

## UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO



### INTRODUCTION TO POLITICS Political Science 2310 : 28 August – 15 December FALL 2023 ONLINE \_\_ Syllabus v28AUG23

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Department of Political Science  
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#### Catalogue Description

This course is entirely asynchronous and conducted remotely via email and Blackboard. The Introduction to Politics provides an overview of the concepts, principles, and practices of politics as background for the study of the political. The course may employ an international, comparative, or theoretical focus. Prerequisite: Freshman standing.

#### Course Content

This is an introductory course in the study of the political, with an emphasis on understanding politics within the context of **global awareness**. We will break the subject down into political behavior within various domestic settings (comparative politics or regime analysis) and relations among countries (international relations). The course will require **critical thinking** in learning fundamental political concepts and issues through the focus on institutions, culture, ideas, and political economy with attention on their global transformations. We will also view the politics of various countries from around the globe. The goal for the semester is to ground you in the study of politics, increase your powers of analysis and argument, and further your ability **problem-solve**.

At the end of this course you will:

- 1) have a knowledge base regarding politics and government in general;
- 2) be able to analyze political activity scientifically in the world today; and
- 3) be able to hold factually based perspectives on important current issues.

#### Why Understanding American Government and Politics is Important:

Citizenship comes with political rights and duties. As citizens of a democratic republic, we are already part of a system of government that relies not only on ethical, representative institutions but also on public discourse, social movements, and civic participation. In fact, the Constitution inaugurates "*We the People* of the United States" as the first and most important political actor. Together "*We hold these truths to be self-evident,*" that equality and unalienable rights are human endowments made meaningful by the government of the Constitution. Because the Constitution acknowledges standards of right and equality to which *all* people may appeal, the Union it establishes exists as a challenge to injustice and inequality everywhere. This has made the Union the natural adversary of despotisms and dictatorships, like those faced during World War II. But American politics are complicated by their own history of injustice and inequality. This history begins with enslavement and continues through Jim Crow and its modern-day legacies of racism and inequality. "It can happen that the constitution is free and the citizen is

not" (*Spirit of the Laws*, Book 12). Oppression undermines the moral integrity of a republic and the efficacy of the federal Union, as Frederick Douglass, Montesquieu, and Alexis de Tocqueville each warn.

### Course Textbook

The course textbook: Genna, Gaspare, M. and Taeko Hiroi. *Exploring Politics*. Available from: **VitalSource Bookshelf**, SAGE Publications, Inc. (US), 2022.

### Course Blackboard Readings

You will find readings for each week in Blackboard.

### Course Obligations

Actively participate in the learning process. What does this mean?

- 1) Read *Exploring Politics*.
- 2) Read the Blackboard (BB) readings.
- 3) Take notes on the readings. I recommend using a word processor. **Focus on the key concepts and authors.**
- 4) Review your notes before taking quizzes and tests.
- 5) Contact me if you need assistance or have questions. The earlier the better.
- 6) Complete each weekly quiz no later than 11:00pm every Friday.

### Quizzes and Final Exam

You will need to take weekly quizzes to assess your active learning in the course. Quizzes will only include multiple-choice questions based on the textbook readings and the lectures and are open notes and book. Quizzes will be on Bb and are due by 11pm (Mountain Time zone) of the Friday listed in the schedule. You will have **15 minutes** to answer the questions. You will not be able to see your grade until all students quizzes are graded.

The final exam is also open book and notes. The exam is solely multiple-choice questions based on the textbook and readings. The exam delivery is in Bb. All quizzes and the final exam will be in an electronic format.

Steps for taking the quizzes and exams

- 1) Be sure to connect to a stable Wi-Fi connection. If you lack one at home, please use one of the labs at UTEP. If you are going to use the UTEP option, it would be wise to plan well ahead of time so you have the space to use it.
- 2) If you encounter an issue during the exam, launch the exam again. The exam will pick up where you left off.

### Grades

Course Requirement	Points
13 Quizzes (3 lowest scores dropped)	100
Final Examination	100

Points	Letter
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
59 and below	F

## Due Dates and Academic Honesty

Academic life places all of us under demanding time constraints. Please mark your calendar with due dates for the assignments and begin working on these projects early in the semester. To get credit for your work, you must meet the due dates. You will receive zero credit for late assignments; however, I will consider any reasonable and extenuating circumstances. If you find that you must turn in an assignment late due to an unforeseen circumstance, please contact me as soon as you recognize there is a problem. Remember: it is your responsibility to notify me to make these arrangements.

Do your own work and act with integrity. I take cheating very seriously and follow the university's policies on academic honesty, cheating, fabrication, helping others to cheat, or plagiarism (presenting the work of others as if it were your own, including material you find on the Internet). Any of these offenses will result in receiving a failing grade in the course and being reported to university authorities. Please note that, on written assignments, exact quotes must be placed in quotation marks, and the source of the quote must be cited in full. In addition, all ideas that come from another source—other than your own thoughts—must be cited in full. These include any ideas you have paraphrased or rephrased, but which originated in someone else's writing or expression, whether human or artificial intelligence.

According to the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution, "Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic 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 without giving sufficient credit, taking an examination for another person, or any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts."

The following are resources that students can use to stay academically honest:

1. [Avoiding Plagiarism \(PDF\)](#)
2. [Deterring Academic Dishonesty Student Resource \(PDF\)](#)
3. In the case of written work, do not use Chat GPT or any other artificial intelligence writing or content generator without clearly citing your use of the generator. Failing to do so is plagiarism.

## Technology Requirements

All course content is delivered via the Internet through the Blackboard learning management system. Ensure your UTEP e-mail account is working and that you have access to the Web and a stable web browser. Google Chrome and Mozilla Firefox are the best browsers for Blackboard; other browsers may cause complications. When having technical difficulties, update your browser, clear your cache, or try switching to another browser.

You will need to have access to a computer/laptop. You will need to download or update the following software: Microsoft Office, Adobe Acrobat Reader, Windows Media Player, QuickTime, and Java. Check that your computer hardware and software are up-to-date and able to access all parts of the course.

If you do not have word-processing software, you can download Word and other Microsoft Office programs (including Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook and more) for free via UTEP's Microsoft Office Portal. Click the following link for more information about [Microsoft Office 365](#) and follow the instructions.

**IMPORTANT:** If you encounter technical difficulties beyond your scope of troubleshooting, please contact the UTEP [Help Desk](#) as they are trained specifically in assisting with technological needs of students. Please do not contact me for this type of assistance. The Help Desk is much better equipped than I am to assist you!

### Course Communication

Because this is an online class, we won't see each other in the ways you may be accustomed to: during class time, small group meetings, and office hours. However, there are a number of ways we can keep the communication channels open:

- Office Hours: We will not be able to meet on campus, but I will still have office hours for your questions and comments about the course. My office hours will be held on Blackboard. See the link on the homepage.
- Email: UTEP e-mail is the best way to contact me. I will make every attempt to respond to your e-mail within 24-48 hours of receipt. When e-mailing me, be sure to email from your UTEP student account and please put the course number in the subject line. In the body of your e-mail, clearly state your question. At the end of your e-mail, be sure to put your first and last name, and your university identification number.
- Announcements: Check the Blackboard announcements frequently for any updates, deadlines, or other important messages.

### Netiquette

As we know, sometimes communication online can be challenging. It's possible to miscommunicate what we mean or to misunderstand what our classmates mean given the lack of body language and immediate feedback. Therefore, please keep these netiquette (network etiquette) guidelines in mind. Failure to observe them may result in disciplinary action.

- Always consider audience. This is a college-level course; therefore, all communication should reflect polite consideration of other's ideas.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to the instructor at all times. No harassment or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Blackboard is not a public internet venue; all postings to it should be considered private and confidential. Whatever is posted in these online spaces is intended for classmates and the professor only. Please do not copy documents and paste them to a publicly accessible website, blog, or other space.

### Course Drop Policy

I will not drop you from the course. However, if you feel that you are unable to complete the course successfully, please let me know and then contact the [Registrar's Office](#) to initiate the drop process. If you do not, you are at risk of receiving an "F" for the course.

### Copyright Statement for Course Materials

All materials used in this course are protected by copyright law. The course materials are only for the use of students currently enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further disseminated.

### UTEP provides a variety of student services and support

Technology Resources

- [Help Desk](#): Students experiencing technological challenges (email, Blackboard, software, etc.) can submit a ticket to the UTEP Helpdesk for assistance via phone, email, chat, website, or in person.

#### Academic Resources

- [UTEP Library](#): Access a wide range of resources including online, full-text access to thousands of journals and eBooks plus reference service and librarian assistance for enrolled students.
- [University Writing Center \(UWC\)](#): Submit papers here for assistance with writing style and formatting, ask a tutor for help and explore other writing resources.
- [Math Tutoring Center \(MaRCS\)](#): Ask a tutor for help and explore other available math resources.
- [History Tutoring Center \(HTC\)](#): Receive assistance with writing history papers, get help from a tutor and explore other history resources.
- [RefWorks](#): A bibliographic citation tool; check out RefWorks tutorial, Fact Sheet, Quick-Start Guide.
- [The Miner Learning Center](#): Join peer-led study sessions in person or online to review content and discover study strategies in core curriculum courses.
- [UTEP Edge](#): UTEP's cross-campus framework for student success and empowerment – develops students' assets through high-impact experiences made possible by the expertise and dedication of faculty, staff, alumni, and community partners.

#### Individual Resources

- [Student Success Help Desk \(SSHHD\)](#): Students experiencing challenges or obstacles to academic success including registration, financial, food, housing, and transportation resources may submit a ticket request assistance to [studentsuccess@utep.edu](mailto:studentsuccess@utep.edu)
- [Military Student Success Center](#): Assists personnel in any branch of service to reach educational goals.
- [Center for Accommodations and Support Services](#): Assists students with ADA-related accommodations for coursework, housing, and internships.
- [Counseling and Psychological Services](#): Provides a variety of counseling services including individual, couples, and group sessions as well as career and disability assessments.
- [UTEP Food Pantry](#): Non-perishable food items are available to students who are currently enrolled in classes. Bring a Miner Gold Card to Memorial Gym, Room 105, Monday through Friday, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

## Course Schedule

<b>Week 1 – Aug. 28, 2023</b>	
<b>Introduction to the Course</b>	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BB: Syllabus</li> <li>• BB: Thinking About Government and the Political</li> </ul>
<b>WATCH</b>	
<b>Lesson Objectives</b>	<p><b>Define</b> government and the political.</p> <p><b>Explain</b> the nature and principles of the three types of government according to Montesquieu.</p>
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>No Assignment due this week. Start reading to get ahead for next week.</b>
<b>Week 2 – Sept. 4, 2023 : Quiz 1</b>	
<b>Analyzing Politics – Identifying Components of Politics</b>	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Politics</i>. Ch. 1 “Analyzing Politics”</li> <li>• BB: Montesquieu, <i>The Spirit of the Laws</i> Book 3, excerpts from Ch. 1-9</li> </ul>
<b>WATCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BB: Harvard Online “Political Culture” Thomas Patterson: <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxDfxXJtTLw">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YxDfxXJtTLw</a></li> </ul>
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Quiz #1: Due Fri. Sept. 8</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Analytic thinking, objective and systematic inquiry, zero-sum game, positive-sum game, distribution of power; Montesquieu, the different natures and principles of government, democratic republics, the People, and virtue (equality); aristocratic republics, influential families, and virtue (difference); monarchy, wealth, and false honor; despotism and fear

<b>Week 3 – Sept. 11, 2023 : Quiz 2</b>	
<b>Studying Politics – Science and Normativity</b>	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Politics</i>. Ch. 2 “Studying Politics”</li> <li>• BB: “The Letters of 1775 Between George Washington &amp; the Legislature of New York” and commentary</li> <li>• Website: “Newburgh Conspiracy,” <a href="https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/newburgh-conspiracy/">https://www.mountvernon.org/library/digitalhistory/digital-encyclopedia/article/newburgh-conspiracy/</a>.</li> <li>• BB: “To the Officers of the Army, March 15, 1783: The Newburgh Addresses”</li> </ul>
<b>WATCH</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Website: Newburgh Conspiracy, Part Four. <a href="https://vimeo.com/122073668">https://vimeo.com/122073668</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Quiz #2: Due Fri. Sept. 15.</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Modernization theory, peer review, hypothesis testing, scientific method, replication, probabilistic theories; George Washington, military and civil service, the long history of militarism and despotism, the power to tax, the threat of armed insurrection, duty to the public; common country, sacred honor, rights of humanity, virtuous national and military character

<b>Week 4 – Sept. 18, 2023 : Quiz 3</b>	
<b>Political Ideologies and Political Thought</b>	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Politics</i>. Ch. 3</li> <li>• BB: Thomas Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> (Excerpts)</li> <li>• BB: John Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> (Excerpts)</li> <li>• BB: “What to the Slave is the 4<sup>th</sup> of July?” Speech: Frederick Douglass (1852)</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Quiz #3: Due Fri. Sept. 22</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Thomas Hobbes, Hobbesian “equality,” the Hobbesian “state of nature,” state’s rights; John Locke, liberal democracy, the Lockean “right of rebellion; social contract theory, fascism, divine right and religious fundamentalism, critical theory, ideology; Adam Smith; Karl Marx, proletariat

<b>Week 5 – Sept. 25, 2023</b>	
<b>The Cultural Dimension of Politics</b>	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Exploring Politics</i>. Ch. 4</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Quiz #4: Due Fri. Sept. 29</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Political Culture, Political Socialization

Week 6 – Oct. 2, 2023	
Federalists v. Antifederalists: Trust, Identity, and Political Behavior	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring Politics. Ch. 5</li> <li>• BB: <i>Cato</i> 3, 25 Oct 1787</li> <li>• BB. Publius, <i>Federalist</i> 08, 20 Nov 1787</li> <li>• BB. Publius, <i>Federalist</i> 10, 23 Nov 1787.</li> <li>• BB. Publius, <i>Federalist</i> 51, 08 Feb 1788.</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Quiz #5: Due Fri. Oct. 6</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Rational actor model, Federalists and Antifederalists; Bill of Rights; civil liberties; standing armies; faction; double security, Origins of civil liberties; the Union as a balancing mechanism for civil-military relations; multiplicity of interests, extended sphere, counteracting ambitions

Week 7 – Oct. 9, 2023	
States, Nations, and Regime Types	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring Politics. Ch. 6</li> <li>• BB. Montesquieu, <i>The Spirit of the Laws</i> Book 9 (selected chapters)</li> <li>• BB. Perspectives on Federalism During and After the Constitutional Convention: Letter from Washington to David Stuart and excerpts from <i>Federalist</i> 45</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Quiz #6: Due Fri. Oct. 13</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Sovereign power, police powers; full faith and credit clause, privileges and immunities clause; dual federalism, states' rights, cooperative federalism; picket fence federalism; competitive federalism;

Week 8 – Oct. 16, 2023	
Public Policy, Public Goods, and Political Responsibility	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring Politics. Ch. 7</li> <li>• BB. Michelle Alexander, "The Rebirth of Caste," from <i>The New Jim Crow</i></li> <li>• BB. Iris Marion Young, "Political Responsibility and Structural Injustice"</li> <li>• BB. Montesquieu, <i>The Spirit of the Laws</i> Book 5, Ch 3</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Quiz #7: Due Fri. Oct. 20</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Civil rights, disenfranchisement, Jim Crow laws; social position, connection, power, privilege, interest, Criminalization, discriminatory treatment, voting access, socioeconomic inequality, criminal justice & hate crimes; political responsibility; love of equality



Week 9 – Oct. 23, 2023	
Governmental Institutions	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring Politics. Ch. 8</li> <li>• BB. Gary Miller and Andrew Whitford, excerpt from <i>Above Politics: Bureaucratic Discretion and Credible Commitment</i>.</li> <li>• BB: Readings in American Politics. 213-215, 217. Richard Neustadt, excerpts from <i>Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Quiz #8: Due Fri. Oct. 27</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Civil servants, political appointees, regulation, state capacity, principal-agent game, regulatory capture; federal civil service; independent agencies; bureaucratic drift, police patrol oversight, fire alarm oversight; executive office of the president, Evolution of state capacity; administrative expertise, professional responsibility, political neutrality, separated institutions sharing powers

Week 10 – Oct. 30, 2023	
Elections and Political Parties	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring Politics. Ch. 9</li> <li>• BB. Steven Rosenstone and John Hansen, “Mobilization, Participation, and Democracy in America”</li> <li>• BB. Robert Putnam and Shaylyn R. Garrett, “Why Did Racial Progress Stall in America?”</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Quiz #9: Due Fri. Nov. 3</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Incumbent, primary, general election, vote counting; electoral college, swing state; open seat; GOTV; voting cues, split tickets; rational ignorance, targeted and timed mobilization, The costs & resources of mobilization, I-we-I curve

Week 11 – Nov. 6, 2023	
Political Economy: How do Countries Govern their Economies?	
<b>READ</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exploring Politics. Ch. 10</li> </ul>
<b>Assignment:</b>	<b>Quiz #10: Due Fri. Nov. 10</b>
<b>Key Concepts / Thinkers</b>	Economic Development, Seigniorage, Free Market Capitalism, Centrally Planned Economies,

Week 12 – Nov. 13, 2023	
Democratization and Social Movements	
READ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring Politics. Ch. 11</li> <li>BB. 01-10. Deva Woodly, <i>The Politics of Common Sense</i> excerpts</li> <li>BB. Abraham Lincoln, "Speech at a Republican Banquet," Chicago, Illinois (December 10, 1856)</li> </ul>
Assignment:	Quiz #11: <b>Due Fri. Nov. 17</b>
Key Concepts / Thinkers	Social movements, public opinion; public discourse, political acceptance, emergence,

Week 13 – Nov. 20, 2023	
Global Conflict: International and Civil Wars	
READ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring Politics. Ch. 12</li> </ul>
LISTEN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>
Assignment:	Quiz #12: <b>Due Fri. Nov. 24</b>
Key Concepts / Thinkers	

Week 14 – Nov. 27, 2023	
Cooperation in Our Globalizing World	
READ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Exploring Politics. Ch. 13</li> </ul>
Assignment:	Quiz #13: <b>Due Fri. Dec. 1</b>

Week 15 – Dec. 4, 2023	
<p><b>COMPREHENSIVE EXAMINATION WINDOW 11-15 DECEMBER,</b></p> <p><b>FINAL DUE NO LATER THAN FRIDAY, 15 DECEMBER, BY 11PM.</b></p>	