1 Instructor Information

Dr. Sanne A. M. Rijkhoff

Email: sanne.rijkhoff@tamucc.edu
Phone: 361-825-2537
Office: https://tamucc.webex.com/meet/srijkhoff
Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, and Friday from 4:00PM to 5PM
Wednesday and Thursday from 7PM to 8PM
and by appointment

You can always email me. During office hours I will respond quickly, and I am available then for calls and online meetings, but we can also make an appointment for those.

Please read this syllabus in full. You are responsible for knowing and adhering to its contents throughout the length of this course.

2 Course Description and Purpose

This course explores the structure and dynamics of American national government by providing a broad-based introduction to the ideas and institutions that shape politics in the contemporary United States. We will focus our analysis on three major areas: The Constitution and the debates of the founding era, the institutions of modern American government, and the political behavior of the American mass public.

This course assumes little knowledge about politics; it is after all an introductory course, and it is set up as a survey course in American government. What this implies, is that we will be covering quite a bit of information each day and we will not have time to focus in depth on any specific subject. If you are interested in a topic we cover (and I hope you will
be!), we probably have a course dealing specifically with that topic. Just talk to me and I will let you know what that course is so you can register for it next semester.

Ultimately, the goal of this course is to help each member of the class arrive at a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the forces that shape American government and politics, so that he or she may be both a more discerning student and critic of the system and a more informed and reflective participant in it.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Recall basic facts related to the foundations of U. S. national government
2. Describe and distinguish key political concepts related to U.S. institutions such as Congress, the presidency and the judiciary
3. Describe and distinguish key political concepts relating to U.S. political behavior such as voting, elections, political parties, interest groups and the media
4. Recognize and interpret definitions, concepts, and theories of U. S. national government.

**Core Objectives**

The four Core Objectives related to this course are: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. By the end of Maymeister the course will have met these objectives:

1. By having the students engage in critical thinking activities related to the Constitution, the political and philosophical foundations of the nation, governmental institutions, and political behavior.
2. By having students engage in written, verbal or visual activities related to the Constitution, the political and philosophical foundations of the nation, governmental institutions, and political behavior.
3. By having students engage in course related activities that connect personal responsibility and political ideology to encourage ethical decision making
4. By having students engage in course related activities that connect social responsibility to civil rights, civil liberties, and to voting and voting behavior, and the policy making process.

**3 Course Format**

This class is conducted entirely online. We cover the core concepts and ideas American government and politics in the readings, class meetings, short videos and discussions. You also engage with the course material through the portal on Blackboard and some supplemental material posted there may help you to understand all the topics we cover. All students officially registered for the course can access the course's Blackboard page. Blackboard has all the pertinent information for the course (e.g. syllabus, course schedule, announcements, some readings, assignments, and any other relevant course information).
4 Requirements

Texts
The required textbook is available FOR FREE from the publisher in their online portal. Go to https://vantage.sagepub.com/Login and create an account using your TAMUCC email address. Then follow the instructions as listed on Blackboard to access the class and our book. Note that you should NOT purchase the book elsewhere, you do not have to pay for anything!

You are required to activate your account to the online book through Vantage no later than the end of day of the first day of class (May15).

For printed versions:
   ISBN: 9781544365855 / 9781544365695 / 978-1544326061

2. Additional information about required quizzes and papers, but also helpful websites and videos will be posted on the Blackboard page for the course.

3. Last but not least, all your lecture notes are also part of the study material for the exams and assignments. Taking a course does not just mean showing up or checking in on Blackboard, it also means being prepared for class beforehand and to engage in the class. Active listening is important and taking notes helps you to process and understand the information. I also encourage you to ask questions and to join classroom discussions. Regular and consistent attendance is essential if you want to do well in the course.

Assessment
This course is broken up over several different items. It is your responsibility to keep track of your grade over the course of Maymester.

- Attendance in group meetings Required but not graded
- Discussions (original posts and replies) 20% (2% each)
- Chapter quizzes (in Vantage) 20% (2% each)
- Papers 20% (10% each)
- Four exams 40% (10% each)

- Discussions (20%)
There are eleven discussion boards that you must be active in. The first discussion board is not graded, but the remaining ten all count for 2% toward your final grade in the class. Participation in the discussion boards include posting an original threat and replying to at least 2 of your fellow students. Deadlines can be found in the course schedule. Late submissions are not accepted and result in 0 points. See below for the full late policy.
• Chapter Quizzes (20%)
We cover twelve chapters and after every chapter, there is chapter quiz. Each quiz is a multiple-choice quiz based on the readings of the chapter. You have two attempts for each quiz. Everything is open note, but these quizzes are timed with just two attempts, so I recommend taking the time to read the class material and review your notes before taking the quiz. There is a total of twelve quizzes, but only the scores of the top ten count toward your final grade. Each of those top ten quizzes is thus worth 2% of your grade. Note that you will take these chapter quizzes in Vantage and not in Blackboard! Deadlines can be found in the course schedule. Unless you have prior approval for an extension, late submissions are not accepted and result in 0 points. See below for the full late policy.

• Papers (20%)
Writing is a skill that translated across majors and careers. To that end, you will complete two writing assignments with each counting for 10% of your final grade. Expectations and information about each assignment can be found on Blackboard. Deadlines can be found in the course schedule. Writing assignments will be submitted through Blackboard. Unless you have prior approval for an extension, late submissions are not accepted and result in 0 points. You cannot make up a writing assignment. See below for the full late policy.

• Exams (40%)
There are four noncumulative exams, and each is worth 10% of your final grade. Exams consist of 40 multiple-choice questions and true/false statements and you have 60 minutes to complete each exam with only 2 attempts. Exams cover three chapters of the class material. Make-up exams will be given only upon receipt of an acceptable and legitimate excuse. If a student finds themselves in an emergency situation and will have to miss an exam, that student must notify the professor via email prior to the start of the exam. I will not seek you out to remind you that you missed the exam. Make-up exams are made on the final day of Maymester. See also below for the late policy.

Assessment Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>90-100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>80-89.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>70-79.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;59.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disclaimer
Since politics is a reflection of the society in which we live, we will cover several topics in class which might be sensitive. Some examples include same-sex marriage, gun control, protest movements, and transgender rights. These topics are included because we cannot adequately study American government without covering them. Many of you bring partisan attachments and/or ideological passion to the discussion of politics. It is my policy to remain neutral in these discussions. I am a political scientist with an emphasis on the second word. Partisan and ideological perspectives are welcome and appropriate for many discussions, but they must be expressed in an appropriate and civil manner that is respectful of classmates, other individuals, groups, and institutions. Rhetoric is an integral part of political communication, but there is no place in this (or any other) class for the vitriol or distortions sometimes seen in political discourse. You have my assurance that I
will do everything reasonably related to keeping these discussions civil and academic. I expect the same from my students, in this class, you are a social scientist – not an activist.

5 Course Policies

Contacting the Instructor

I am happy to help you either via e-mail or telephone, or through video conferencing. My office is online, and I will be there Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 4PM and 5PM and Wednesday and Thursday between 7PM and 8PM. You can find me here: https://tamucc.webex.com/meet/srijkhoff. If these times do not work for you, please reach out by email to make an appointment for a phone call or video call. My goal is to engage you in the many fascinating aspects of American politics and government. We cannot cover everything on this broad and important topic in meetings, discussion, and the readings, so these office hours are also the appropriate time to discuss additional ideas and materials that may interest you. Of course, they are also a valuable resource if you have questions about lecture, readings, assignments, or exams. If we schedule an appointment for a phone or video call, you should be prepared; prepare your questions, have your book, notes, and read the material in advance.

Email is the second most reliable way to reach me. Although I try to respond quickly, I will most likely be handling many emails thus please allow up to 4 hours during the week between 8am and 2pm, outside of those hour I will reply to your email by the next business day at noon. If you need to reach me, please plan accordingly. Note that in every e-mail you must identify yourself and use proper email etiquette format which consists of an opening (As simple as the recipient’s name), a closing (as simple as your name), and a descriptive subject line. Since I am teaching multiple classes, also include what course you are referring to. If you do not follow these rules or if you use Internet shorthand (i.e.: \u" instead of \you," ) I will not reply to the message. In addition, I will not reply to emails asking about deadlines, or any other information that can be found by looking in the syllabus. Furthermore, I will not and cannot discuss your grade over email. Finally, I will not answer questions about assignments, quizzes, or exams that are due within 12 hours of the email.

Attendance

Due to the intense nature of Maymester format, attendance is mandatory at all class group sessions. These meetings are daily. Each student will be assigned a group (A meets between 9.30AM and 10.30AM, B meets between 11AM and Noon and C meets between 2PM and 3PM). Attendance will be taken at multiple points during each class session by the professors. If you are not present within the first 10 minutes of the group meeting, you will be counted absent for that portion of the course. In the event that you cannot attend, stay the entire meeting, or must arrive late for the meeting, you will need to discuss the circumstances with the professor.

Preparation for Class

The material for this course will be covered in lecture, readings, and independent preparation for class. We cover a lot of ground, so you are likely to get lost if you do not keep up with the material. As a general policy, for each credit hour, you are expected to do 48 hours of studying per semester. Thus, for classes that are 3 credits, you are expected to
put in 144 hours per semester. For Maymester this comes down to 9 hours per day. The time required for preparation will vary by week and by individual, so this is offered as a rough guideline – and definitely not as a maximum time.

Lecture Slides
Lecture slides are posted online on Blackboard ahead of the class meetings. However, sometimes it is necessary to make last minute changes to the slides and the final slides will be posted online on Blackboard at the end of the day. Note that these slides are under copyright this means that if you use these slides in any way, you must give me the credit the way the copyright requests. I let others copy, distribute, display and perform only original copies of my slides. If you want to modify my work, you must get my permission first.

Note that the lecture slides in class are primarily for visual learners who need to both hear words and see text as they are learning. They are not meant for students to copy as a substitute for prior studying.

Online Etiquette
Online classroom etiquette is an essential component of creating an effective learning environment. Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere.

Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor's ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the group environment on Blackboard. All students have the right to learn without unnecessary distractions. These distractions include: arriving late to meetings, talking during conversations (unless recognized by the instructor), cell phone use, reading anything else than class material, falling asleep, watching videos unrelated to class on your computer, etc. If you need a cell phone for emergency purposes, leave it on vibrate. Entering and leaving are significant sources of distraction. It is your responsibility to be on time and to stay for the entire period. In circumstances where you need to leave early, tell the instructor beforehand. Repeated disruptions (of any kind) of class will lead to a reduction in your final grade. Also note that since we are meeting online, try to make sure to have a quiet environment, or if needed, mute your microphone.

Most importantly, the syllabus of this particular class includes many sensitive topics which can lead to strong feelings and heated debate. Because this is a college classroom, all discussion must be respectful and scholarly. This is to say you must be respectful, in both content and tone, of diverse opinions and not make personal or partisan attacks.

Acceptable comments:
- are respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow up questions and/or disagreement
- are related to class and/or the course material
- focus on advancing the discussion about issues related to the course and/or course material rather than personal beliefs, and
are delivered in normal tones and a non-aggressive manner.

Unacceptable comments:
- are personal in nature. This includes attacks on a person’s appearance, demeanor, or political beliefs.
- include interrupting the instructor or other students. Raise your hand and wait to be recognized.
- often use the discussion to argue for political positions and/or beliefs. If political discussions arise, they must be discussed in a scholarly way (see above).
- may include using raised tones, yelling, engaging in arguments with other students and being threatening in any manner.
- include ignoring the instructor’s authority to maintain the integrity of the classroom environment.

Grade Appeals
As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C0.03, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

Grade Changes
I do make mistakes, so I am willing to review any exam or assignment grade you believe to be incorrect. However, you must contact me or see me during office hours (scheduled or by appointment) no earlier than 24 hours after the assignment or exam is returned. A request to review graded written work means that I will reconsider the entire assignment or entire exam. Therefore, the assignment/exam grade may go up or down based on my review (note: past grade reviews have resulted in changes up and down). Math errors in adding up exam grades will be resolved in your favor and will not entail review of the entire exam/assignment. These can (and should) be brought to my attention immediately (i.e. no 24-hour cooling off period). You are not obligated to bring me errors made in your favor.

Late Policy for Exams, Online Quizzes, and Papers
Late work is not accepted in this course (unless you have prior approval from the professor). Deadlines are stated in the syllabus and are posted on Blackboard. Students are responsible for tracking their own assignments and due dates. It is your responsibility to make sure that you submit your work ahead of the deadline. For chapter quizzes and
papers, this means that if the deadline is 11.59pm, your work needs to be submitted by 11.58pm. Late submission results in a 0.

Students are expected to take exams at the scheduled times. Make-up exams will be given only if there is an acceptable and legitimate excuse. I require documentation to reschedule exams. Should you miss an exam it is your responsibility to notify me (ideally in advance). I will not seek you out to remind you that you missed the exam. Any make-up work is scheduled on the final day of Maymester.

It is the student’s responsibility to trouble-shoot and resolve any technology problems in their online accounts and their DUO abilities before the syllabus deadlines and before the end of Maymester. This involves a student opening a ticket with the IT Helpdesk and keeping the reference numbers for the student account, taking and saving screenshots of problems, email correspondence copies, office hours meetings, and other related attempts.

On a related note, you should complete assignments early to protect against computer failures. Always retain an electronic copy of your work and be sure to back up your computer files on a regular basis. Also make sure to keep your graded work after I return it to you until at least the end of Maymester.

Extra Credit
No extra credit options are available for this course. No exceptions. Please do not request extra credit from the instructor at any point during Maymester.

Academic Dishonesty, Cheating, and Plagiarism
Academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism of any kind are unacceptable. There are no exceptions. Consequences for academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism include, but are not limited to, a failing grade for an assignment, a failing grade for the course, noncredit for an assignment, additional work, and/or direct referral to university officials. Most often the result is a 0 for the relevant assignment or exam. If academic dishonesty, cheating, or plagiarism is suspected on any assessment, the instructor reserves the right to impose restrictions and make changes on future assessments for an individual and/or the entire class as needed.

Please note that the university requires that faculty members formally report all instances of academic misconduct. Here is the link for copies of the required forms and reports: http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/academicmisconduct.html. Here are the official procedures:
http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.c0.04_student_academic_misconduct.pdf.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the use of unauthorized information during a quiz or exam, plagiarism, submitting the same paper for multiple courses without permission, or depriving another student of the ability to perform his or her work. The term cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments, plagiarism; or (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the university faculty or staff.
The term plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. Plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling or distribution of term papers or other academic materials. Please note plagiarism includes intentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one's own. Additionally, the procedure has been updated to reflect the Academic Integrity Committee as the body to consider grade appeals and academic misconduct cases, as well as identifies the selection process of committee members. Detailed information can be found on the University Handbook of Rules and Procedures website. Contact for interpretation or clarification is the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs. If you have questions about the university's policy on academic dishonesty, please see the Student Code of Conduct at http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/studentcofc.html.

**Academic Honor Code**

Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code published in the University Student Handbook. The Academic Honor Code is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student’s own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community. Violations of the Academic Honor Code will not be tolerated.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course. Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class.

**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**S.A.I.L. System**

S.A.I.L. is a secure online student portal where you can access your student, academic, and financial aid records at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Students can find information related to registration, class schedules, course catalogs, tuition and fees, grades, etc. at http://sail.tamucc.edu/.
Disabilities Accommodations
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

Veterans
If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816. Veterans can find more information online at http://vets.tamucc.edu/. Please also communicate with your instructor for assistance.

Student Caregivers
If you have caregiving responsibilities (e.g., parent of a child or care for elderly parents) and you anticipate scheduling difficulties, please discuss this at the beginning of Maymester with the instructor to work out an appropriate strategy and keep in regular touch with the instructor during Maymester.

Part-time or Full-time Employed Students
If you anticipate scheduling conflicts or workload difficulties, please discuss your questions, concerns, and potential solutions with the instructor at the beginning of Maymester and keep in regular touch with the instructor during Maymester.

6 Tentative Course Schedule
All dates, assignments, and evaluations are subject to change with advanced notice. Please pay careful attention to Blackboard for updates. The times posted for deadlines refer to the time in Corpus Christi, Texas (i.e., Central Time Zone).

Group meetings:
A) 9:30AM to 10:30AM  B) 11:00AM to Noon  C) 2:00PM to 3:00PM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Friday May 15</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Introduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Chapter 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>Entire class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussions 1</td>
<td>Post due 4PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussions 1</td>
<td>Replies due 11.59PM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday May 18</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Politics and Citizens</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Readings</td>
<td>Chapter 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meetings</td>
<td>In groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>Quiz 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussions 2</td>
<td>Post due 4PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discussions 2</td>
<td>Replies due 11.59PM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topics</td>
<td>Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday May 19</td>
<td>American Founding</td>
<td>Chapter 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday May 20</td>
<td>U.S. Constitution</td>
<td>Chapter 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday May 21</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>Chapter 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday May 22</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>Chapter 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sunday May 24</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topics</td>
<td>Readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monday May 25</td>
<td>Congress &amp; the Presidency</td>
<td>Chapters 7 AND 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuesday May 26</td>
<td>The Judiciary</td>
<td>Chapter 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday May 27</td>
<td>Political Parties</td>
<td>Chapter 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thursday May 28</td>
<td>Interest Groups</td>
<td>Chapter 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friday May 29</td>
<td>Voting and Elections</td>
<td>Chapter 14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saturday May 30</td>
<td>End of class</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The instructor reserves the right to make changes to the course schedule or material due to instructional needs throughout Maymester. Students are responsible for using the most current version.*
7 Advice for Being Successful in Class

Most of you will know instinctively much or all of what is below. However, experience has taught me that there are several people every semester who miss an important point or two. Therefore, in order to answer (or better yet avoid) as many questions as possible in advance:

- For each credit hour, you are expected to do 48 hours of studying per semester. Thus for classes that are 3 credits, you are expected to put in 144 hours per semester. For Maymester this comes down to 9 hours per day.

- The time to begin caring about your grade is at the beginning of Maymester, not the night before an exam or, even worse, the last day of Maymester.

- All the reading material and lectures are important: I would not ask you to read something I thought was trivial or bother to prepare lectures I did not think were important. Please do not ever ask if you missed anything important from class or what you should study, since the answer will be all of these things. The syllabus, the slides and the repetition of certain concepts in class are more than adequate guidance for studying.

- It is wise to read over your notes after class and fill in blanks while the material is still fresh in your mind. It is likely that otherwise you forget the material.

- Try to study for exams ahead of time. That way, if something does not make sense, you have plenty of time to ask for an explanation. Do not be afraid to ask questions.

- Exam questions test how well you have absorbed and integrated the information presented in the readings and in class. You will need to make connections between different parts of the lectures and the readings. The multiple-choice format of the exam requires you to know and understand the concepts. Focus on the concepts and their definitions.

- The writing assignments require you to think thoroughly about the material. Do not assume that you can get by with simply giving an opinion. Some questions have more than one part; be sure you have answered all of them.

- Re-read your work before turning in the writing assignment and correct errors in spelling and grammar. Also make sure that you have answered all the questions in their entirety.
• Occasionally an emergency occurs, and you will be unable to come to class. Find a classmate or two to borrow notes from if the need should arise. In the event you miss class due to an emergency, I will be happy to answer questions during office hours about things that are unclear from the notes you receive – just as I am happy to answer questions about things that are unclear when you attend class. However, I will not summarize or repeat the lecture for you. In any case, please come to discuss your situation with me.

8 Personal and Public Health Statement – Covid 19

As you know in response to the outbreak of the Covid-19 virus all courses are held entirely online. While you should be somewhat familiar with Blackboard, this might be the first time you are asked to take a class completely online. While this situation is not ideal, the goal is to provide, as best as we can, a high-quality educational experience for you. I will not be able to recreate the exact same in-person classroom experience in this online environment but know that I will do the best I can.

There are lots of available resources from the university online, this includes resources from the library, ODELT and IT. Please know that I am here to help you as much as I can. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

This online format might be challenging for you. Especially during Maymester it requires that you are adhering to a strict daily schedule. Make sure you read the announcements in your class space and follow the lecture slides and posts made by me. Also, make sure to keep track of the readings in the textbook. I realize that this asks of you to create a good study schedule and to be disciplined. I have set deadlines for the quizzes, exams, papers and discussion boards to help you keep this schedule. Still, please reach out if you are in need for make-up opportunities.

We will have daily class meetings in small groups for about 45 minutes per group. In addition, I am available via email and during virtual office hours if you need. I am here to make sure that, despite the situation, you have the most seamless transition possible. I promise to be patient with you, if you are patient with me.

I understand that many of you have jobs which may have increased or decreased hours and that this causes worry. Also, some of you might have increased family and personal responsibilities during this trying time. Then some of you may lack access to a good computer or reliable high-speed internet. Please let me know if this online format will be very difficult for you due to a lack of the necessary equipment.

In the meantime, please take good care of your own health and of that of others around you. Most of us have heard the basic public health recommendations we should follow, including:

• Stay at home for as much as you can – if you need to go outside, wear a mask
• Wash your hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
• Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth.
• Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
• Avoid large public gatherings (10 or more people) and exercise social distancing.
• Cover your mouth when coughing and sneezing with a tissue, then discard the tissue in a contained trash bin. If no tissue available, cough or sneeze into your elbow.
• Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.
• Seek medical attention if you believe you have been exposed or present with symptoms.
• Call ahead before presenting at a doctor’s office or emergency room.

Finally, you likely still have a lot of doubts, questions, and worries. It is important that besides this class you also take time to relax and find some time for yourself. I recommend that you find some activities to help you have a little fun, that help you unwind, and help you to take care of your mental health.

On Blackboard I provide a list of websites where you can find different interests and activities that you can do in between work so that you can take care of yourself between all of the work you have to do. Remember, your mental health is just as important (if not more important) as your homework, so find something in the list on Blackboard that interests you and spend a few minutes doing something that you enjoy every day.