

Honors Tutorial Course

**GOV 679HA
Spring 2024**

**Unique # 38435
Tuesdays 3:30-6:15pm**

**Professor Bethany Albertson
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**Office Hours:
Wednesday 1-4
Batts 4.124**

Course Description

The Honors Thesis Program provides undergraduates with an opportunity to conduct original research in an area of Government of their interest. The Spring seminar will function largely as a forum to develop a project and move through its initial stages. Over the course of the semester, students will identify a research question; refine their research idea; conduct a literature review; and begin the task of formulating research findings. This is a demanding course designed for dedicated students who already possess good academic writing skills and are prepared to research and write independently. Much of the work will be self-directed. Each student will be expected to complete readings and assignments on time. Peer review will also be an element of the course; fellow students will offer constructive criticisms and feedback, and generally cheer one another on. By the end of the Spring semester, students will have completed the first section of their thesis, as well as an outline of the remainder and a plan of work for the second semester.

Students making sufficient progress on their thesis project at the close of the spring semester will be admitted into the fall semester of the Honors Tutorial. 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.

Readings

Students will construct their own reading lists for their thesis – if you are having difficulty finding appropriate resources, please let me know right away. We will also cover strategies for finding relevant books and articles in class.

Grading

Grades for this class will be based on the following:

- 20% Participation in class discussions and activities – this includes offering feedback in our peer review process.
- 40% Performance on writing assignments – each is due at 5pm on Monday before class.
- 40% Rough draft of first 20 pages of the thesis & summer/fall plan.

Overall Grades

The grading scale is as follows:

| | |
|----------|----|
| 93%-100% | A |
| 90%-93% | A- |
| 87%-90% | B+ |
| 83%-87% | B |
| 80%-83% | B- |
| 77%-80% | C+ |
| 73%-77% | C |
| 70%-73% | C- |
| 67%-70% | D+ |
| 63%-67% | D |
| 60%-63% | D- |

0%-60%

F

The Role of Thesis Advisor

Students who write an honors thesis participate in Fall and Spring seminars. They also work closely with a primary advisor who has expertise in the student's area of research. The primary advisor will be involved in all stages of the project. This advisor will be closely involved in all major decisions, including what grade the thesis merits in both semesters, whether the student should advance to the Spring semester, and ultimately, whether the thesis merits Special Honors in Government.

In light of the importance of the primary advisor, it is essential to obtain one and to develop a strong working relationship with that advisor as early as possible. Students should be submitting all of the work that they submit in our seminar to their primary advisor for feedback. Students are required to meet with their primary advisor at least once every three weeks, and should be keeping them in the loop throughout the process.

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 Introductions

January 23 **Assignments:**

 1 page idea statement (explain your thesis)

 -work outline for semester (include challenges)

- January 30 List of 10 sources due; article example due;
individual meetings begin
- February 6 **5 page intro** to your research question; individual meetings
- February 13 Peer review, 5-source Progress report, individual meetings
- February 20 Peer review, 5-source Progress report, individual meetings
- February 27 **Literature Overview Due (5 pages)**
Thesis Outline Due (1 page), peer review
- March 5 Peer Review, individual meetings
- March 19 Peer review, individual meetings
- March 26 **10 pages due**, individual meetings
- April 2 Progress reports
- April 9 Peer review, Individual Meetings
- April 16 Peer review, Individual Meetings
- April 26 **Part 1 Due**
1-page plan for second semester due