

Spring 2021

University of Texas at Austin and Sciences Po-Lyon

GOV 355M

International Responses to a Global Phenomenon: The COVID-19 Pandemic

Unique #: 38659
Wednesdays, 9-12
Zoom!

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Course Description and Format

This course is a collaboration between UT and Sciences Po Lyon. It will be open to 25 UT students and 25 Sciences Po Lyon students. Group work and interactions between French and American students will be mandatory. All instructions will be done via Zoom and in English, though fluency in other languages maybe helpful (but not at all required).

The objective of this course is to give students a thorough understanding of COVID-19 through a public policy lens. How have different governments at various levels reacted to the global pandemic? What are the public health and economic consequences? How has the political discourse shaped public policy on the issue? How has the public policy affected the spread of the virus? How has the vaccine development and rollout gone?

We will provide a framework for perspectives and answers that extend beyond the personal or even local, to consider the virus and the public policies that attempted to contain it in a more global way. While nothing like COVID-19 has happened in at least the last 100 years, the disciplines of political science and public policy have provided us with a framework to understand the corona virus situation a bit more than the popular media suggests. With this orientation, we will provide a front-row seat to all participants on how the framework and findings from these disciplines change as a consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The pandemic caused by this virus provides the academy with an incredible opportunity to evaluate government actions even as the consequences continue to unfold. While the COVID-19 crisis has ramifications in lots of disciplines, this course will focus on how the governments – at various levels and around the globe – responded to the pandemic. While our focus will be on the responses of the United States and France, we will place both of these countries in a broader perspective in order to evaluate the decisions made by their national and regional governments.

What has become clear since the origins of the virus at the end of 2019 is that it does not abide by national boundaries, though governments around the globe quickly retreated to national policies in hopes of retarding its spread, alleviating its devastating consequences, and vaccinating citizens. Students in Texas and Lyon will be challenged to reflect upon the personal consequences of the virus's spread while being provided with a framework for understanding how governments responded and the effect of those responses.

Special Needs

The University of Texas at Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. To determine if you qualify, please contact the Dean of Students at 471-6259 (471-4641 TTY). If they certify your needs, I will work with you to make appropriate arrangements.

Grades

Grades will be determined according to the following formula:

- 60% Class Participation. Throughout the class, we reserve the right to take attendance, to give pop quizzes, and to assign homework.
- 40% Group Research Project

We frown on issues of academic dishonesty and will severely punish any student caught plagiarizing, cheating, or engaged in unethical classroom practices. We will not accept late assignments without prior written notice. We will not accept excuses for missing pop quizzes. All grade disputes must be type written and turned in within 1 week of receiving the grade. We will use pluses and minuses in this class, with the 0.7 and 0.3 at cutoffs. So, an 82.9 is a B- and an 83.1 is B; an 86.9 is a B and an 87.1 is a B+. We will not “round up”; an 89.9999 is a B+.

Course Readings

All readings will be posted on Canvas.

Tentative Course Schedule

January 20 (UT only) – A very brief introduction

January 27 (UT only) – Designing a Framework (United States)

February 3 (UT only) – Federalism in the United States

- Morone, James A., and Rogan Kersh. 2018. Chapter 4, "Federalism and Nationalism" in *By the People: Debating American Government*. Oxford University Press.

February 10 – Updating the Framework (International)

February 17 (UT only) – France, Europe, and the European Union

February 24 – Background on Pandemics

March 3 – International Organizations and Pandemic history

March 10 – COVID and Public Health

March 17 (Sciences Po Lyon only) – ???

March 24 – COVID and Party Polarization

March 31 – Misinformation

April 7 – Student Presentations

April 14 – Student Presentations

April 21 – Research Week

April 28 – Student Presentations

May 5 – Student Presentations