

POLS 3345 Urban and Municipal Government

The University of Texas at Tyler

Spring 2026 (January to May, 2026)

Online: Geoffrey Willbanks

Office: Tyler Junior College, Jenkins Hall 179. Office hours: 1:20-2:40 pm Monday and Wednesday in person, 2:55-4:15 pm online via Zoom; Tuesday and Thursday 10:10 to 11:30 am, and by appointment. I do not have an office at UT Tyler.

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1. **Course Description:** A study of the functions and problems of urban and municipal political units. Topics include small towns and cities, taxation, home rule, minority relations, suburban politics, personnel recruitment, and intergovernmental relations.
2. **Student Learning Outcomes.** By the conclusion of the course, students should be able to :
  - a. Demonstrate an understanding of how and why urban areas emerged and developed in the U.S.
  - b. Analyze governmental efforts to address citizens' needs in the urban environment.
  - c. Synthesize material explaining how and why machine politics developed in the United States and how reformers ended most urban political machines.
  - d. Compare and contrast how various groups have competed for and exercised political power in urban areas.
  - e. Demonstrate an understanding of service delivery and the management of service delivery in urban areas.
  - f. Analyze arguments concerning the rise of suburbs and the effects of the relationship between suburbs and the inner cities.
  - g. Make judgments about the attempts to remedy urban sprawl and other "problems" produced by suburbanization
- **Textbooks and Required Reading:**
  1. Hinze, A. M., & Judd, D.R.(2022). City Politics: Cities and Suburbs in 21st Century America (11th ed.). Routledge ISBN 9781032006352 (Paperback)
  2. Articles from academic journals
3. **Grading Scale and Course Requirements:**

a. Course Requirements

- i. Ten short papers on topics from the readings in *City Politics*. Each short paper will be worth 2 points. All ten together will equal 20 points. Points earned are included in the grade average.
- ii. Ten newspaper article quizzes. Each summary will be worth 2 points. All ten together will equal twenty points.
- iii. One major paper on a topic selected by the professor. Consult a separate handout for additional information. The paper will be worth 20 points.
- iv. A series of quizzes of five to ten questions on the reading. All quizzes will be worth 10 points together.
- v. A group project on topics selected by the professor. Consult a separate handout for additional information. The project will be worth 20 points.
- vi. A final exam composed of essay questions on topics from the course material discussed in class. Students will have access to the question topics before the test. The test will be worth 10 points.
- vii. All assignments listed above are combined. This combination is worth 100 points.

4. Grading Scale:

All points will be added together to get a total. The course grade will be based on the following grade zones:

100-90=A, 89-80=B, 79-70=C, 69-60=D, >60=F

The instructions and assignment details are located in Canvas.

**Course Schedule:**

**Week 1:**

*Chapter One: An Introduction*

**Week 2:**

*Chapter Two: The Enduring Legacy*

Quiz One

Newspaper Article Quiz One

Short paper assignment One

**Week 3:**

*Chapter Three: Party Machines and the Immigrants*

Quiz Two

Newspaper Article Quiz Two

Short paper Assignment Two

**Week 4:**

*Chapter Four: The Reform Crusades*

Quiz Three

Newspaper Article Quiz Three

Short paper Assignment Three

**Week 5:**

*Chapter Five: Urban Voters and the Rise of a National Democratic Majority*

Quiz Four

Newspaper Article Quiz Four

Short paper Assignment Four

**Week 6:**

*Chapter Six: Federal Policy, Race, and the Emerging Urban/Suburban Divide*

Quiz Five

Newspaper Article Quiz Five

Short paper Assignment Five

**Week 7:**

*Chapter Seven: Federal Programs, the Democrats, and the Politics of Racism*

Quiz Six

Newspaper Article Quiz Six

Short paper Assignment Six

**Springbreak March 9-13**

**Week 8:**

*Chapter Eight: Federal Programs and the Divisive Politics of Race*

Quiz Seven

Newspaper Article Quiz Seven

Short paper Assignment Seven

**Week 9:**

*Chapter Nine: Changing Demographics: The Rise of the Sunbelt, the Changing Suburbs, and the Emerging “Rural-Urban Divide”*

Quiz Eight

Newspaper Article Quiz Eight

Short paper Assignment Eight

Group Project Assignment Eight

**Week 10:**

*Chapter Ten: The Changing Metropolis*

Quiz Nine

Newspaper Article Quiz Nine

Short paper Assignment Nine

Individual papers assignment

**Week 11:**

*Chapter Eleven: Economic and Fiscal Realities of the Metropolitan Mosaic*

Quiz Ten

Newspaper Article Quiz Ten

Short paper Assignment Ten

**Week 12:**

*Chapter Twelve: Cities and the Challenges of Climate Change*

**Week 13:**

*Thanksgiving week (no classes)*

**Week 14:**

*Chapter Thirteen: Governing the Divided Metropolis*

*Chapter Fourteen: Epilogue: Cities After the Year 2020: A Year of Upheaval, Reckoning, and Change*

**Week 15:**

**“FINAL EXAM”: Week of April 27-30**

**Late work and missed assignments**

The professor has due dates and one deadline. Assignment due dates are flexible. Students may submit all work except the final exam after the due date with no penalty until the one-course deadline. The professor strongly suggests students attempt to submit all work by the assigned due date to maintain a reasonable flow of work. No work will be accepted after the deadline at the end of the semester. The one deadline is December 12, 2024. While a student may wait until the deadline or close to the deadline to submit all work, it is a poor time management strategy. Students may receive a zero placeholder grade if an assignment needs to be updated and corrected. Students are encouraged to read the professor's assignment comments as a guide to edit and revise work.

**Withdrawing from Class**

Students may withdraw (drop) from this course using the Withdrawal Portal. Withdrawing (dropping) this course can impact your Financial Aid, Scholarships, Veteran Benefits, Exemptions, Waivers, International Student Status, housing, and degree progress. Please speak with your instructors, consider your options, speak with your advisor, and visit the

One-Stop Service Center (STE 230) or email [enroll@uttyler.edu](mailto:enroll@uttyler.edu) to get a complete review of your student account and the possible impacts of withdrawing. We want you to make an informed decision. UT Tyler faculty and staff are here for you and often can provide additional support options or assistance. Make sure to carefully read the implications of withdrawing from a course and the instructions on using the Withdrawal portal. Texas law prohibits students from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career\*. The six courses dropped include those from other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress and other areas, such as financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and Enrollment Services for additional guidance. CAUTION #1: Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule. CAUTION #2: All international students must check with the Office of International Programs before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms. CAUTION #3: All UT Tyler Athletes must check with the Athletic Academic Coordinator before withdrawing from a course. CAUTION #4: All veterans or military-affiliated students should consult with the Military and Veterans Success Center.

- Students who began college for the first time before 2007 are exempt from this law.

### **Artificial Intelligence Statement**

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional research approaches. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. Refer to the About This Course section of the UT Tyler Syllabus Module for specific information on the appropriate use of AI in your course(s).

Professor Willbanks' policy on the use of AI platform use: Students can use AI platforms to help prepare for assignments and projects. You can use AI tools to revise and edit your

work (e.g., identify flaws in reasoning, spot confusing or underdeveloped paragraphs, or correct citations). When submitting work, students must identify any writing, text, or media generated by AI. Students MUST properly cite the use and inclusion of any and all work created or attained using AI platforms. You should use the 7th edition APA standards to cite the AI work. Your ethical responsibilities as a student remain the same. You must follow UT Tyler's Honor Code and uphold the highest standards of academic honesty. This applies to all uncited or improperly cited content, whether created by a human or in collaboration with an AI tool. Students are cautioned that AI-generated content is not necessarily accurate or appropriate, you must assess the validity and applicability of any submitted AI output. You will not earn full credit if inaccurate, invalid, or inappropriate information is found in your work. <https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>

### **Final Exam Policy**

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the Dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members must maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

### **Incomplete Grade Policy**

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in place of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all coursework or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor, and (c) the student presents these reasons before the time that the final grade roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average. The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to meet all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has yet to be assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F or NC. If the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis, this may adversely affect the student's academic standing.

## **Grade Appeal Policy**

Disputes regarding grades must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade by filing a Grade Appeal Form with the instructor who assigned the grade. A grade appeal should be used when the student thinks the final course grade awarded does not reflect the grades earned on assessments or follow the grading scale as documented in the syllabus. The student should provide the rationale for the grade appeal and attach supporting documents about the grades earned. The form should be sent via email to the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member reviews the rationale and supporting documentation and completes the instruction section of the form. The instructor should return the form to the student, even if a grade change is made at this level. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the department from which the grade was issued. In situations where there is an allegation of capricious grading, discrimination, or unlawful actions, appeals may go beyond the Chairperson to the Dean or the Dean's designee of the college from which the grade was issued, with that decision being final. The Grade Appeal form is found in the Registrar's Form Library.

NOTE: The Grade Appeal Form is different from the Application for Appeal form submitted to the Student Appeals Committee, which does not rule on grade disputes as described in this policy.

## **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 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 the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <https://www.uttyler.edu/disability-services>, the SAR office located in the Robert Muntz Library, LIB 460, email [saroffice@uttyler.edu](mailto:saroffice@uttyler.edu), or call 903.566.7079."

## **Military Affiliated Students**



UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. The Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC) has campus resources for military-affiliated students. The MVSC can be reached at [MVSC@uttyler.edu](mailto:MVSC@uttyler.edu) or via phone at 903.565.5972.

### **Students on an F-1 Visa**

To remain in compliance with Federal Regulations requirements you must do the following:

- Traditional face-to-face classes: Attend classes on the regular meeting days/times.
- Hybrid Classes: Attend all face-to-face classes convened by the instructor according to the schedule set for your specific course.
- Online course: Only one online course can count toward your full-time enrollment. Students are expected to be fully engaged and meet all requirements for the online course.

### **Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct**

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and Discipline policy in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

### **FERPA**

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in University Policy 5.2.3. The course instructor will follow all requirements to protect your confidential information.

### **Absence for Official University Events or Activities**

This course follows the practices related to Excused Absences for University Events or Activities as noted in the Catalog.

### **Absence for Religious Holidays**

This course follows the practices related to Excused Absences for Religious Holy Days as noted in the Catalog.

## **Absence for Pregnant Students**

This course follows the requirements of Texas Laws SB 412, SB 459, SB 597/HB 1361 to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting students. Part of the supports afforded to pregnant students includes excused absences. Faculty who are informed by a student of needing this support should make a referral to the Parenting Student Liaison. NOTE: Students must work with the Parenting Student Liaison in order to receive this support. Students should reach out to the Parenting Student Liaison at [parents@uttyler.edu](mailto:parents@uttyler.edu) and also complete the Pregnant and Parenting Self-Reporting Form.

## **Campus Carry**

We respect the right and privacy of students 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>.

1. All submitted written work will be subject to review by plagiarism software.

## **UT Tyler Resources for Students**

UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), [writingcenter@uttyler.edu](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu)

UT Tyler Tutoring Center (903.565.5964), [tutoring@uttyler.edu](mailto:tutoring@uttyler.edu)

UT Tyler Counseling Center (903 566.7254)

UT Tyler Writing Center (903.565.5995), [writingcenter@uttyler.edu](mailto:writingcenter@uttyler.edu)