(4): 406-422.
- Bernhard, William, and Brian R. Sala. 2006. "The remaking of an American Senate: The 17th Amendment and Ideological Responsiveness." *Journal of Politics* 68(2): 345-357.
- Apr 6** Presidency
Readings:
- Deen, Rebecca and Laura Arnold. 2002. "Veto Threats as a Policy Tool: When to Threaten?" *Presidential Studies Quarterly* 32(1): 30-45.
- Bolton, Alexander and Sharece Thrower. 2019. "The Constraining Power of the Purse: Executive Discretion and Legislative Appropriations." *Journal of Politics* 81(4): 1266-1281.
- Ostrander, Ian and Toby J. Rider. 2019. "Presidents Abroad: The Politics of Personal Diplomacy." *Political Research Quarterly* 72(4): 835-848.
- Apr 13** Power of the Judiciary
Readings: Mishler, William and Reginald Sheehan. 1996. "Public Opinion, the Attitudinal Model, and Supreme Court Decision Making: A Micro-Analytic Perspective." *Journal of Politics* 58: 169-200.

Johnson, Timothy and Andrew Martin. 1998. "The Public's Conditional Response to Supreme Court Decisions." *American Political Science Review* 92: 299-309.

Black, Ryan and Christie Boyd. 2013. "Selecting the Select Few: The Discuss List and the U.S. Supreme Court's Agenda-Setting Process." *Social Science Quarterly* 94(5): 1124-1144.

Final Week Three-Minute Presentations or Lyceum

UNIVERSITY POLICIES AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION THAT MUST APPEAR IN EACH COURSE SYLLABUS

UT Tyler Honor Code

Every member of the UT Tyler community joins together to embrace: Honor and integrity that will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do.

Students Rights and Responsibilities

To know and understand the policies that affect your rights and responsibilities as a student at UT Tyler, please follow this link: <http://www.uttyler.edu/wellness/rightsresponsibilities.php>

Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students 21 and over who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>

UT Tyler a Tobacco-Free University

All forms of tobacco will not be permitted on the UT Tyler main campus, branch campuses, and any property owned by UT Tyler. This applies to all members of the University community, including students, faculty, staff, University affiliates, contractors, and visitors.

Forms of tobacco not permitted include cigarettes, cigars, pipes, water pipes (hookah), bidis, kreteks, electronic cigarettes, smokeless tobacco, snuff, chewing tobacco, and all other tobacco products.

There are several cessation programs available to students looking to quit smoking, including counseling, quitlines, and group support. For more information on cessation programs please visit www.uttyler.edu/tobacco-free.

Grade Replacement/Forgiveness and Census Date Policies

Students repeating a course for grade forgiveness (grade replacement) must file a Grade Replacement Contract with the Enrollment Services Center (ADM 230) on or before the Census Date of the semester in which the course will be repeated. Grade Replacement Contracts are available in the Enrollment Services Center or at <http://www.uttyler.edu/registrar>. Each semester's Census Date can be found on the Contract itself, on the Academic Calendar, or in the information pamphlets published each semester by the Office of the Registrar.

Failure to file a Grade Replacement Contract will result in both the original and repeated grade being used to calculate your overall grade point average. Undergraduates are eligible to exercise grade replacement for only three course repeats during their career at UT Tyler; graduates are eligible for two grade replacements. Full policy details are printed on each Grade Replacement Contract.

The Census Date is the deadline for many forms and enrollment actions of which students need to be aware. These include:

- Submitting Grade Replacement Contracts, Transient Forms, requests to withhold directory information, approvals for taking courses as Audit, Pass/Fail or Credit/No Credit.
- Receiving 100% refunds for partial withdrawals. (There is no refund for these after the Census Date)
- Schedule adjustments (section changes, adding a new class, dropping without a "W" grade)
- Being reinstated or re-enrolled in classes after being dropped for non-payment
- Completing the process for tuition exemptions or waivers through Financial Aid

State-Mandated Course Drop Policy

Texas law prohibits a student who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career. This includes courses dropped at another 2-year or 4-year Texas public college or university. For purposes of this rule, a dropped course is any course that is dropped after the census date (See Academic Calendar for the specific date).

Exceptions to the 6-drop rule may be found in the catalog. Petitions for exemptions must be submitted to the Enrollment Services Center and must be accompanied by documentation of the extenuating circumstance. Please contact the Enrollment Services Center if you have any questions.

Disability/Accessibility Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA) the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or you have a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with Cynthia Lowery, Assistant Director of Student Services/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 or call 903.566.7079.

Student Absence due to Religious Observance

Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform the instructor of such absences by the second class meeting of the semester.

Student Absence for University-Sponsored Events and Activities

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

Social Security and FERPA Statement

It is the policy of The University of Texas at Tyler to protect the confidential nature of social security numbers. The University has changed its computer programming so that all students have an identification number. The electronic transmission of grades (e.g., via e-mail) risks violation of the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act; grades will not be transmitted electronically.

Emergency Exits and Evacuation

Everyone is required to exit the building when a fire alarm goes off. Follow your instructor's directions regarding the appropriate exit. If you require assistance during an evacuation, inform your instructor in the first week of class. Do not re-enter the building unless given permission by University Police, Fire department, or Fire Prevention Services.

Student Standards of Academic Conduct

Disciplinary proceedings may be initiated against any student who engages in scholastic dishonesty, including, but 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.

- i. "Cheating" includes, but is not limited to:
 - copying from another student's test paper;
 - using, during a test, materials not authorized by the person giving the test;
 - failure to comply with instructions given by the person administering the test;
 - possession during a test of materials which are not authorized by the person giving the test, such as class notes or specifically designed "crib notes". The presence of textbooks constitutes a violation if they have been specifically prohibited by the person administering the test;
 - using, buying, stealing, transporting, or soliciting in whole or part the contents of an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program;
 - collaborating with or seeking aid from another student during a test or other assignment without authority;
 - discussing the contents of an examination with another student who will take the examination;
 - divulging the contents of an examination, for the purpose of preserving questions for use by another, when the instructors has designated that the examination is not to be removed from the examination room or not to be returned or to be kept by the student;
 - substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for oneself to take a course, a test, or any course-related assignment;
 - paying or offering money or other valuable thing to, or coercing another person to obtain an unadministered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program or information about an unadministered test, test key, home solution or computer program;
 - falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other academic work offered for credit;
 - taking, keeping, misplacing, or damaging the property of The University of Texas at Tyler, or of another, if the student knows or reasonably should know that an unfair academic advantage would be gained by such conduct; and
 - misrepresenting facts, including providing false grades or resumes, for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit or injuring another student academically or financially.
- ii. "Plagiarism" includes, but is not limited to, the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the submission of it as one's own academic work offered for credit.
- iii. "Collusion" includes, but is not limited to, the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any section of the rules on scholastic dishonesty.
- iv. All written work that is submitted will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

UT Tyler Resources for Students

- [UT Tyler Writing Center](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu) (903.565.5995), writingcenter@uttyler.edu
- [UT Tyler Tutoring Center](mailto:tutoring@uttyler.edu) (903.565.5964), tutoring@uttyler.edu
- The Mathematics Learning Center, RBN 4021, this is the open access computer lab for math students, with tutors on duty to assist students who are enrolled in early-career courses.
- [UT Tyler Counseling Center](tel:903.566.7254) (903.566.7254)