

**Selected Topics in Comparative Politics:
Representation in Democracies
Summer I 2021**

Asynchronous Online

Course Information:

Course Number: PS 3302 – D02
Location: Online (Blackboard)

Instructor Information:

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Office Hours: By appointment (Zoom)

Overview of the Course

Democracy promises to represent “the will of the people,” yet in practice, many groups in democracies around the world are excluded from political institutions and decision making. At the same time, contemporary political scientists have identified a “crisis of representation” in both old and new democracies, characterized by widespread distrust in and dissatisfaction with established “vehicles of representation” such as political parties and the legislature. This growing disenchantment with representation has fueled the rise of political outsiders and populist leaders who at times subvert democratic norms and institutions. This course reviews the major approaches to political representation. In the first unit of the course, we will define the concept of *representation* and discuss various arguments for the formal inclusion of historically minoritized groups in democratic decision making. In the second unit of the course, we will ask, “How do citizens in a democracy receive representation?” In this unit, we will examine the role of elections, political parties, and other institutions (i.e., “rules of the game” that structure political life) from a comparative perspective. In the final unit of the course, we will ask, “Does representation matter?” In particular, we will investigate why policy outcomes do not always reflect the “will of the majority” and how various representative linkages affect citizens’ evaluations of democracy.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the status of historically marginalized groups in governments worldwide
2. Critically assess the normative arguments for descriptive representation
3. Critically assess the “integrated framework” of representation
4. Critically assess the validity of major theories in Comparative Politics explaining the lack of women, racial/ethnic minorities, and the working class in public office
5. Explain different types of quotas and their effectiveness
6. Explain the impact of descriptive representation on policy outcomes
7. Explain how political representation affects citizens’ political attitudes and participation.

Course Requirements

This course will be taught entirely online. The modality for this class is *asynchronous online*, meaning that you may work through the course materials and assignments at your own pace, so long as you meet the 5PM (Central Time) deadlines listed in the course schedule. **Summer courses condense**

roughly three “semester weeks” into one calendar week. We will move quickly, and you are expected to keep up and work ahead where appropriate. In addition, the following rules apply:

1. You must have a consistent, functioning internet connection to take this course. As this is an online-only course, you are required to have access to the internet. It is your responsibility to ensure that your computer and connection are functioning properly. Technical problems are never an excuse for failed or incomplete work.
2. Always maintain professional and respectful language, both in emails and in your online coursework.
3. Any disruptive or disrespectful behavior will result in a loss of credit for the assignment and possibly a referral to the Office of Student Conduct. Racism, sexism, homophobia, or any other forms of bigotry are not acceptable in this class.
4. You are responsible for all information and announcements made in the course. Prepare to log onto Blackboard every day to check for updates, changes, or new information. Read the course home page thoroughly and check announcements daily. Course rules and expectations are subject to change.
5. **Since all assignment are available to you well in advance of the deadlines, late work will not be accepted without prior written permission from the professor.**
6. **Students may not print, save, photograph, or make any record of graded materials in this course.**

Required Materials

There is no required textbook for this course. Instead, you will also be responsible for reading a variety of peer-reviewed research articles. These articles are listed in the course schedule and can be found in the relevant module folder on Blackboard.

Earning Your Grade

The grading and assignments for this course have been designed to offer you *a variety of ways to succeed*. Below is a breakdown of how your grade for this course will be assessed. **If you put in the effort and complete all the assignments, you will pass this class.**

Weekly Activities (30%): For “weeks” 2 through 14 in the syllabus, each module will include a graded activity. (This means that for each calendar week, you will complete 2-3 assignments by the associated due date). Most of the modules ask that you answer a series of multiple choice and short essay questions to check your understanding of the week’s materials. In all, you will complete 13 of these activities, and when I calculate final grades, I will drop the lowest grade.

Asynchronous Discussion Assignments (20%): In addition to the “participation activities,” you will also participate in four online discussion boards. For each discussion board, I will provide the prompt and you will write an original “think piece” or response (~250 words). You will post your response, and then you will respond to someone else’s posting. You will be graded on the thoroughness and thoughtfulness of both your original post and your peer reply. Replies like “I totally agree with the points you brought up” won’t cut it. Your job is to critically assess, provide useful feedback, and offer comments rooted in the course material and/or current events. Each asynchronous discussion board will constitute 5% of your final grade.

Midterm Exams (50%): The primary written assignments for this course will consist of two midterm exams (25% each). The first midterm exam will be due following “week 8” in the course schedule. The other will be due during the finals period. Both exams will be non-cumulative and will be in the format of a “take-home essay.” I will provide essay prompts one calendar week in advance of the due date on the syllabus. By virtue of being a take-home exam, it will technically be open book/note. That said, you are NOT permitted to collaborate with other students. Moreover, all answers must be in your own words. If I find that you’ve copied and pasted from the readings or collaborated with other students (discussed questions, shared answers, etc.), you will receive a ZERO for the exam. Cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated. You are also expected to engage with and cite relevant course readings. There will be detailed instructions related to expectations included with each essay prompt.

Calculating Your Grade

Each assignment will receive a percentage grade and both midterm and final grade formulas will result in a percentage, which will translate into a letter grade using the following scale:

Points	Letter Grade
97-100%	A+
93-96%	A
90-92%	A-
87-89%	B+
83-86%	B
80-82%	B-
...	
59% or below	F

Please do not contact me requesting an arbitrary grade increase (this includes requests for “rounding” at the end of the semester). If you have an appeal about an assignment grade besides a simple clerical error, you must type a formal appeal describing the problem. Your appeal should clearly explain why you believe that your original work correctly answered the question and make a cogent argument for improving your grade. Attach a copy of the original work to your appeal. This appeal will not be accepted within two days of the return of the assignments or exam, as the intention of this rule is to allow you time to consider and formulate your appeal and let any emotions cool.

Makeup Opportunities

Late work will not be accepted without express written permission of the instructor. In particular, this means that if you anticipate missing a deadline for any reason, you need to try and contact me in advance. I am reasonable and flexible when it comes to extensions during this unprecedented time, but this requires that you effectively communicate with me. Other university-specific rules are listed below:

- In case of an illness that will require an absence from class for more than one week, the student should notify her/his academic dean. The dean's office will inform the student's

instructors through the departmental office. In case of class absences because of a brief illness, the student should inform the instructor directly. OP 34.04

- A student must submit any written documentation supporting an excused absence within **one week** after the absence, except when the absence is for the observation of a major religious holiday.
- The Texas state legislature has passed rules governing absences for **religious observances**. TTU OP 34.19 stipulates the following:
 - A student who intends to observe a religious holy day should make that intention known in writing to the instructor prior to the absence.
 - A student who is absent from classes for the observance of a religious holy day shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment scheduled for that day within a reasonable time after the absence.
 - A student who is excused under section 2 may not be penalized for the absence; however, the instructor may respond appropriately if the student fails to complete the assignment satisfactorily.

Academic Accommodations

Any student who, because of a disability, may require special arrangements in order to meet the course requirements should contact the instructor as soon as possible to make any necessary arrangements. Students should present appropriate verification from Student Disability Services during the instructor's office hours. Please note, instructors are not allowed to provide classroom accommodations to a student until appropriate verification from Student Disability Services has been provided. For additional information you may contact the Student Disability Services office in 335 West Hall or 806-742-2405.

LGBTQIA Support

I identify as an ally to the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA) community, and I am available to listen and support you in an affirming manner. I can assist in connecting you with resources on campus to address problems you may face pertaining to sexual orientation and/or gender identity that could interfere with your success at Texas Tech. Please note that additional resources are available through the Office of LGBTQIA within the Center for Campus Life, Student Union Building Room 201, www.lgbtqia.ttu.edu, 806.742.5433.

Academic Integrity, Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are serious crimes and will be handled in accord with Texas Tech University policy. I have no tolerance for this type of behavior. Students caught cheating may receive a failing grade for the course, not simply for the assignment, and the incident may be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. **Remember that copying from internet sources, closely paraphrasing sources, and quoting without citing sources are all forms of plagiarism. Submitting something you wrote in another class without the instructor's permission is also considered plagiarism.** For more information on the definitions of and penalties for cheating and plagiarism, please consult the following website: <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/dos/handbook/>

Classroom Behavior and Civility

Please be respectful to others in this class and engage in civil discourse when we discuss topics with a diversity of perspectives. This includes being respectful in online discussion boards *and* in your engagement with course materials. It is one thing to disagree with the normative basis of a question or argument, but in disagreeing, it is everyone's responsibility to do so in a respectful manner. Critiques of readings should be based in scientific reason and not in the character of the author. Any personal or discriminatory remarks based on race, sex, religion, age, ethnicity, nationality, or sexual orientation made by students will likewise not be tolerated.

Course Schedule

Participation activities associated with each "weekly" learning module are due by 5:00 PM (Lubbock time) on the date listed in the course schedule. All required readings and assignments will be in corresponding (and labeled) folders under the "Weekly Learning Modules" heading on our Blackboard course.

I reserve the right to alter the course schedule. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced via email, as well as posted on Blackboard. A Current version of the course schedule will always be available on Blackboard.

Week	Readings/Assignment	Due Date
Unit 1: What is "representation?"		
Week 1: Introduction	No graded assignments. You do not need to do anything besides watch the "Welcome to Class" video, read through the syllabus, and familiarize yourself with the class.	June 2
Week 2: What is "representation?" – an <i>integrated</i> framework	Schwindt-Bayer and Mishler (2005) Week 2 Activity Asynchronous Discussion #1	June 4
Week 3: Descriptive Representation	Htun (2004) Week 3 Activity	June 7
Week 4: Representative Linkages	Mainwaring (2006) Week 4 Activity	June 9
Unit 2: Vehicles for Representation		
Week 5: Elections I	Chapters 1-2 from <i>Elections as Instruments of Democracy</i> by G. Bingham Powell Week 5 Activity Asynchronous Discussion #2	June 11
Week 6: Elections II	Carey and Hix (2011) Week 6 Activity	June 14
Week 7: Party Systems in Advanced Industrial Democracies	Dalton (2000) Chapter 7 Week 7 Activity	June 16

Week 8: Party Systems in Developing Countries	Chapters 1-2 in <i>Bankrupt Representation</i> by Jana Morgan Week 8 Activity Asynchronous Discussion #3	June 18
Week 9: Quotas	Barnes and Holman (2020) No graded activity associated with this module	June 21
Midterm Exam 1	You need to submit your take-home essay exam by 5PM on June 21	
Unit 3: Does Representation Matter?		
Week 10: Policy Responsiveness I	Chapter 1-2 in <i>Democracy for Realists</i> by Achen and Bartels Week 10 Activity	June 23
Week 11: Policy Responsiveness II	Chapter 8-9 in <i>Democracy for Realists</i> by Achen and Bartels Week 11 Activity Asynchronous Discussion #4	June 25
Week 12: Policy Responsiveness III	Heath, Schwindt-Bayer, and Taylor-Robinson (2005) Week 12 Activity	June 28
Week 13: Symbolic Representation in the US	Hayes and Hibbing (2017) Week 13 Activity	June 29
Week 14: Symbolic Representation - Comparative	Barnes and Saxton (2019) Week 14 Activity	June 30
Midterm Exam 2	You need to submit your take-home essay by 5PM on July 3	