

Honors Tutorial Course

GOV 679HB
Spring 2024

Unique # 37605
Tuesdays 3:30-6:15pm

Professor Dana Stauffer
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Course Description

The purpose of this course is to provide support for students as they write their honors theses. The course will consist mainly of self-directed writing and research, supplemented by peer reviews. Each student will craft a semester plan and set checkpoints and deadlines appropriate to their individual projects. Students are also expected to stay in close touch with their advisors and keep them apprised of their progress. Like last term, we will meet as a group before breaking off into individual meetings. The last few weeks of the term will be devoted to student presentations.

The main goal this semester is simple: finish your thesis. Writing a significant paper is difficult. The benefit of such a small class is its flexibility. As always, you are encouraged to bring your concerns to me and I will help you find a solution, or connect you with people who can. Students who successfully complete the year-long program (and meet college and departmental semester hour and minimum grade point average requirements) may earn Special Honors in Government.

Course Flags

Independent Inquiry: This course carries the Independent Inquiry flag. Independent Inquiry courses are designed to engage you in the process of inquiry over the course of a semester, providing you with the opportunity for independent investigation of a question, problem, or project related to your major. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come from the independent investigation and presentation of your own work.

Writing: This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline. In this class, you can expect to write regularly during the semester, complete substantial writing projects, and receive feedback from your instructor to help you improve your writing. You will also have the opportunity to revise one or more assignments, and you may be asked to read and discuss your peers' work. You should therefore expect a substantial portion of your grade to come

from your written work. Writing Flag classes meet the Core Communications objectives of Critical Thinking, Communication, Teamwork, and Personal Responsibility, established by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board.

There are no required texts for this course, but I recommend the following books:

The Elements of Style. By William R. Strunk and E.B. White. Pearson: 1999.

Writing with Style: Conversations on the Art of Writing. By John R. Trimble. Pearson: 2010.

On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction. By William Zinsser. Harper: 2016.

A Manual for Writers Of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations. By Kate L. Turabian. University of Chicago Press: 2017.

Rebel with a Clause: Tales and Tips from a Roving Grammarian. By Ellen Jovin. Mariner Books: 2022.

Grading

I DO use plus and minus grades as follows: 92.5 and up = A, 89.5 and up = A-, 86.5 and up is a B+, and so on.

Grading breakdown is as follows:

Thesis grade, based primarily on your advisor's recommendation: 75%

Participation in seminar: 15%

Checkpoint Check-ins: 5%

Oral Presentation: 5%

Participation in seminar includes:

- Attendance (I will be passing around a sign-in sheet)
- Submitting a hard copy checkpoint plan in the second week of classes
- Conducting peer review for classmates both verbal and written
- Meeting deadlines
- Individual meetings: Each week, I will put out a Canvas announcement listing the students due for individual meetings that week. You are also welcome to ask for a meeting if you want one.
- Attentiveness at other students' oral presentations

- General class participation, including in joint sessions with the other cohort of honor's students
- Submitting a hard copy rough draft in early April

Thesis submission:

Final thesis projects will be due on the last day of classes, April 29th, in order to give your advisors time to read and grade your theses. You will need to email me a complete copy as well as your advisor.

Completed theses will be stored in an online database of Government Honors Department Theses accessible to the UT Community.

Format: Unless there is a compelling reason to present your thesis in a different format, theses should be double-spaced, typed, with 1- inch margins in 12-point font. Endnotes or footnotes should also be double-spaced. If you want to format it differently, run it by me and/or your advisor.

Length: There is no official minimum or maximum thesis length, but most theses are between 50-100 pages and that is a good range to aim for.

Completed theses should include:

A title page with your name, your advisor's name, thesis title and date of submission

Page numbers

A complete bibliography or reference list

The Role of Thesis Advisor

By now, you have all developed working relationships with your thesis advisors. As a reminder, advisors are closely involved in all major decisions related to your thesis, including what grade the thesis merits, and, notably, this semester, whether the thesis merits Special Honors in Government.

As was the case last semester, you should be meeting with your thesis advisor at least three times this semester, preferably more, as you hammer out the final details of what your thesis will look like.

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd>.

Notification of a need for disability accommodations must be given to the professor at least 14 days prior to a paper due date or exam.

Accommodations for religious holidays

By UT Austin policy, you must notify me of your pending absence at least fourteen days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If you must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, you will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Academic Honesty

In all of your work for this course, you are expected to know and to adhere to University of Texas policies regarding academic honesty and integrity. Plagiarism, cheating, or any other form of academic dishonesty will result in a grade of F for the course. Please familiarize yourself with the University honor code.

Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited: No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

Title IX

Title IX is a federal law that protects against sex and gender-based discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual misconduct, 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 sexual misconduct 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](#).

Faculty members and certain staff members are considered "Responsible Employees" or "Mandatory Reporters," which means that they are required to report violations of Title IX to the Title IX Coordinator. **We are Responsible Employees and must report any Title IX related incidents** that are disclosed in writing, discussion, or one-on-one. Before talking with us, 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 want to speak with someone for support or remedies without making an official report to the university, email advocate@austin.utexas.edu. For more information about reporting options and resources, visit titleix.utexas.edu or contact the Title IX Office at titleix@austin.utexas.edu.

Course Schedule

January 16	Welcome back; status updates; outline of the semester
January 23	Assignment due: Checkpoint plan , meetings
January 30	Meetings
February 6	Meetings
February 13	Checkpoint 1: First Self-Assigned Assignment Due , meetings
February 20	Meetings, peer review
February 27	Meetings, peer review
March 5	Meetings, peer review
March 19	Checkpoint 2: Second Self-Assigned Assignment Due; Meeting with other cohort
March 26	Meetings, peer review
April 2	Presentation prep, meetings, peer review
April 9	Presentations; Rough Draft of Thesis Due
April 16	Presentations
April 23	Alternative date for Presentation ; otherwise de-stress
April 29	Final Drafts Due