

1. Basic Information

Instructor: Diego Vega (he/his/him)

Email: diegovega@utexas.edu

Classes: Monday/Wednesday/Friday, 9.00-10.00 AM

Location: PAR 203/ Starting on Zoom (Link in the Canvas page, “Zoom” tab on the left)

Office Hours: Monday/ Wednesday, 10.30-12.00 AM

Location: Zoom (Link in the Canvas page, “Zoom” tab on the left) or in person by appointment.

2. Course Description

“We are not just one more nation, one more same entity on the world stage.
We have been essential to the preservation and progress of freedom.”
(Dick Cheney)¹

“I believe in American exceptionalism, just as I suspect that the Brits believe in British exceptionalism and the Greeks believe in Greek exceptionalism.”
(Barack Obama)²

You have probably heard many times that the United States of America is a unique country with a singular history, unparalleled democratic institutions, and a social ethos driven by individual action towards the greater good. All these characteristics, it is said, make this country exceptional. Is the US really that exceptional? The United States does have a long democratic history with a stable party system, but isn't it still marked by racial discrimination and economic inequality that challenge the aspiration to justice and happiness for all?

This course uses concepts and tools of political science to put American politics in comparative perspective. By comparing it with other countries, you will learn about what is truly special about the US, such as its long-lasting democratic constitution (the oldest still in place!), and about what is not that particular to Americans, such as its federalist system of states (there are more than 20 federal countries in the world). You will also get to know about political institutions and policy solutions from abroad to compare with the ones implemented in this country. Is the electoral college better than direct elections for presidency? Are systems with multiple parties preferable to Americans' two party-system? Would it be a good idea to make it easier to amend the Constitution?

After this course, you will be able to critically assess the political debates in the United States with a broad international perspective. With that, you will find your own answer to the question: to what extent and in what ways are the United States truly exceptional?

This course fulfills the second half of the legislative requirement for government. It may be taken for credit only once.

1 Cheney, Dick. *Exceptional: Why the World Needs a Powerful America*. Threshold Editions. 2015. pp. 259

2 Obama, Barack. Response to Financial Times's reporter Edward Luce in Press Conference. April 4, 2009.

Objectives

By successfully completing this course, you should be able to:

- Understand and put in perspective most political debates in the US.
- Think critically about American political history, institutions, disputes and choices.
- Discuss and explain how different countries organize their politics, elections, and policies.
- Compare American political organizations to other countries, with the pros and cons.
- Formulate and defend an opinion about different political issues.
- Write a college level essay to present and defend an argument.
- Interpret and understand some concepts and tools from Political Science.

Teaching Format

This course is formed by texts and lectures, both equally important. Each week has a selection of mandatory texts that you must read before the lecture on Tuesday. All texts will be made available free of charge through the Canvas web page or through links to external websites. Section 5 below describes how to get **the free textbook**, which **is an open-access book** on American Politics, and section 6 includes the calendar for the course with the readings for each week.

The lectures will develop the content from these texts and present additional information relevant for the course. There will be short discussions in class to further your understanding of the material which form your participation grade. Even outside those exercises, you are always welcome to ask questions!

The program for this course is divided in three units: (1) Conceptual and Historical Basis; (2) The Government and its Branches; (3) Elections and Parties. The first one lays the ground for the other two, which are inter-related (as most, if not all, topics in the social sciences).

Face-to-Face and Covid

This course is registered as face to face, and I will do my best to maintain as much of the course as possible in face to face classes. Unfortunately, some situations during the semester may preclude the whole class from meeting in the same room. Following a request from the University, the course will start through Zoom until the end of January. After that, classes should return to normal face to face mode.

This course is using the Lectures Online recording system for face-to-face classes. This system records the audio and video material presented in class for you to review after class. Links for the recordings will appear in the Lectures Online tab on the Canvas page for this class. You will find this tab along the left side navigation in Canvas.

Pre-Requisites

There are no official pre-requisites for this course. Even if some readings may at first seem hard to follow, lectures will provide the necessary background to grasp the main ideas relevant for the course from the texts. If you still encounter difficulty understanding the content, I encourage you to ask questions in class or office hours.

Office Hours (online through Zoom, Monday/ Wednesday 10.30-12.00 AM)

The term “office hours” may be new to you. In college, it means specific time slots instructors (professors, lecturers, teaching assistants) dedicate to help their students outside the class. Typically,

they stay in their offices with open doors (or in Zoom meeting sessions) waiting for students to arrive with their questions, doubts, or issues regarding the course (or university life in general). This is a great resource for students, and I encourage you to use it in this class and in others as well.

I will hold office hours through Zoom on Mondays and Wednesdays, at 10.30-12.00 AM. If you prefer to join me in person, send me an email and we can set up a meeting somewhere outside for that time. Also email me if you absolutely cannot join me at those times. Until the end of January, all office hours will be held through Zoom as well.

3. Assignments, Evaluations, and Grades

Grades for this course are formed by a combination of in class and home assignments. The exams will evaluate your understanding of the content at the end of each unit in the course, with a set of multiple choice questions and a short written response. The final essay will ask for a longer reflection on cumulative material from the whole course. Participation will be measured by your presence in a series of guided discussions in small groups during class. And Reading write-ups will ensure you are following and understanding the material.

I understand that unexpected events can affect your lives during the semester, and for that reason there is some flexibility built in the assignments. Your final grade will include only your best two exams (so your worst exam will be dropped). This also means you may miss one exam without getting a zero in your grade – but it would be wiser to do all of them, since that increases your chances of a better grade. Similarly, you only have to submit 3 reading write-ups, and you can get full participation grade with only ten in-class discussions. The table below briefly describes all assignments in the course.

Assignment	Date	Description
Student Survey	January 22 (due 11:59 PM)	A brief survey with general information so I can know the students a bit better.
First Exam	February 18 (in class)	In class exam combining multiple choice and short written questions.
Second Exam	April 01 (in class)	In class exam combining multiple choice and short written questions.
Third Exam	May 02 (in class)	In class exam combining multiple choice and short written questions.
Final Essay	May 09 (due 11:59 PM)	A 2-3 pages essay (double spaced) submitted in Canvas.
3 Reading Write-ups	Every Monday (due 8:59 AM)	A 1-page summary of one of that week's readings submitted in Canvas. You only have to submit three.
10 In-class Participation	Every week (in class)	Participate in the small-group discussions organized in class once per week and submit a brief summary.

Student Survey

You will respond to a survey on Canvas before the second week of classes. There are no wrong answers. You will get credit worth 1% of your final grade for submitting the survey.

Exams

Each of the three exams for this course will be a set of multiple choice and short written questions regarding one unit of the course. All material from lectures and readings can be in these questions. The exams will take place in class on February 18, April 01, and May 02. You will have the whole class (50 minutes) to respond to those questions.

Out of the three exams, your two best ones will count towards your final grade in the course. Each of these two will be worth 25% of your final grade. Your worst exam will be dropped.

Final Essay

The final assignment for this course will be a 2-3 pages essay that brings together material covered throughout the whole semester. This will require the use of sources from the course's readings but **no** additional research. Complete instructions will be given to you two weeks before the due dates.

The essay will be due on May 09 at 11:59 PM. Late submissions will be penalized with a deduction of 5 points in the essay's grade per day, counting from that time. Grading timelines are very strict at the end of the semester, please make sure you submit your essay within the deadline. It must be submitted in Canvas, in the respective link within the "Assignments" tab on the left. It is your responsibility to ensure that your assignment was successfully uploaded.

Reading Write-ups

The readings are a central element of this course. To ensure your understanding of the readings, you have to submit **at least three** 1-page write-ups summarizing **one** of the readings for that week (the three must be from different weeks). Each of the submissions is worth 3% of your final grade (for a total of 9% with the three write-ups).

These write-ups are due on the Monday of the week for that reading, before class (so you have to do the assignment before watching any lecture on that topic). The write-up is to be submitted in Canvas before the beginning of the lecture on Monday.

Participation

It is important to be present in the lectures for this course, because the readings do not cover all the course's material. In addition, there will be in-class activities that will make for 10% of your final grade. Once per week, students will form small groups (4-5 students) for a guided discussion about that week's material. Each group will submit a short write-up summarizing the discussion at the end of the class.

I understand you may sometimes have to miss class for several reasons, so there is some flexibility here as well: you are required to participate in only 10 discussion activities to get full credit for participation (out of 15 weeks). Each of the ten discussions will be worth 10% of the participation grade (which means 1% of your final grade). I will mark participation on Canvas every week so you can track your own situation.

Calculating the Final Grade

Your final grade will be a combination of all assignments, calculated following the table below:

Assignment	Weight in the Final Grade
Student Survey	1%
Your best exam	25%
Your second best exam	25%
Your worst exam	0%
Final essay	30%
3 Reading write-ups	9%
10 Participation	10%

As I hope you can see, flexibility is built into the assignments to support your success in this course by dropping your worse grades. Consequently, the final grades are firm, and no additional curve is available. Plus/minus grading will be used. Final grades will follow the table below:

Grade	Points
A	94 - 100
A-	90 - 93
B+	87 - 89
B	84 - 86
B-	80 - 83
C+	77 - 79
C	74 - 76
C-	70 - 73
D+	67 - 69
D	64 - 66
D-	60 - 63
F	0 - 60

Grades and participation will be recorded in Canvas throughout the semester. I advise checking your grades after every assignment to ensure that there are no errors. At the end of the semester, grade reporting deadlines are too tight for us to investigate. End-of-semester grades reported to the Registrar are final and can only be changed by petition due to a verifiable instructor error.

4. Course Policies

Learning Success

Your success in this class is important to me. If there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. We'll develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course. I also encourage you to reach out to the student resources available through UT. Many are listed at the end of this syllabus.

Late Essay

As described above, there is some good amount of flexibility in the grading for this course, since your worse grades for the exams will be dropped and the number of required discussions is quite small. As a result, I will not be flexible regarding deadlines for the essay. Lateness penalties will be enforced. You are encouraged to submit well before the deadline at 11.59 pm, to avoid technical issues that may cost you 5 points.

Missed Exams

For the same reasons, there will be no make-ups for the exam. If you miss one exam, that one will count as your worst grade and will be dropped. Extenuating circumstances that may preclude you from taking a second quiz must be communicated to me as soon as possible – hopefully before or during the quiz. Exceptional cases that can be justified and documented will be dealt with on a personal basis.

Religious holidays: please let me know at least two weeks ahead of time if an exam falls on a religious holiday that is important to you. This situation will be dealt with on a personal basis. You will **not** be penalized for this absence.

Regrades

You are always welcome to come talk to me in office hours to understand the grade and the notes about your essay. However, if would like to have it regraded, you must request that by writing. The only acceptable reason to request a regrade is that you believe I made a mistake. Since I need to know what mistake you think I made, you have to write up an argument in one or two paragraphs about what was graded improperly. That request can be sent up to seven days after the grades were released. Upon receiving your request, I will regrade your essay within the next seven days.

Absences

Other than participation in the discussions (described above), this course has no control of presence in class.

Services for Students with Disabilities

The university and I are committed to creating an accessible and inclusive learning environment consistent with university policy and federal and state law. Please let me know if you experience any barriers to learning so I can work with you to ensure you have equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. If you are a student with a disability, or think you may have a disability, and need accommodations please contact Services for Students with Disabilities (SSD). Please refer to SSD's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>. If you are already registered with SSD, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your accommodations and needs in this course.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity

All assignments in this course may be processed by TurnItIn, an online tool in Canvas that compares submitted material to an archived database of published work to check for potential plagiarism. Other methods may also be used to determine if a paper is the student's original work. Regardless of the results of any TurnItIn submission, I will then personally analyze the essay to make the final determination as to whether or not a paper has been plagiarized.

You and all students are expected to abide by the University of Texas Honor Code: "As a student of The University of Texas at Austin, I shall abide by the core values of the University and uphold academic integrity." Plagiarism is taken very seriously at UT. Therefore, if you use words or ideas that are not your own or that you have used in previous class, you must cite your sources. Otherwise you will be guilty of plagiarism and subject to academic disciplinary action, including but not limited to failure of the course. Please get in touch by email or in my office hours if you have any question about plagiarism. You are responsible for understanding UT's Academic Honesty and the University Honor Code which can be found at the following web address:

<https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/standards/conduct.php>

Q Drop Policy

If you want to drop a class after the 12th class day, you'll need to execute a Q drop before the Q-drop deadline, which typically occurs near the middle of the semester. Under Texas law, you are only allowed six Q drops while you are in college at any public Texas institution. For more information, see: <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/csacc/academic/adddrop/qdrop>

Prohibition of Sharing of Materials and Recordings

Sharing of any materials from this course to people not in the class (either directly, or by posting online) is **prohibited** by me and by the University. This includes recordings of classes in video or audio, links to Zoom meetings, power point presentation, essays' prompts and instructions, pictures or information from the exams, and readings available on Canvas. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. The websites used for sharing materials are well known. I will personally report unauthorized sharing of these materials to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including but not limited to failure in the course. Recordings of the class in particular are also protected by federal law under FERPA. They must not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

Personal Pronouns

Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to differences of race, culture, religion, politics, sexual orientation, gender, gender variance, and nationalities. Class rosters are provided to me with the student's legal name unless they have added a "preferred name" with the Gender and Sexuality Center (<http://diversity.utexas.edu/genderandsexuality/publications-and-resources/>). I will gladly honor your request to address you by a name that is different from what appears on the official roster, and by the gender pronouns you use. Please advise me of any changes early in the semester so that I may make appropriate updates to my records. For instructions on how to add your pronouns to Canvas, visit <https://utexas.instructure.com/courses/633028/pages/profile-pronouns>

5. Readings

This course will use a large set of readings that form a crucial element of your experience as a student. You must read the mandatory texts assigned for each week **before** Monday. The mandatory readings are the first texts described in each week. All mandatory readings are available to you for free, either in the course's Canvas page or on their own websites with a link provided. There are optional readings listed for each week as well, but those are only for your reference in case you would like to deepen your knowledge about a topic. Optional readings are not available in the same form, but most can be found through the UT Library. Please, let me know if you cannot find a particular reading in which you are interested.

Some texts in the list are more complicated than others. They usually come from academic sources and were written by and for social scientists. Do not worry about understanding every word and every argument, but make sure you dedicate enough time to understand their key arguments and ideas. You are encouraged to take notes on the difficulties you faced in your readings and bring them to class to ask for clarifications. Other texts are more accessible, meant for the general public or for students. Lectures will not go into so much detail in explaining their content, but will use them as a basis. These readings should take less of your time in comparison to the academic readings, but they can still present challenges. Do not feel discouraged if you cannot understand an idea or concept from the textbook, for example. Chances are the lecture will make them clearer. If not, please bring your question to the lecture: many other students may be silently asking themselves the same think.

Texbook (FREE)

This course will use the OpenStax Textbook on American Politics, called "American Government 3e", available on: <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

You can have full access to the textbook free of charge using that link. The list on the left of the website allows you to see the contents of the book, read it directly in the website, download it as a pdf or kindle file. I recommend having it on your device as a pdf, in case you have to read it offline at some point. If you prefer, you can pay for a physical copy.

Other Readings (Also Free)

The other mandatory readings in the course are formed by book chapters, academic articles, policy/research briefs, and news texts. They will also all be available to you free of charge. Most of them will be in the course's Canvas webpage, inside the "Files" tab, organized by weeks. In the cases with a link associated with the reading in the calendar below, you may go directly to the original website to find the text.

6. Calendar and Weekly Readings

UNIT 1: Conceptual and Historical Basis

Week 1) January 19 and 21

Comparative Politics: What is politics? What are governments? How can we compare countries' politics?

[TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Section 1.1 What is government? In _____. *American Government 2e*. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 7-13).

Mattei, Dogan and Pelassy, Dominique. Chapter 1 and Chapter 3. In _____. How to Compare Nations. Chatham House. 1990. (pgs 3-14, 24-31).

Optional:

Boix, Carles and Stokes, Carol. Introduction. In _____. The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics. Oxford University Press. 2007. (pg 3-11)

[STUDENT SURVEY – JANUARY 22]

Week 2) January 24, 26, and 28

Nation-States and Government: What are countries? How did they originate, and what is similar in all of them? What makes a state? What makes a nation? Why is the whole world formed by nation-states?

Appiah, Kwame. Chapter 3 – Country (Selected Pages). In _____. The Lies that Bind: Rethinking Identity, Creed, Country, Color, Class, Culture. Profile Books. 2018. (pgs 70-79, 98-104)

Tilly, Charles. Chapter 8: Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990-1990. In Castañeda, Ernesto and Schneider, Cathy Lisa (eds). Collective Violence, Contentious Politics, and Social Change: a Charles Tilly Reader. Routledge. 2017. (pgs 140-155)

Anderson, Benedict. Introduction. In Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. Verso. 1983. (pgs 1-7)

Optional:

Appiah, Kwame. The Lies that Bind: Rethinking Identity, Creed, Country, Color, Class, Culture. Profile Books. 2018.

Tilly, Charles. Coercion, Capital, and European States, A.D. 990-1990. Basil Blackwell. 1990.

Anderson, Benedict. Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism. Verso. 1983. (see especially chapters 2, 3, and 6)

Hobsbawm, Eric and Ranger, Terence. The Invention of Tradition. Cambridge University Press. 1983.

Spruyt, Hendrik. War, Trade, and State Formation. In Boix, Carles and Stokes, Susan Carol. The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics. Oxford University Press. 2007.

Week 3) January 31, February 02, and 04

Theorizing Democracy: What is a democracy? Has democracy been the same thing over time and space? How to conceptualize contemporary democracy?

Schmitter, Philippe and Karl, Terry Lynn. What democracy is... and is not. Journal of Democracy. 1991. (pgs 3-16)

Dahl, Robert. Democratization and Public Opposition. In _____ Polyarchy. Yale University Press. 1971. (pgs 1-16)

Optional:

Lansford, Tom. Polyarchy. In Kurian, George T. The Encyclopedia of Political Science, vol. 4. CQ Press. 2011. (pg 1311)

Held, David. Models of Democracy (3rd Ed). Polity. 2006.

Collier, David and Levitsky, Steven. Democracy with Adjectives. World Politics. 1997.

Lijphart, Arend. Introduction. In _____ Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries. Yale University Press. 1999.

de Souza Santos, Boaventura (ed). Democratizing Democracy: Beyond the Liberal Democratic Canon. Verso. 2005. - available online

Week 4) February 07, 09, and 11

Measuring Democracy: How can we identify Democracies in the real world? How many Democracies are there? How similar or different are they? Were all democracies created equal?

Przeworski, Adam; Alvarez, Michael E.; Cheibub, José Antonio; and Limongi, Fernando. Chapter 1: Democracies and Dictatorships (selected pages). In _____. Democracy and Development: Political Institutions and Well-Being in the World, 1950-1990. Cambridge University Press. 2000. (pgs 13-30).

Steven Levitsky and Lucan A. Way. Elections Without Democracy: The Rise of Competitive Authoritarianism. *Journal of Democracy* 13(2). 2002. (pgs 51-65)

Mechkova, Valeriya and Sigman, Rachel. Varieties of Democracy (V-Dem) – Policy Brief 5.1. V-Dem Institute. 2018. (pgs 1-3)

Optional

Linz, Juan. Totalitarian and Authoritarian Regimes. Lynne Rienner, 2000.

Greene, Kenneth. Why Dominant Parties Lose: Mexico's Democratization in Comparative Perspective. Cambridge. 2007.

V-Dem. Codebook V11.1. University of Gothenburg: V-Dem Institute. 2021.

Elkins, Zachary. Gradations of Democracy? Empirical Tests of Alternative Conceptualizations. *American Journal of Political Science*, 44. 2000. (pgs 293-300).

O'Donnell, Guillermo, and Schmitter, Philippe C. Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies. Johns Hopkins University Press. 1986.

Freedom House: <https://freedomhouse.org/reports/freedom-world/freedom-world-research-methodology>

Week 5) February 14 and 16 (18 is the first exam)

Slavery: What countries received more enslaved African people? How does the history of slavery connects countries and their politics? How does slavery impact these countries' politics?

Brent, Linda. Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl. Available at:

<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11030/11030-h/11030-h.htm>

Baquaqua, Mahommah G. (with Lovejoy, Paul E. and Law, Robin). The Biography of Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua: His Passage from Slavery to Freedom in Africa and America (select pages). Markus Wiener Publishers. 2001. (pgs 161-177).

Bergad, Laird W. Introduction. In _____. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2007. (pgs XI-XIV)

Optional

Prince, Mary. The History of Mary Prince, a West Indian Slave. Related by Herself. With a Supplement by the Editor. To Which Is Added, the Narrative of Asa-Asa, a Captured African. Available at: <https://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/prince/prince.html>

Bracks, Lean'tin. Writings on Black Women of the Diaspora. Routledge. 1998.

Engerman, Stanley L.. Slavery, Emancipation, and Freedom: Comparative Perspectives. Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press. 2007.

Araújo, Ana Lúcia. Shadows of the Slave Past: Memory, Heritage, and Slavery. Routledge. 2014.

Bergad, Laird W. The Comparative Histories of Slavery in Brazil, Cuba, and the United States. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2007.

[FIRST EXAM – FEBRUARY 18]

UNIT 2: The Government and Its Branches

Week 6) February 21, 23, and 25

Constitutions: How are constitutions created? How are constitutions changed or amended? What differentiates the American constitution? How constitutions determine the relationship among branches and levels of government?

United States. The Constitution of the United States and The Amendments to The Constitution of the United States. National Constitution Center.

Elkins, Zachary and Ginsburg, Tom. What Can We Learn from Written Constitutions? Annual Review of Political Science, 24. 2021.

[TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 2 – The Constitution and its origins (Sections 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, and 2.5). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 37-58)

Optional

Elkins, Zachary, Ginsburg, Tom, and Melton, James. The Endurance of National Constitutions. Cambridge University Press. 2009.

Samuels, Kirsti. 2007. Constitution building processes and democratization: A discussion of twelve case studies. International IDEA.

Maier, Pauline. Ratification: The People Debate the Constitution, 1787-1788. Simon & Schuster, 2011.

Milkis, Sidney M. and Nelson, Michael. Chapter 1 – The Constitutional Convention. In _____ The American Presidency: Origins and Development, 1776–2018.

Gargarella, Roberto. Latin American Constitutionalism, 1810–2010: The Engine Room of the Constitution. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press. 2013.

Week 7) February 28, March 02, and 04

Federalism: Why are some countries unitary and others federalist? What does that mean for the government? What are the consequences of federalism?

Hueglin, Thomas O., and Fenna, Alan. Chapter 2-Summary and Chapter 3: Federal Systems. In _____. Comparative Federalism: a Systematic Inquiry. Broadview Press. 2006. (pg 53-83)

[TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 3 – American Federalism (sections 3.1, 3.4, and 3.5). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 65-75, 87-94)

Optional

Robertson, David. Introduction. In _____. Federalism and the Making of America. Routledge. (pgs 1-22)

[TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 14 – State and Local Government. In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021.

Taylor, Steven L., Shugart, Matthew S., Lijphart, Arend, and Grofman, Bernard. Chapter 4, Federalism and Division of Power. In _____. A Different Democracy: American Government in a 31-Country Perspective. Yale University Press. 2014. (pgs 83-114)

Beramendi, Pablo. Federalism. In Boix, Carles and Stokes, Carol. The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics. Oxford University Press. 2007. (pgs 752-781)

Serna de la Garza, José María. Constitutional Federalism in Latin America. California Western International Law Journal, Vol. 30, No. 2. 2000. (pg 277-301)

- Burgess, Michael. Comparative Federalism. Routledge. 2006.
- Watts, Ronald L. Comparing Federal Systems (Third edition). McGill-Queen's University Press. 2008.
- Ziblatt, Daniel. 2006. Structuring the State: The Formation of Italy and Germany and the Puzzle of Federalism. Princeton University Press. 2006.

Week 8) March 07, 09, and 11

Legislature (Congress): What does Congress do? How are congresspeople organized? How does Congress represent a society? How laws come to be in Congress? How can Congress check the Presidency?

[TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 11: Congress (Sections 11.3-11.5). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 389-404)

Lupu, Noam. Debate: Class and Representation in Latin America. Swiss Political Science Review 21(2). 2015. (pg 229-236)

Morgenstern, Scott. Limits on Exporting the US Congress Model to Latin America. In Power, Timothy and Rae, Nicol. Exporting Congress? The Influence of the US Congress on World Legislatures. University of Pittsburgh Press. 2006. (pg 82-101)

Optional

Heitshusen, Valerie. Introduction to the Legislative Process in the U.S. Congress. Congressional Research Service. 2018.

Laver, Michael. Legislatures and Parliaments in Comparative Context. In Wittman, Donald A. and Weingast, Barry R. The Oxford Handbook of Political Economy. Oxford University Press. 2008.

Olson, David. Legislative Institutions: A Comparative View. M. E. Sharpe. 1994.

Karram, Azza. Women in Parliament: Beyond Numbers. A Revised Edition. IDEA: Stockholm. 2005.

Morgenstern, Scott and Nacif, Benito. Legislative Politics in Latin America. Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Power, Timothy and Rae, Nicol. Exporting Congress? The Influence of the US Congress on World Legislatures. University of Pittsburgh Press. 2006

Week 9) March 14, 16, and 18

SPRING BREAK

Week 10) March 21, 23, and 25

Executive (President/Prime Minister): What are the powers of the president? What are the limits to the president's power? How it compares to countries with a parliamentary system? What are the pros and cons of a presidential system?

[TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 12: The Presidency (Sections 12.4 and 12.5). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 429-441)

Shugart, Matthew. Comparative Executive–Legislative Relations. In Binder, Sarah; Rhodes, R.; and Rockman, Bert. The Oxford Handbook of Political Institutions. Oxford University Press. 2018. (pgs 1-18)

Optional:

O'Donnell, Guillermo. Delegative Democracy. Journal of Democracy 5(1). 1994. (pgs 55-69)

Pérez-Liñan, Aníbal. Presidential Impeachment and the New Political Instability in Latin America. Cambridge University Press. 2007.

- Mansfield, Harvey. *Taming the Prince: The ambivalence of Modern Executive Power*. Johns Hopkins University Press. 1993.
- Mainwaring, Scott and Shugart, Matthew S. *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press. 1997.
- Power, Timothy J., Gasiorowski, Mark J. *Institutional Design and Democratic Consolidation in the Third World*. Comparative Political Studies, 30 (2). 1997. (pgs 123-155).
- Elgie, Robert. *From Linz to Tsebelis: Three Waves of Presidential / Parliamentary Studies? Democratization*, 12 (1). 2005. (pgs 106-122)
- Mainwaring, Scott and Shugart, Matthew S. *Presidentialism and Democracy in Latin America*. Cambridge University Press. 1997.
- Morgenstern, Scott, John Polga-Hecimovich, and Sarah Shair-Rosenfield. "Tall, Grande, or Venti: Presidential Powers in the United States and Latin America." *Journal of Politics Latin America* 5. 2013. (pgs 37-70)

Week 11) March 28 and 30 (April 01 is the second exam)

Judiciary: Why is the Judiciary a branch of government? How can it affect politics? What powers can/should it have? How can it enforce its decisions?

- [TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 13: The Courts (Sections 13.4 and 13.5). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 464-473)
- Ferejohn, John; Rosenblith, Frances; and Shipan, Charles. *Comparative Judicial Politics*. In Boix, Carles and Stokes, Susan. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford University Press. 2009.

Optional:

- Hilbink, Lisa. "The origins of positive judicial independence." *World Politics* 64(4). 2012. (pgs 587-621)
- Hirschl, Ran. *The Judicialization of Mega-Politics and the Rise of Political Courts*. Annual Review of Political Science, 11. 2008. (pgs 93-118)
- Epp, Charles R. *The rights revolution: Lawyers, activists, and supreme courts in comparative perspective*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1998.
- Ginsburg, Tom. *Judicial Review in New Democracies: Constitutional Cases in Asian Cases*. Cambridge University Press. 2003.
- Vanberg, Georg. *Constitutional Courts in Comparative Perspective: A Theoretical Assessment*. Annual Review of Political Science, 18. 2015. (pgs 167-185)

[SECOND EXAM – APRIL 01]

UNIT 3 – Elections and Parties

Week 12) April 04, 06, and 08

Electoral Governance: Who is eligible to vote? Who organizes elections and counts the votes? Are elections centralized? How are ballots designed? Why does that matter?

- [TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 7: Voting and Elections (Sections 7.2 and 7.4). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 228-236 and 247-254)
- Navarro, Carlos. *Mexico: A Sophisticated Scheme for Addressing a Serious Distrust Issue*. In Catt, Helena; Ellis, Andres; Maley, Michael; Wall, Alan; and Wolf, Peter. *Electoral Management Design*. IDEA International. 2014.(Pgs 32-40).

Pastor, Robert. The United States Administration of Elections: Decentralized, Pre-modern and Contented. In Catt, Helena; Ellis, Andres; Maley, Michael; Wall, Alan; and Wolf, Peter. *Electoral Management Design*. IDEA International. 2014. (pgs 245-249)

Optional:

Catt, Helena; Ellis, Andres; Maley, Michael; Wall, Alan; and Wolf, Peter. *Electoral Management Design*. IDEA International. 2014.

Hartlyn, Jonathan; McCoy, Jennifer; Mustillo Thomas. *Electoral Governance Matters: Explaining the Quality of Elections in Contemporary Latin America*. Comparative Political Studies, 41(1). 2008. (pgs 73-98)

Kerevel, Yann. *Election Management Bodies and Public Confidence in Elections: Lessons from Latin America*. IFES Fellowship in Democracy Studies. 2009.

Mozaffar, Shaheen, and Schedler, Andreas. The comparative study of electoral governance – Introduction. *International Political Science Review* 23. 2002. (pgs 5-27).

Madrid, Raúl. *Opposition Parties and the Origins of Democracy in Latin America*. Comparative Politics, 52(2). 2008. (pgs 157-178).

Hartlyn, McCoy J, Mustillo TM. *Electoral Governance Matters: Explaining the Quality of Elections in Contemporary Latin America*. Comparative Political Studies. 2008;41(1):73-98.

Makulilo, Alexander B. *Election management bodies in East Africa : a comparative study of the contribution of electoral commissions to the strengthening of democracy*. Project Muse. 2016.

Stokes, Susan. *Political Clientelism*. In Boix, Carles and Stokes, Carol. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford University Press. 2007. (pg 604-627)

Week 13) April 11, 13, and 15

Electoral System: How are votes translated into offices in government? What types of electoral rules are there for Congress and for the Executive? What incentives do these rules generate for parties and voters? What consequences do these rules have?

Engstrom, Erik J. *The United States: the Past - Moving from Diversity to Uniform Single-Member Districts*. In Colomer, Joseph M. (ed) c. Palgrave Macmillan. 2004. (pgs 155-162)

Cheibub, José. *Brazil: Candidate-Centred PR in a Presidential System*. In Reynolds, Andre; Reilly, Ben; and Ellis, Andrew. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook*. IDEA. 2005. (pgs 86-89)

Reynolds, Andre; Reilly, Ben; and Ellis, Andrew. *Electoral System Design: The New International IDEA Handbook (Chapters 2 and 3, Selected pages in the file on Canvas)*. IDEA. 2005.

Optional:

Colomer, Joseph M. (ed) *Handbook of Electoral System Choice*. Palgrave Macmillan. 2004.

Pérez-Liñán, Aníbal. *Neo-institutional accounts of voter turnout: moving beyond industrial democracies*. *Electoral Studies*, 20(2). 2001. (pgs 281-297)

Taagepera, Rein. *Electoral Systems*. In Boix, Carles and Stokes, Carol. *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics*. Oxford University Press. 2007. (pg 678-702)

Lijphart, Arend. Chapter 8 – *Electoral Systems: Majority and Plurality Methods Versus Proportional Representation*. In _____ *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. Yale University Press. 1999.

Week 14) April 18, 20, and 22

Political Parties: What is the role of political parties in democracies? Why some countries have two parties, and other countries have many? How electoral systems define the number

and behavior of political parties? What types of parties are there, and what are their strategies?

- [TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 9: Political Parties (Sections 9.2 and 9.4). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 310-317 and 325-333)
- Rae, Nicol. Exceptionalism in the United States. In Katz, Richard S. and Crotty, William. Handbook of Party Politics. SAGE Publications. 2006. (pgs 196-203)
- Mainwaring, Scott; Power, Timothy; and Bizarro, Fernando. Chapter 6 - The Uneven Institutionalization of a Party System: Brazil (selected pages). In Mainwaring, Scott (ed.). Party Systems in Latin America: Institutionalization, Decay, and Collapse. New York: Cambridge University Press. 2018. (pgs 164-176 and 188-197)

Optional:

- Mainwaring, Scott. (Ed.). Party Systems in Latin America: Institutionalization, Decay, and Collapse. Cambridge University Press. 2018.
- Mainwaring, Scott and Power, Timothy. Building Democratic Institutions: Party Systems in Latin America. Stanford University Press. 1995.
- Katz, Richard S. and Crotty, William. Handbook of Party Politics. SAGE Publications. 2006.
- Clarke, Harold; and Marianne Stewart. The decline of parties in the minds of citizens. Annual Review of Political Science, 1. 1998. (pgs 357-378).
- Inglehart, Ronald, and Pippa Norris. "Trump, Brexit, and the Rise of Populism: Economic Have-Nots and Cultural Backlash." HKS Faculty Research Working Paper Series RWP16-026, August 2016.
- Kitschelt, H., K. A. Hawkins, et al. Latin American Party Systems. New York, Cambridge University Press. 2010.
- Madrid, Raul. Indigenous Parties and Democracy in Latin America. Latin American Politics and Society. 2018.
- Greene, Kenneth F., and Mariano Sánchez-Talanquer. Latin America's Shifting Politics: Mexico's Party System Under Stress. Journal of Democracy 29(4). 2018 (pgs 31–42)
- Gunther, Richard; Montero, Jose Ramon; and Linz, Joan J. Political Parties: Old Concepts and New Challenges. Oxford University Press. 2002.
- Scherlis Gerardo. Party regulation in Latin America: A change of normative paradigms. Party Politics. 2021

Week 15) April 25, 27, and 29

Interest Groups and Social Movements: How can citizens and organizations influence politics?

**What strategies for collective action are available? How do they differ across countries?
How may different forms of inequality play a role in political participation through interest groups and social movements?**

- [TEXTBOOK] Krutz, Glen and Waskiewicz, Silvie. Chapter 10: Political Parties (Sections 10.3 and 10.4). In _____. American Government 3e. OpenStax. 2021. (pgs 350-366)
- Snow, David; Soule, Sarah; Kriesi, Hanspeter; and McCammon, Holly. Introduction: Mapping and Opening Up the Terrain (selected pages). In _____ (eds.). The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements (2nd Edition). Wiley Blackwell Publishing. 2019. (pgs 5-10)
- Nicolás Somma, Matías Bargsted, Rodolfo Disi Pavlic, and Rodrigo M. Medel. 2020. No water in the oasis: the Chilean Spring of 2019–2020. Social Movement Studies. 2020.
- Hill, Charlotte. America's Lobbying System is Broken. New Leaders Council. 2017. Available at: <https://medium.com/the-new-leader/americas-lobbying-system-is-broken-c6cef36de4cd>

Optional:

- Anria, Santiago. When Movements Become Parties: The Bolivian MAS in Comparative Perspective. Cambridge University Press. 2018.
- Mayka, Lindsay and Smith, Amy Erica. Introduction: The Grassroots Right in Latin America. Latin American Politics and Society. 2021.
- Sidney Tarrow. Power in Movement (3rd edition). Cambridge University Press. 2010.
- Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink. Activists beyond Borders-Advocacy Networks in International Politics. Cornell University Press. 1998.
- Néstor Castañeda. Business Interest Groups and Policymaking in Latin America. In Riggiozzi, P. and Wylde, C. (eds.). Handbook of South American Governance. Routledge. 2017.
- Morales Queiroga, Mauricio. Chile's perfect storm: social upheaval, COVID-19 and the constitutional referendum. Contemporary Social Science, 16(5). 2021. (pgs 556-572).
- Jessica Rich. State-Sponsored Activism: Bureaucrats and Social Movements in Democratic Brazil. Cambridge University Press. 2019.
- Flávia Biroli and Mariana Caminotti. The Conservative Backlash against Gender in Latin America. Politics & Gender. 2020.
- Drutman, Lee. How Corporate Lobbyists Conquered American Democracy. The Atlantic. April 20, 2015. Available at: <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2015/04/how-corporate-lobbyists-conquered-american-democracy/390822/>
- Various Authors. Special Issue:Interest Groups and Lobbying in Latin America: A New Era or More of the Same? Journal of Public Affairs, 14(3-4). 2014.

[THIRD EXAM – MONDAY, MAY 02]

Week 16) May 04 and 06 (May 02 is the third exam)

Democracy in the Future (+ preparation for the final essay)

V-Dem. Autocratization Turns Viral: 2021 Democracy Report. University of Gothenburg: V-Dem Institute. 2021. (pgs 6-7, 13-23, 31-33, 42-49)

Optional:

Levitsky, Steven and Ziblatt, Daniel. How Democracies Die? Penguin Books. 2018.

Weyland, Kurt. Populism's Threat to Democracy: Comparative Lessons for the United States. Perspectives on Politics, 18(2). 2020. (pgs 389-406).

Weyland, Kurt, and Madrid, Raúl (eds.). When Democracy Trumps Populism: European and Latin American Lessons for the United States. Cambridge University Press. 2019.

Przeworski, Adam. Crises of Democracy. Cambridge University Press. 2019.

Repucci, Sarah and Slipowitz, Amy. Democracy under Siege. Freedom House. 2021. Available at: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2021/democracy-under-siege>

Hunter, Wendy and Vega, Diego. Populism and the Military: Symbiosis and Tension in Bolsonaro's Brazil. Democratization. 2001.

[FINAL ESSAY – DUE ON CANVAS MAY 09, 11:59 PM]

7. University Resources

Title IX Reporting

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, dating/domestic violence and stalking at federally funded educational institutions. UT Austin is committed to fostering a learning and working environment free from discrimination in all its forms. When unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature occurs in our community, the university can:

1. Intervene to prevent harmful behavior from continuing or escalating.
2. Provide support and remedies to students and employees who have experienced harm or have become involved in a Title IX investigation.
3. Investigate and discipline violations of the university's relevant policies.

Beginning January 1, 2020, Texas Senate Bill 212 requires all employees of Texas universities, including faculty, report any information to the Title IX Office regarding sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence and stalking that is disclosed to them. Texas law requires that all employees who witness or receive any information of this type (including, but not limited to, writing assignments, class discussions, or one-on-one conversations) must be reported. **I am a Responsible Employee and must report any Title IX related incidents that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one.** Before talking with me, or with any faculty or staff member about a Title IX related incident, be sure to ask whether they are a responsible employee. If you would like to speak with someone who can provide support or remedies without making an official report to the university, please email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit <http://www.titleix.utexas.edu/>, contact the Title IX Office via email at titleix@austin.utexas.edu, or call 512-471-0419. Although graduate teaching and research assistants are not subject to Texas Senate Bill 212, they are still mandatory reporters under Federal Title IX laws and are required to report a wide range of behaviors we refer to as unprofessional or inappropriate conduct of a sexual nature, including the types of conduct covered under Texas Senate Bill 212. The Title IX office has developed supportive ways to respond to a survivor and compiled campus resources to support survivors.

Counseling and Mental Health Center

The Counseling and Mental Health Center serves UT's diverse campus community by providing high quality, innovative and culturally informed mental health programs and services that enhance and support students' well-being, academic and life goals. To learn more about your counseling and mental health options, call CMHC at (512) 471-3515. If you are experiencing a mental health crisis, call the CMHC Crisis Line 24/7 at (512) 471-2255.

BeVocal

BeVocal is a university-wide initiative to promote the idea that individual Longhorns have the power to prevent high-risk behavior and harm. At UT Austin all Longhorns have the power to intervene and reduce harm. To learn more about BeVocal and how you can help to build a culture of care on campus, go to: <https://wellnessnetwork.utexas.edu/BeVocal>.

Safety Concerns

If you have concerns about the safety or behavior of fellow students, TAs or Professors, call BCAL (the Behavior Concerns Advice Line): 512-232-5050. Your call can be anonymous. If something doesn't feel right – it probably isn't. Trust your instincts and share your concerns.

The Sanger Learning Center

Did you know that more than one-third of UT undergraduate students use the Sanger Learning Center each year to improve their academic performance? All students are welcome to take advantage of Sanger Center's classes and workshops, private learning specialist appointments, peer academic coaching, and tutoring for more than 70 courses in 15 different subject areas. For more information, please visit <http://www.utexas.edu/ugs/slcc> or call 512-471-3614 (JES A332).

Undergraduate Writing Center

The Writing Center can help you plan and write your essays. This is a great resource, and I can say that students who get their help tend to improve their writing skills significantly. This is a free resource you can use to increase your grades. <http://uwc.utexas.edu/>

Libraries

<http://www.lib.utexas.edu/>

ITS

<http://www.utexas.edu/its/>

Student Emergency Services

<http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/emergency/>