

Leadership & Civic Participation

Political Science (POLS) 4357 – 001

CRN: 28106

The University of Texas at El Paso

Spring 2016

MWF: 10:30 - 11:20am

Old Main 214

Instructor: Dr. Gregory S. Schober

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Office Hours: MW, 9:15 – 10:15am (and by appointment)

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?

Outcomes (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 Course Books (available at 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 likely consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, and it will cover material from the course readings, lectures, and/or discussion (20% of grade).
- Final Exam: The final exam will likely consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions, and it will cover material from the course readings, lectures, and/or discussion (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). **Insert the Word Count for each paper and send them to gschober@utep.edu NO LATER than the due date/time (see schedule below). Late papers are not accepted** (20% of grade).
- Civic Engagement Project: Students will have the option of completing community service through the Center for Civic Engagement or writing a research paper on civic engagement (20%).
- Class Attendance and Participation: Students will be able to earn participation points each class session by attending and participating in class discussions (15% of grade).

Attendance Policy

Attendance is mandatory by university policy, and students will be asked to sign an attendance sheet for each class meeting. It is expected of you 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:

- If you know you will be unable to attend a class due to a valid university excuse (NCAA sports, religious purposes, other university events, brief military duties) you must notify me ten days in advance by a letter provided by the Dean of Students.
- 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.

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. (~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 **Due 2/15 by 5pm**

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 (~1000 words, worth 10% of overall grade). **Due 4/11 by 5pm**

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 community service 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 community service to the CCE by 4/28 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 college students in the United States. What are the names of seven groups or centers that try to increase civic engagement among college students? 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 college students 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 your paper to me via email by 4/28 at 5:00pm 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

Model integrity and ethical behavior! Students who copy exams or steal ideas and quotations without citations in their writing will be subject to discipline. Read <http://sa.utep.edu/osccr/academic-integrity/>

UTEP Statement for Each Syllabus: “Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and collusion. Cheating may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person's as ones' own. And, collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts which erode the University's educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators, but also for the entire community. It is expected that UTEP students will understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they will be willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.”

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.

Schedule of Classes

Wed	1/20	Introduction to the Course
Fri	1/22	Political Science and Citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 1 (first half of chapter) • Presentation by the Center for Civic Engagement
Mon	1/25	Political Science and Citizenship <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 1 (second half of chapter)
Wed	1/27	National Electoral Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 2 (first half of chapter)
Fri	1/29	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)
Mon	2/1	National Electoral Processes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 2 (second half of chapter)
Wed	2/3	Context and Civic Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 3 (first half of chapter)
Fri	2/5	Context and Civic Activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 3 (second half of chapter)
Mon	2/8	Associations, Policy, and Civic Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 4 (first half of chapter)
Wed	2/10	Associations, Policy, and Civic Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 4 (second half of chapter)
Fri	2/12	Democratic Deficit and Reform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 5 (first half of chapter)
Mon	2/15	Democratic Deficit and Reform <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Macedo, Ch. 5 (second half of chapter) • Short Paper #1 Due by 5pm
Wed	2/17	No Class (UTEP Closed)
Fri	2/19	Civic-Political Divide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 1 (first half of chapter)
Mon	2/22	Civic-Political Divide <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 1 (second half of chapter)
Wed	2/24	Generations and Trends in Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 2 (first half of chapter)
Fri	2/26	Generations and Trends in Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 2 (second half of chapter)

Mon	2/29	Political and Civic Engagement Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 3 (first half of chapter)
Wed	3/2	Political and Civic Engagement Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 3 (second half of chapter)
Fri	3/4	Midterm Exam
Mon	3/7	No Class (Spring Break)
Wed	3/9	No Class (Spring Break)
Fri	3/11	No Class (Spring Break)
Mon	3/14	Discussion on Policy and Civic and Political Participation
Wed	3/16	Age and Attitudes towards Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 4 (first half of chapter)
Fri	3/18	Age and Attitudes towards Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 4 (second half of chapter)
Mon	3/21	Pathways to Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 5 (first half of chapter)
Wed	3/23	Pathways to Participation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 5 (second half of chapter)
Fri	3/25	No Class
Mon	3/28	Youth and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 6 (full chapter)
Wed	3/30	Generational Change, Life Cycle, and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 7 (first half of chapter)
Fri	4/1	Generational Change, Life Cycle, and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zukin et al., Ch. 7 (second half of chapter)
Mon	4/4	Leadership and Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 1 (first half of chapter)
Wed	4/6	Leadership and Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 1 (second half of chapter)
Fri	4/8	Using Organization Case Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 2 (first half of chapter)
Mon	4/11	Using Organization Case Studies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 2 (second half of chapter) • Short Paper #2 Due by 5pm
Wed	4/13	Strategies for Building Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 3 (first half of chapter)
Fri	4/15	Strategies for Building Power <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 3 (second half of chapter)
Mon	4/18	Organizing Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 4 (first half of chapter)
Wed	4/20	Organizing Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 4 (second half of chapter)
Fri	4/22	Mobilizing Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 5 (first half of chapter)
Mon	4/25	Mobilizing Activists

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 5 (second half of chapter)
Wed	4/27	Civic Engagement Project <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflection Session on Project Experience (Options 1 and 2)
Thurs	4/28	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class • Civic Engagement Project (Options 1 and 2) Due by 5pm
Fri	4/29	Leadership and Success in Developing/Retaining Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 6 (first half of chapter)
Mon	5/2	Leadership and Success in Developing/Retaining Activists <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Han, Ch. 6 (second half of chapter)
Wed	5/4	Discussion on Education, Leadership, and Civic Engagement
Fri	5/6	Exam Review
Fri	5/13	Final Exam: 10am-12:45pm