

Fa23 - ISSUES & POLICIES IN AMER GOV (38195)

GOV312L: Issues and Policies in American Government – U.S Social Policy

The University of Texas at Austin
Department of Government
Fall 2023 (Unique ID: 38195)

Location: WEL 2.122 ([MapLinks to an external site](#))
Tuesday 11:00 - 12:30 / Thursday 11:00 - 12:30

Woong Kwon
(woongkwon@utexas.edu)

Office hours: Thursday 14:00 – 17:00
Primarily By Zoom and Appointment Required ([Google Link](#))[Links to an external site.](#)
Office: MEZ.5.102

Course Overview

This course critically examines the overall structure and characteristics of the U.S. welfare state from both historical and comparative perspectives, focusing on American society's economic and political development. The first one-third of the class will cover major areas within current research on the welfare state to provide theoretical frameworks for understanding the U.S. welfare state from comparative perspectives. We will review the different types of welfare states found among advanced industrialized countries, the key dynamics underneath the welfare state development, and the traditional and new challenges to the welfare states. In the remaining two-thirds of the class, we will discuss the development of the U.S. welfare state. We will begin by surveying the brief history of the American welfare state, including health care, social insurance, and anti-poverty programs, from the Progressive Era to the present. Then we will address the economic and political forces driving welfare politics in the United States. Finally, we will discuss contemporary challenges to the U.S. welfare state, including race, inequality, and immigration.

Learning Outcomes

The course's main objective is to provide students with an understanding of the dynamics and underlying issues of welfare politics in the United States. The welfare state is an essential topic of political economy, which studies the interaction between politics (states) and the economy (markets). Upon completing the course, students will have developed a basic competence to read, connect, or generate ideas related to advanced texts in the area.

Assignments and Grading

Your grade in this course will be based on the five components as follows:

1. **First mid-term exam (25%):** The first exam will be an in-class exam on the material covered during the first few weeks. It will consist of multiple-choice questions only.
2. **Second mid-term exam (25%):** The second exam will be an in-class exam on the material covered after the first exam (non-cumulative). It will consist of multiple-choice questions and short answer questions.
3. **Final exam (25%):** The final exam will be an in-class exam on the material covered after the second exam (non-cumulative). It will consist of one essay question and five short answer questions.
4. **Pop-up quizzes (15%):** There will be six pop-up quizzes over the course, all of which are multiple-choice questions. The lowest two scores will be removed from your grading (so the best four scores will be counted into your final grade). These pop-up quizzes must be taken in person in the classroom and will replace the regular attendance check also. Students who do not take the pop-up quizzes more than three times will not be allowed to have a grade better than B+.
5. **Book Review (10%):** You will write a book review, summarizing and discussing one of the books listed below. Your book review should be 1,000 ~ 1,200 words and due by 11:59 pm on November 25 via CANVAS. Please DO NOT send it via email. In your book review, you should address 1) the basic argument of the author and 2) its implications for understanding American welfare politics. Those who submit outstanding book reviews will have extra credits.

<Book List>

- Gilens, Martin (1999), *Why Americans Hate Welfare: Race, Media, and the Politics of Antipoverty Policy*, The University of Chicago Press.
- Mettler, Suzanne (2011), *The Submerged State: How Invisible Government Policies Undermine American Democracy*, The University of Chicago Press.
- Hacker, Jacob (2019), *The Great Risk Shift: The New Economic Insecurity and the Decline of the American Dream [Second Edition]*, Oxford University Press
- Case, Anne and Angus Deaton (2020), *Death of Despair and the Future of Capitalism*, Princeton University Press
- Metzl, Jonathan (2019), *Dying of Whiteness: How the Politics of Racial Resentment Is Killing America's Heartland*, Basic Books

*All these books are available (e-book) via the UT library

** There will also be opportunities for extra credit that will be interspersed throughout the semester. These opportunities are entirely voluntary but can benefit you both academically and personally. Extra credit will require 1) attendance and a half-page summary of the event or 2) a one-page short essay on an article or AV material. You may choose one extra credit opportunity this semester. Properly completed extra credit assignments will increase your final grade by 1 point.

** A word on late or missed assignments. Over the course of the semester, it is inevitable that some events will cause a time management issue, which might lead to a missed assignment deadline. Though normally handled on a case-by-case basis, there are some baseline penalties for missed or delayed assignments. Missed exams for documented reasons (illness, family emergency) can be made up for 3 days post-exam with no penalty. Missed exams for any non-documented reason can be made up until 3 days post-exam but will accrue a 10% penalty for each missed day before grading.

Grading Scale

93-100 A	90-92 A-	
87-89 B+	83-86 B	80-82 B-
77-79 C+	73-76 C	70-72 C-
60-69 D	<60 F	

Required Readings

The required text for this course is *The Welfare State: A Very Short Introduction* by David Galand (Oxford University Press, 2016).

There will also be various supplementary academic journals, book chapters, and newspaper articles (all of them are available via the University library for free). The average reading load will be around 40 to 50 pages per class.

Policies

Extension of Deadlines

Extension of deadlines for the assignments will not be offered except in extremely rare circumstances. These extremely rare circumstances can be: 1) University-sanctioned events (verification required), 2) extraordinary medical emergencies (verification required), or (3) religious observances. Extension of deadlines requested for any other reason will be decided case-by-case. Vacations and early departure for breaks do not constitute legitimate reasons for extensions.

Academic Dishonesty

All violations of university academic conduct guidelines, including plagiarism, will be referred to the Dean of Students and result in a zero on the assignment or exam. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off one's own ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. Under the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy another person's work and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the person's permission. For more information, please visit <https://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/conduct/academicintegrity.php>[Links to an external site.](#)

Religious Holidays

According to UT-Austin policy, students must notify the instructor of an impending absence at least 14 days prior to the date of observance of a religious holy day. If a student must miss a class, an examination, a work assignment, or a project in order to observe a religious holy day, the student will be given an opportunity to complete the missed work within a reasonable time after the absence.

Student Privacy

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) requires that student privacy be preserved. Thus, posting grades, even by the last four digits of the social security number, is forbidden. In addition, all communication will remain between the instructor and the student, and the instructor will not be able to share details of the student's performance with parents, spouses, or any others.

Documented Disability Statement

The university is 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 an equal opportunity to participate fully in this course. In addition, if you are a student with a disability or think you may have a disability and need accommodations, don't hesitate to contact Disability and Access (D&A). Please refer to D&A's website for contact and more information: <http://diversity.utexas.edu/disability/>[Links to an external site.](#) If you are already registered with D&A, please deliver your Accommodation Letter to me as early as possible in the semester so we can discuss your approved accommodations and needs in this course.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	Due
Tue Aug 22, 2023	Assignment Introduction	due by 12:30pm
Thu Aug 24, 2023	Assignment What is the Welfare State?	due by 12:30pm
Tue Aug 29, 2023	Assignment Ethics and Values	due by 12:30pm
Thu Aug 31, 2023	Assignment Birth of the Welfare State	due by 12:30pm
Tue Sep 5, 2023	Assignment Keynesian Welfare State	due by 12:30pm
Thu Sep 7, 2023	Assignment Dynamics (1)	due by 12:30pm
Tue Sep 12, 2023	Assignment Dynamics (2)	due by 12:30pm
Thu Sep 14, 2023	Assignment Varieties	due by 12:30pm
Tue Sep 19, 2023	Assignment Conventional Challenges	due by 12:30pm
Thu Sep 21, 2023	Assignment New Challenges	due by 12:30pm
Tue Sep 26, 2023	Quiz Midterm Exam One	due by 12:30pm
Thu Sep 28, 2023	Assignment Progressive Era	due by 12:30pm
Tue Oct 3, 2023	Assignment New Deal Era	due by 12:30pm
Thu Oct 5, 2023	Assignment The Great Society	due by 12:30pm
Tue Oct 10, 2023	Assignment 1970 ~ 1980	due by 12:30pm

Date	Details	Due
Thu Oct 12, 2023	Assignment 1990 ~ Present	due by 12:30pm
Tue Oct 17, 2023	Assignment Political Institution & Parties	due by 12:30pm
Thu Oct 19, 2023	Assignment Interest Groups & Public Opinion	due by 12:30pm
Tue Oct 24, 2023	Quiz Midterm Exam Two	due by 12:30pm
Thu Oct 26, 2023	Assignment Poverty (1)	due by 12:30pm
Tue Oct 31, 2023	Assignment Poverty (2)	due by 12:30pm
Thu Nov 2, 2023	Assignment The Elderly	due by 12:30pm
Tue Nov 7, 2023	Assignment Workers & Families / The Disabled & Veterans	due by 12:30pm
Thu Nov 9, 2023	Assignment Challenges (1): Retirement & Gender	due by 12:30pm
Tue Nov 14, 2023	Assignment Challenges (2): Inequality	due by 12:30pm
Thu Nov 16, 2023	Assignment Challenges (3): Race and Immigration	due by 12:30pm
Sat Nov 25, 2023	Assignment Book Review	due by 11:59pm
Tue Nov 28, 2023	Assignment Course Recap	due by 12:30pm
Thu Nov 30, 2023	Quiz Final Exam	due by 12:30pm