

Leadership & Civic Participation

Political Science (POLS) 4357 – 001

CRN: 26884

The University of Texas at El Paso

Spring 2017

TR: 12:00pm - 1:20pm

Education Building 202

Instructor: Dr. Gregory S. Schober

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Office Hours: TR, 10:45am – 11:45am (and by appointment)

Class Website: Blackboard through your MY UTEP PORTAL

Course Description

This course focuses on democracy, civic and political participation, and efforts to recruit activists in the United States. We will study the different forms of civic engagement, with an emphasis on identifying how these forms have changed in recent years. We also will consider leadership, factors that encourage (or discourage) civic and political participation, and civic education in schools. We examine issues mostly at the national level, but also will discuss applications for the state and local levels.

Throughout the course, we will revisit the following three questions: (1) Why do some people participate in several civic activities, while others are not civically engaged? (2) How do political and/or civic leaders influence civic participation among citizens? (3) What role do schools and teachers play in motivating civic engagement?

Learning Objectives

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Identify the different forms of civic and political participation.
- Explain how civic participation in the United States has changed in recent years.
- Understand the factors that influence who participates in civic activities.
- Communicate the different strategies used by civic organization leaders to recruit and retain activists.
- Advise education leaders on how to incorporate civic engagement in a course and inspire civic responsibility among students.
- Recognize the role of civic engagement in American politics and society.

Required Books (available at the UTEP Bookstore or elsewhere):

- Stephen Macedo. 2005. Democracy at Risk: How Political Choices Undermine Citizen Participation, and What We Can Do About It
 - ISBN-13: 978-0815754053
- Cliff Zukin et al. 2006. A New Engagement?: Political Participation, Civic Life, and the Changing American Citizen.
 - ISBN-13: 978-0195183177
- Hahrie Han. 2014. How Organizations Develop Activists: Civic Associations and Leadership in the 21st Century
 - ISBN-13: 978-0199336777

Course Requirements

- Midterm Exam: The midterm exam will consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, and it will cover material from the course readings, class lectures, and/or class discussions up to the date of the midterm exam (20% of grade).
- Final Exam: The final exam will consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, and it will cover material from the course readings, class lectures, and/or class discussions after the midterm exam (25% of grade).
- Short Papers: Students will be required to write two short research papers, in lieu of a lengthy research paper due at the end of the course, with fixed deadlines (as noted in the syllabus). **Late papers will be penalized one full letter grade for each class day they are late** (20% of grade).
- Civic Engagement Project: Students will have the option of completing service learning in the community through the Center for Civic Engagement or writing a research paper on civic engagement in the local region (20% of grade).
- Class Attendance and Participation: Students will be able to earn participation points each class session by attending and participating in class discussions. Points will be awarded based on the quantity and quality of participation (15% of grade).

University Policies

This instructor abides by university policies, such as excused absences and attendance, as stated in the UTEP undergraduate catalog: <http://catalog.utep.edu/undergrad/academic-regulations/curriculum-and-classroom-policies/>. It is the student's responsibility to understand their rights and university policies. In addition to university policies, I add the following policies below.

Attendance Policy

UTEP expects that students will not miss classes without valid excuses. Students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet for each class meeting. It is expected that you do not miss classes, which will result in a penalty to your grade. More specifically, after two unexcused absences, I will begin to deduct points from your attendance and participation grade for each subsequent

unexcused absence. Note that the class participation portion of each student's grade is left solely to the discretion of the instructor.

Here are specific situations of absence and whether or not excuses will be accepted as valid or not:

- Valid university excuses include religious holy days, officially recognized university activities (with Dean of Students letter), and military leave. Students must follow the required documentation procedure for each valid university excuse.
- The instructor reserves the right to accept, or not, excuses related to medical issues. Naturally, it is not usually feasible to document in advance any time lost due to illness. The exception is planned surgeries and appointments (not normal check-ups). Any class time missed will not be excused without medical or other valid documentation. Documentation from Mexico is permissible. Students with severe medical problems that result in missing a majority of the semester may want to consider a complete withdrawal from the university for medical purposes.
- Absences due to conflicts with work, child care, etc. that make it impossible for you to regularly attend this class are not permitted. If you know you will have scheduling conflicts with this class, then you should make other arrangements or postpone this class until a future semester.
- According to UTEP Curriculum and Classroom Policies, "When, in the judgment of the instructor, a student has been absent to such a degree as to impair his or her status relative to credit for the course, the instructor can drop the student from the class with a grade of W before the course drop deadline and with a grade of F after the course drop deadline."
- Missed exams due to family hardship or family medical problems may not be accepted by the instructor as valid excuses. For example, helping family members move, picking up at the airport, driving family members to medical appointments when you know they conflict with class, and other such activities, will not be permitted as valid excuses. Emergencies such as deaths in the family must be documented, unfortunately.
- Missing any course assessments and work due to vacations and pre-booked travel arrangements are not valid excuses.

Final Exam Policy

The date of the final exam is listed below in the Schedule of Classes. The final exam is considered over when the instructor is no longer in the room (all other students present have completed the exam), so do not be late. The exam must be taken on this day unless you have a valid university accepted excuse.

Midterm Exam Policy

The date of the midterm exam is listed below in the Schedule of Classes. No make-up midterm exam will occur without a student having provided to the instructor valid documentation explaining or excusing the absence. The instructor has the discretion to decide if a make-up is allowable outside the university excused absences. If you miss an exam due to an emergency or illness, you must notify me (and confirm with me that I have received your notification attempt)

as soon as possible to arrange a make-up exam. A make-up exam may be of a different format than the original exam.

Short Papers

SHORT PAPER #1: Who are YOUR representatives at the U.S. Congress, state legislative (House and Senate), and local (county, city) levels? What kinds of decisions have they made recently, and do you agree with those decisions? Explain why you agree or disagree with each decision that you consider. Further details and instructions will be provided in class (about 1000 words, worth 10% of overall grade). Websites: www.elpasotexas.gov; www.co.el-paso.tx.us, www.capitol.state.tx.us; www.house.gov; www.senate.gov. **Printed copy is due on 2/9 (at the start of class).**

SHORT PAPER #2: Study the El Paso County Election Commission website: <http://www.co.el-paso.tx.us/elections/>. Analyze at least 3 recent elections, calculating voter turnout rates. Describe what was at stake in the elections as well as the final results. Then analyze why the voter turnout rates are so low (or high), integrating course readings and feedback from conversations with several of your friends or relatives. Further details and instructions will be provided in class (about 1000 words, worth 10% of overall grade). **Printed copy is due on 4/13 (at the start of class).**

Civic Engagement Project

Students are to choose one of the following two options for the civic engagement project:

- **Option 1:** Complete a minimum of 20 hours of service learning coordinated by the Center for Civic Engagement (CCE). We will have an in-class session to have class members registered and trained on how to do the project and another session where students will have an opportunity to share and discuss the activities they accomplished during the semester. You must submit your documentation verifying the hours of service learning to the CCE by 4/27 at 5:00pm to receive credit (further details and instructions will be provided in class).
- **Option 2:** Write a research paper (minimum 15 pages - maximum 20 pages) on current efforts to increase civic engagement among adults in the United States. What are the names of seven groups or centers that try to increase civic engagement among adults? How do these groups attempt to increase civic engagement? How are their efforts similar (and how are they different)? Which groups and efforts do you think are most effective, and why? How could the groups be more successful at engaging adults in the community? You should refer to relevant scholarly work as well as the official websites of the groups or centers that you are researching for the paper (minimum of 15 scholarly and official website sources). Students who choose this option will also have an opportunity to share and discuss their project with other class members during a class session. You must submit a printed copy of your paper to the instructor by 4/27, at the start of class, to receive credit (further details and instructions will be provided in class).

Other Course Policies and Expectations

- Debate and discussion are important in the critical evaluation of politics. It is expected that students will treat the instructor and other students with respect, including refraining from disparaging remarks, personal insults, derogatory comments, and other unprofessional behavior, in person or electronically. Any problem related to rude conduct, or any threats to violence, etc., likely will result in the student being dropped from the course by the instructor.
- Outside work and other non-class related activities are not permitted in our classroom.
- If you engage in behaviors that distract others or create a disturbance, you will be asked to leave the class. If you refuse to leave class, university police will be contacted.
- Cell phone/smart phone/PDA usage is not permitted during exams or at other times when it might pose a class disturbance. Laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices used for note-taking are permissible, but students using such must not engage in any activities that disturb other students.

Email Protocol

When emailing me, please put the course and section number in the subject line. In the body of your email, clearly state your question. At the end of your email, be sure to put your first and last name. Please do not email me about information you can obtain from the syllabus. I generally do not answer substantive material from lectures or readings via email, as it is not an effective means of communicating. If there is class material you are confused about, please come see me during my office hours.

Academic Integrity and Dishonesty

As stated in the UTEP undergraduate catalog, “Any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Academic dishonesty includes, and 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, and any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts. Proven violations of the detailed regulations, as printed in the *Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP)*, and available in the Office of Student Life and on the homepage of the Office of Student Life at www.utep.edu/dos, can result in sanctions ranging from disciplinary probation, to a failing grade on the work in question, to a failing grade in the course, to suspension or dismissal, among others.”

Students with Different Abilities

If you have a disability and need classroom accommodations, please contact The Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148, or by email to cass@utep.edu, or visit their office located in UTEP Union East, Room 106. For additional information, please visit the CASS website at www.sa.utep.edu/cass. CASS’ staff are the only individuals who can

validate, and if need be, authorize accommodations for students with disabilities. The student is responsible for presenting to the instructor any CASS accommodation letters and instructions before arrangements need to be made for exams or other needs.

Liberal Arts Honors Program

This class has been designated as a Liberal Arts Honors Program [LAHP] course. It has received this designation because it features at least five of the Honors course criteria, which include student leadership, advanced readings and/or reviews, opportunities for intensive writing, opportunities for intensive research, opportunities to utilize technology, opportunities to make extensive use of campus resources, community-based experiences, pre-professional opportunities, and development of critical thinking. In broader terms, this course is honors-designated because of its creativity and/or intellectual rigor, both of which are integral components of the Liberal Arts Honors Program. No additional coursework is necessary for this course to count towards the LAHP Honors minor. If you are not a member of the LAHP, and are interested in the program, please visit the LAHP website at utep.edu/lahp or contact LAHP Director Michael Topp at mtopp@utep.edu. If you join the Liberal Arts Honors Program, this course will count towards the LAHP minor!

Schedule of Classes

Tues	1/17	Introduction to the Course
Thurs	1/19	Political Science and Citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 1
Tues	1/24	National Electoral Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 2
Thurs	1/26	Context and Civic Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 3 (first half of chapter) • Presentation by the Center for Civic Engagement
Tues	1/31	Context and Civic Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 3 (second half of chapter)
Thurs	2/2	Civic Engagement Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training by the Center for Civic Engagement (Option 1) • Description and Discussion of Research Paper (Option 2)
Tues	2/7	Associations, Policy, and Civic Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 4
Thurs	2/9	Democratic Deficit and Reform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 5 (first half of chapter) • Short Paper #1 Due (submit printed copy to the instructor at the start of class)

Tues	2/14	Democratic Deficit and Reform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 5 (second half of chapter)
Thurs	2/16	Civic-Political Divide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 1
Tues	2/21	Generations and Trends in Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 2
Thurs	2/23	Political and Civic Engagement Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 3 (first half of chapter)
Tues	2/28	Political and Civic Engagement Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 3 (second half of chapter)
Thurs	3/2	Age and Attitudes towards Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 4 • Review Session
Tues	3/7	Civic Participation in Comparative Perspective
Thurs	3/9	Midterm Exam
Tues	3/14	Spring Break (no class)
Thurs	3/16	Spring Break (no class)
Tues	3/21	Pathways to Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 5
Thurs	3/23	Youth and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 6
Tues	3/28	Generational Change, Life Cycle, and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 7
Thurs	3/30	Leadership and Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 1
Tues	4/4	Using Organization Case Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 2
Thurs	4/6	No Class
Tues	4/11	Strategies for Building Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 3 (first half of chapter)

Thurs	4/13	<p>Strategies for Building Power</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 3 (second half of chapter) • Short Paper #2 Due (submit printed copy to the instructor at the start of class)
Tues	4/18	<p>Organizing Activists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 4
Thurs	4/20	<p>Mobilizing Activists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 5
Tues	4/25	<p>Leadership and Success in Developing/Retaining Activists</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 6
Thurs	4/27	<p>Civic Engagement Project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection Session (Options 1 and 2) • Civic Engagement Project Due *Option 1: Due by 5pm *Option 2: Due by the start of class (submit printed copy to the instructor)
Tues	5/2	Review Session
Thurs	5/4	<p>Discussion on Education, Leadership, and Civic Engagement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Lecture
Tues	5/9	Final Exam: 1pm-3:45pm