

POLS 312: Ethnic Conflict

Spring 2026

Professor	Ilayda B. Onder, Assistant Professor of Political Science
Lecture Date, Time, & Room	Mon. & Wed. 2:20-3:35 PM, ALLN 1015
Office Hours	Mon. & Wed. 4:15-5:15 PM
Office	ALLN 3046
Email	ilaydaonder@tamu.edu

Course Description

This course examines the causes, dynamics, and resolution of ethnic conflict through a comparative and theoretically grounded perspective. It introduces students to major debates and empirical research in the study of ethnicity and violence, drawing on examples from across the world. The course is organized into six parts, each addressing a key dimension of ethnic conflict and building cumulatively toward students' independent research on a specific case.

We begin by unpacking key concepts such as ethnicity, nationalism, and religion, and by examining how ethnic identities become politically salient. The second part explores the causes of violent ethnic conflict, surveying classic and contemporary explanations, including economic, identity-based, and rationalist approaches, to why some societies experience ethnic conflict while others do not.

The third part investigates mobilization in violent ethnic conflict, focusing on how individuals and communities join or support ethnic violence. We analyze the factors that motivate participation, the formation of ethnic organizations, and the processes that sustain or constrain collective action. The fourth part turns to the dynamics of violence, examining why and how ethnically-motivated armed groups target civilians, engage in mass killing, terrorism, or sexual violence, and how local-level interactions shape patterns of violence in ethnic conflict.

In the fifth part, we move beyond violence to study the non-violent dimensions of ethnic conflict, including ethnic voting and public goods provision, during and in the aftermath of ethnic conflict. Finally, the course concludes with the resolution of ethnic conflicts, exploring mechanisms such as power sharing, partition, secession, diplomacy, and international peacekeeping as means as resolving ethnic conflicts.

Course Prerequisites

Prerequisite/Corequisite(s): Junior or senior classification.

Special Course Designation

Course Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, the learner will be able to:

- Define and critically analyze key concepts such as ethnicity, nationalism, and religion, and explain how they relate to political behavior and conflict.
- Differentiate among major theoretical explanations for the causes of ethnic conflict.
- Evaluate the processes of mobilization and participation in ethnic conflicts at both individual and collective levels.
- Analyze the dynamics of violence in ethnic conflicts.
- Assess the role of non-violent strategies in shaping during- and post-conflict ethnic politics.
- Compare and critique ethnic conflict resolution strategies and assess their long-term political effects.
- Synthesize and apply theoretical and empirical insights to a specific ethnic conflict case through independent research.

Textbook and/or Resource Materials

There are no required textbooks for this course. All readings will consist of scholarly journal articles and book chapters, which will be posted on Canvas. Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class and are encouraged to download or annotate them digitally to facilitate active engagement during discussions.

Additional Instructional Materials

Technology and Software

No specific software or technical tools are required for this course. All readings, assignments, and announcements will be posted on Canvas. Students are expected to have regular access to Canvas and to check it frequently for updates.

Other Resources

Additional resources will be made available on Canvas throughout the semester, if needed. Students are encouraged to make use of university resources such as the Writing Center and the Library's research databases for assistance with their review and research papers.

Grading Policy

Each class meeting includes designated readings, which are listed in the class schedule below. For each week, there will be 1-2 *required* readings that capture the central themes and key debates of that week's topic. These readings are essential for engaging fully in class discussions and activities. In addition, the schedule provides a list of *recommended* readings for students who wish to explore the topic in greater depth. While these recommended readings are not mandatory, it is a good idea to at least skim them to gain a broader understanding of the week's subject and see how scholars approach the topic from different perspectives.

Your final grade will be based on 5 components: Review Paper (20%), In-Class Quizzes (40%), Final Exam (25%), Class Participation (10%), and Attendance (5%).

Review Paper (20%)

Each student will write 1 review paper, focusing on one of the weekly topics beginning in Week 3. The review paper should engage with at least 4 readings from the selected week, including some from the recommended readings list. The paper should be written in a synthetic and comparative manner, going beyond simple summaries of each reading. Students should begin by identifying the overarching themes or points of contrast that connect the readings. The body of the paper should compare the readings in terms of their theoretical arguments, methods, and findings, highlighting how they contribute to or diverge from one another. In the conclusion, students should critically reflect on these works, explaining why and how they agree or disagree with certain aspects of the arguments or evidence presented.

A sign-up sheet is posted on Canvas ([follow this link](#)) for students to select the week on which their review paper will focus. Everyone needs to sign up by **Jan 21 at 11:59pm**. Please note that only up to 4 students can sign up for the same week. The paper is due by **Sunday at 11:59 p.m. before the chosen week**.

In-Class Quizzes (40%)

The course is divided into six thematic parts, each spanning two to three weeks (see course schedule below). At the end of each part, there will be a short in-class quiz to assess understanding of key concepts, theories, and empirical examples discussed in lectures and readings. A total of **six quizzes** will be administered.

Each of the first five quizzes will consist of **7 questions**, worth one point each, for a total of **7 points per quiz**. The sixth quiz will consist of **5 questions**, worth one point each, for a total of **5 points**. Quiz scores will together make up 40% of the final course grade. Quizzes will be administered at the beginning of class and will focus on material covered since the previous quiz. **No make-up quizzes will be offered**.

- Quiz 1 (Key Concepts): January 26 (Monday)
- Quiz 2 (Causes of Violent Ethnic Conflict): February 16 (Monday)
- Quiz 3 (Mobilization in Violent Ethnic Conflict): March 2 (Monday)
- Quiz 4 (Dynamics of Violence in Violent Ethnic Conflict): March 30 (Monday)
- Quiz 5 (Non-Violent Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict): April 20 (Monday)
- Quiz 6 (Resolution of Ethnic Conflicts): April 27 (Monday)

Final Exam (25%)

The final exam will take place **during finals week (April 29–May 5)**, on the date and time assigned by the university's official final exam schedule (TBD). The exam will be held **in person**. Students are expected to remain in town for the entire finals week. Travel plans made or flights booked before the final exam schedule is officially released do **NOT** constitute an excused absence and **will not be accommodated**. **Early or online final exams will not be offered**.

Class Participation (10%)

Active and thoughtful participation is an essential component of this course. Students are expected to come to class having completed all assigned readings and prepared to engage with the material. Participation grades will reflect both the frequency and quality of students' contributions. Effective participation can take many forms: offering insightful comments that connect readings to broader course themes, asking clarifying or probing questions, responding constructively to the questions that the instructor poses.

Attendance (5%)

I will take attendance on Canvas at the beginning of each class meeting.

Grading Scale

A	90 to 100%
B	80 to 89.99%
C	70 to 79.99%
D	60 to 69.99%
F	below 59.99%

Note that the decimal points here are meaningful. An 89.98% is a B; it does not automatically round up to an A. I recognize that cutoffs are arbitrary, but I have to set them nonetheless, and they apply to everyone.

Late Work Policy

Work submitted by a student as makeup work for an excused absence is not considered late work and is exempt from the late work policy ([Student Rule 7](#)).

Due Dates

All assignments are due by 5pm on the assigned due date unless stated otherwise.

Assignment Submissions

All assignments are to be submitted on Canvas.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Assignments not submitted by the designated due date/time are late. Late submissions will be accepted but with a one-half grade (5%) per day (including weekends) penalty. All assignments must be completed to pass the course. Extensions will be granted in severe circumstances. If you feel you need an extension, please contact me at least 24 hours before the due date.

Long-term Absences

If you need to be away from class for an extended period due to an illness or family matter, contact me.

Course Schedule

Below you will find a detailed list of class meetings, the topic we will cover, and assignments. You should complete reading and homework assignments before coming to class unless specifically listed otherwise. If any deviations from this schedule are necessary, I will let you know.

PART I. Key Concepts

Week 1. Ethnicity, politicized ethnicity, ethnic fractionalization

January 12 (Monday) & January 14 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Hale, Henry E. 2004. "Explaining Ethnicity." *Comparative Political Studies* 37: 458–485.

Chandra, Kanchan. 2006. "What is Ethnic Identity and Does It Matter?" *Annual Review of Political Science* 9: 397–424.

Recommended Readings

Bates, Robert H. 1974. "Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Contemporary Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 6(4): 457–484.

Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98: 529–545.

Posner, Daniel N. 2004. "Measuring Ethnic Fractionalization in Africa." *American Journal of Political Science* 48: 849–863.

Week 2. Nationalism and religion in the context of ethnicity

No class on January 19 (Monday), Martin Luther King Jr. Day

January 21 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Haas, Ernst B. 1986. "What Is Nationalism and Why Should We Study It?" *International Organization* 40: 707–744.

Mylonas, Harris, and Maya Tudor. 2021. "Nationalism: What We Know and What We Still Need to Know." *Annual Review of Political Science* 24: 109–132.

Recommended Readings

Connor, Walker. 1978. "A nation is a nation, is a state, is an ethnic group is a . . ." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 1(4): 377–400.

Toft, Monica Duffy. 2007. "Getting Religion? The Puzzling Case of Islam and Civil War." *International Security* 31(4): 97–131.

Wimmer, Andreas. 2018. "Nation Building: Why Some Countries Come Together While Others Fall Apart." *Survival* 60(4): 151–164.

PART II. Causes of Violent Ethnic Conflict

Week 3. Greed vs grievance debate

Quiz 1 (Key Concepts) on January 26 (Monday)

January 26 (Monday) & January 28 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Fearon, James D, and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97: 75–90.

Collier, Paul, and Anke Hoefler. 2004. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers* 56(4): 563-595.

Recommended Readings

Cederman, Lars-Erik, Nils B. Weidmann, and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2011. "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison." *American Political Science Review* 105: 478–495.

Lane, Matthew. 2016. "The Intrastate Contagion of Ethnic Civil War." *The Journal of Politics* 78: 396–410.

Week 4. Identity-related explanations

February 2 (Monday) & February 4 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Cederman, Lars-Erik, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min. 2010. "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis." *World Politics* 62: 87–119.

Denny, Elaine K., and Barbara F. Walter. 2014. "Ethnicity and Civil War." *Journal of Peace Research* 51(2): 199-212.

Recommended Readings

Eck, Kristine. 2009. "From Armed Conflict to War: Ethnic Mobilization and Conflict Intensification." *International Studies Quarterly* 53(2): 369–388.

Lewis, Janet I. 2017. "How Does Ethnic Rebellion Start?" *Comparative Political Studies* 50: 1420–50.

Week 5. Rationalist explanations and bargaining theories

February 9 (Monday) & February 11 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Posen, Barry R. 1993. "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict." *Survival* 35: 27–47.

Lake, David A, and Donald Rothchild. 1996. "Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict." *International Security* 21(2): 41–75.

Recommended Readings

Fearon, James D. 1995. "Ethnic War as A Commitment Problem." Paper presented at the 1994 Annual Meetings of the American Political Science Association.

Jenne, Erin. 2004. "Bargaining Theory of Minority Demands: Explaining the Dog that Did not Bite in 1990s Yugoslavia." *International Studies Quarterly* 48: 729–754.

PART III. Mobilization in Violent Ethnic Conflict

Week 6. Individual mobilization

Quiz 2 (Causes of Violent Ethnic Conflict) on February 16 (Monday)

February 16 (Monday) & February 18 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Humphreys, Macartan, and Jeremy Weinstein. 2008. "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War." *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2): 436-455.

Tezcur, Gunes Murat. 2016. "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Risks: Participation in an Ethnic Rebellion." *American Political Science Review* 110: 247-264.

Recommended Readings

Mueller, John. 2000. "The Banality of Ethnic War." *International Security* 25(1): 42-70.

Kruglanski, Arie W., Michele J. Gelfand, Jocelyn J. Bélanger, Anna Sheveland, Malkanthi Hetiarachchi, Rohan Gunaratna. "The Psychology of Radicalization and Deradicalization: How Significance Quest Impacts Violent Extremism." *Political Psychology* 35: 69-93.

Kaplan, Oliver, and Enzo Nussio. 2016. "Explaining Recidivism of Ex-combatants in Colombia." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62(1): 64-93.

Week 7. Community mobilization

February 23 (Monday) & February 25 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Parkinson, Sarah Elizabeth. 2013. "Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War." *American Political Science Review* 107(3): 418-432.

Shesterinina, Anastasia. 2016. "Collective Threat Framing and Mobilization in Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 110 (3): 411-27.

Recommended Readings

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2008. "Ethnic Defection in Civil War." *Comparative Political Studies* 41(8): 1043-1068.

Lyall, Jason. 2010. "Are Co-ethnics More Effective Counterinsurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War." *American Political Science Review* 104: 1-20.

Pearlman, Wendy. 2021. "Mobilizing From Scratch: Large-Scale Collective Action Without Pre-existing Organization in the Syrian Uprising." *Comparative Political Studies* 54 (10): 1786-1817.

Edgerton, Jared F., Elizabeth L. Brannon, Dagmar Heintze, and Hollie Nyseth Nzitatira. 2025. "Unpacking Gendered Co-Participation in Political Violence: Women Perpetrators of the 1994 Genocide in Rwanda." *American Journal of Political Science*.

PART IV. Dynamics of Violence in Violent Ethnic Conflict

Week 8. Logic of violence against civilians

Quiz 3 (Mobilization in Violent Ethnic Conflict) on March 2 (Monday)

March 2 (Monday) & March 4 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Kalyvas, Stathis. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 6 and 7.

Recommended Readings

Weinstein, Jeremy. 2005. "Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(4): 598-624.

Weinstein, Jeremy. 2007. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge University Press. Chapter 6.

Gowrinathan, Nimmi, and Zachariah Mampilly. 2019. "Resistance and Repression under the Rule of Rebels: Women, Clergy, and Civilian Agency in LTTE Governed Sri Lanka." *Comparative Politics* 52(1): 1-20.

Onder, Ilayda B. 2024. "How Civilian Loyalties Shape Rebel-Led Victimization of Rebel Constituencies." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 69(4): 701-730.

No class on Mar 9 (Mon) and Mar 11 (Wed), Spring Break

Week 9. Mass killing, terrorism, and sexual violence in ethnic conflicts

March 16 (Monday) & March 18 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Valentino, Benjamin, Paul Huth, and Dylan Balch-Lindsay. 2004. "Draining the Sea: Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare." *International Organization* 58(2): 375-407.

Cohen, Dara Kay. 2013. "Explaining Rape during Civil War: Cross-National Evidence." *American Political Science Review* 107(3): 461-477.

Recommended Readings

Polo, Sara M.T., and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch. 2016. "Twisting Arms and Sending Messages: Terrorist Tactics in Civil War." *Journal of Peace Research* 53(6): 815-829.

Hägerdal, Nils. 2019. "Ethnic Cleansing and the Politics of Restraint: Violence and Coexistence in the Lebanese Civil War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(1): 59-84.

No class on March 23 (Mon) and March 25 (Wed), Instructor at conference

PART V. Non-Violent Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict

Week 10. Notion of “non-violent resistance”

Quiz 4 (Dynamics of Violence in Ethnic Conflict) on March 30 (Monday)

March 30 (Monday) & April 1 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Stephan, Maria J., and Erica Chenoweth. 2008. “Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict.” *International Security* 33(1): 7–44.

Pischedda, Costantino. 2020. “Ethnic Conflict and the Limits of Nonviolent Resistance.” *Security Studies* 29(2): 362–391.

Recommended Readings

Cunningham, Kathleen Gallagher. 2013. “Understanding Strategic Choice: The Determinants of Civil War and Nonviolent Campaign in Self-Determination Disputes.” *Journal of Peace Research* 50(3): 291–304.

Thurber, Ches. 2018. “Ethnic Barriers to Civil Resistance.” *Journal of Global Security Studies* 3(3): 255–270.

Hendrix, Cullen S., and Idean Salehyan. 2019. “Ethnicity, Nonviolent Protest, and Lethal Repression in Africa.” *Journal of Peace Research* 56(4): 469–484.

Manekin, Devorah, and Tamar Mitts. 2022. “Effective for Whom? Ethnic Identity and Nonviolent Resistance.” *American Political Science Review* 116(1): 161–80.

Week 11. Ethnic voting

April 6 (Monday) & April 8 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Dunning, Thad, and Lauren Harrison. 2010. “Cross-Cutting Cleavages and Ethnic Voting: An Experimental Study of Cousinage in Mali.” *American Political Science Review* 104: 21–39.

Houle, Christian, Chunho Park, and Paul D Kenny. 2019. “The Structure of Ethnic Inequality and Ethnic Voting.” *The Journal of Politics* 81: 187–200.

Recommended Readings

Wolfinger, Raymond E. 1965. “The Development and Persistence of Ethnic Voting.” *American Political Science Review* 59: 896–908.

Houle, Christian. 2015. “Ethnic Inequality and the Dismantling of Democracy: A Global Analysis.” *World Politics* 67: 469–505.

Nathan, Noah L. 2016. “Local Ethnic Geography, Expectations of Favoritism, and Voting in Urban Ghana.” *Comparative Political Studies* 49: 1896–1929.

Week 12. Ethnic conflict and public good provision

April 13 (Monday) & April 15 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Habyarimana, James, Macartan Humphreys, Daniel N Posner, and Jeremy M Weinstein. 2007. "Why Does Ethnic Diversity Undermine Public Goods Provision?" *American Political Science Review* 101: 709–725.

Wimmer, Andreas. 2016. "Is Diversity Detrimental? Ethnic Fractionalization, Public Goods Provision, and the Historical Legacies of Stateness." *Comparative Political Studies* 49: 1407–1445.

Recommended Readings

Miguel, Edward. 2004. "Tribe or Nation? Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya Versus Tanzania." *World Politics* 56: 327–362.

Weldon, Steven A. 2006. "The Institutional Context of Tolerance for Ethnic Minorities: A Comparative, Multilevel Analysis of Western Europe." *American Journal of Political Science* 50: 331–349.

Kasara, Kimuli. 2007. "Tax Me If You Can: Ethnic Geography, Democracy, and the Taxation of Agriculture in Africa." *American Political Science Review* 101: 159–172.

PART VI. Resolution of Ethnic Conflicts

Week 13. Power-sharing, partition, and secession

Quiz 5 (Non-Violent Dimensions of Ethnic Conflict) on April 20 (Monday)

April 20 (Monday) & April 22 (Wednesday)

Required Readings

Walter, Barbara F. 2006. "Building Reputation: Why Governments Fight Some Separatists but Not Others." *American Journal of Political Science* 50(2): 313–330.

Chapman, Thomas, and Philip G Roeder. 2007. "Partition as a Solution to Wars of Nationalism: The Importance of Institutions." *American Political Science Review* 101: 677–691.

Samii, Cyrus. 2013. "Perils or Promise of Ethnic Integration? Evidence from a Hard Case in Burundi." *American Political Science Review* 107: 558–573.

Recommended Readings

Sambanis, Nicholas, and Jonah Schulhofer-Wohl. 2009. "What's in a Line? Is Partition a Solution to Civil War?" *International Security* 34: 82–118.

Coggins, Bridget. 2011. "Friends in High Places: International Politics and the Emergence of States from Secessionism." *International Organization* 65: 433–467.

Griffiths, Ryan D. 2015. "Between Dissolution and Blood: How Administrative Lines and Categories Shape Secessionist Outcomes." *International Organization* 69: 731–751.

Hierro, Maria Jose, and Didac Queralt. 2020. "The Divide over Independence: Explaining Preferences for Secession in an Advanced Open Economy." *American Journal of Political Science* 65: 422–442

Week 14. Final Exam Review

No class on April 29 (Wednesday), Reading Day

Quiz 6 (Resolution of Ethnic Conflicts) on April 27 (Monday)

April 27 (Monday)

REVIEW SESSION FOR THE FINAL EXAM

Additional Course Information

Syllabus Changes Policy

This syllabus is subject to change. However, per university policy, the number of assignments, type of assignments, and the percentage each assignment contributes to the final grade will not change. Reading assignments may be adjusted, and the dates of exams or other assignments may be modified if necessary. In the event of any changes, students will be given prior written notification (via email or the learning management system).

How to be Successful?

Students come to this course with varied skills and interests. I will do my best to make the material as accessible and easy to digest as possible. This requires you to do your part as well. Here are my tips for you:

- Read before class and come to class with any questions you have.
- Participate in class. At a minimum, attend class, but actively participating is another way to engage the material (see above).
- I will hold weekly office hours. **COME TO OFFICE HOURS AND ASK FOR HELP WHEN YOU NEED IT.** Students that come to office hours often do very well in class. Coming to office hours does not mean you aren't smart; it means you care about this class.
- Take handwritten notes during class and while reading/watching the assigned material. Multiple studies also show that handwritten notes improve retention and improve understanding of material better than typed notes. When we get closer to exam time, re-organizing your handwritten notes by typing them up is also a good study strategy. However, I will never penalize you for taking notes on your computer.
- Study regularly. Many students cram their studying before an exam. An alternative strategy is to dedicate a little bit of time every other day or so to just reading through your notes. If you do this, you will find that studying before exams is far less stressful and usually you'll do better on them too.

Office Hours

I will hold weekly office hours. If you need help with the material, come to office hours as much as you can. My office and weekly office hours are listed at the top of page 1 of this syllabus. Students who come to office hours do the best in class.

Peer Collaboration

Studying together is encouraged. However, when submitting the assignments, the final work must be your own. This means that you must write the written assignments yourself; and you must complete your own review paper. **YOU MAY NOT COLLABORATE ON EXAMS.**

Academic Dishonesty

Do not cheat. There are more details in the Academic Integrity section, but if you are unsure whether what you are doing is cheating, ask me. I do not tolerate academic dishonesty, and claiming ignorance about what cheating entails will not excuse you from the appropriate consequences.

Technology Support

Technology Services (IT) - Main Campus

Hours: 24/7

Phone: (979) 845-8300

Email: helpdesk@tamu.edu

Call/Chat/Email/Visit: <https://it.tamu.edu/help>

Canvas LMS Technical Support

Hours: 24/7/365

Phone: (877) 354-4821

Email: support@instructure.com

Support is available by clicking the Help button at the far left in the Canvas global navigation menu. Canvas Resources are also linked on the home page of every Canvas course.

University Policies

This section outlines the university-level policies that must be included in each course syllabus. The TAMU Faculty Senate established the wording of these policies.

Attendance Policy

The university views class attendance and participation as an individual student responsibility. Students are expected to attend class and to complete all assignments.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about excused absences, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Makeup Work Policy

Students will be excused from attending class on the day of a graded activity or when attendance contributes to a student's grade, for the reasons stated in [Student Rule 7](#), or other reason deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Please refer to [Student Rule 7](#) in its entirety for information about makeup work, including definitions, and related documentation and timelines.

Absences related to Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 may necessitate a period of more than 30 days for make-up work, and the timeframe for make-up work should be agreed upon by the student and instructor" ([Student Rule 7](#), Section 7.4.1).

"The instructor is under no obligation to provide an opportunity for the student to make up work missed because of an unexcused absence" ([Student Rule 7](#), Section 7.4.2).

Students who request an excused absence are expected to uphold the Aggie Honor Code and Student Conduct Code. (See [Student Rule 24](#).)

Academic Integrity Statement and Policy

"An Aggie does not lie, cheat or steal, or tolerate those who do."

"Texas A&M University students are responsible for authenticating all work submitted to an instructor. If asked, students must be able to produce proof that the item submitted is indeed

the work of that student. Students must keep appropriate records at all times. The inability to authenticate one's work, should the instructor request it, may be sufficient grounds to initiate an academic misconduct case" (Section 20.1.2.3, [Student Rule 20](#)).

You can learn more about the Aggie Honor System Office Rules and Procedures, academic integrity, and your rights and responsibilities at aggiehonor.tamu.edu.

Notice of Nondiscrimination

Texas A&M University is committed to providing safe and non-discriminatory learning, living, and work environments for all members of the University community. The University provides equal opportunity to all employees, students, applicants for employment or admission, and the public, regardless of race, color, sex (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or veteran status.

Texas A&M University will promptly, thoroughly, and fairly investigate and resolve all complaints of discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), complicity, and related retaliation based on a protected class in accordance with [System Regulation 08.01.01](#), [University Rule 08.01.01.M1](#), [Standard Administrative Procedure \(SAP\) 08.01.01.M1.01](#), and applicable federal and state laws. In accordance with Title IX and its implementing regulations, Texas A&M does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any educational program or activity, including admissions and employment.

The following person has been designated to handle inquiries and complaints regarding the non-discrimination policies: Jennifer M. Smith, TAMU Associate VP & Title IX Coordinator at YMCA Ste 108, College Station, TX 77843, 979-458-8407, or email civilrights@tamu.edu. For other reporting options, visit the [U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights Complaint Assessment System](#) to locate the address and phone number of the office that serves your area, or call 1-800-421-3481.

Civil Rights, Free Speech, and Title IX Policies

Texas A&M University is committed to fostering a learning environment that is safe and productive for all. University policies and federal and state laws prohibit discrimination and harassment based on an individual's race, color, sex, (including pregnancy and related conditions), religion, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, veteran status, or any other legally protected characteristic. This includes forms of sex-based violence, such as sexual assault, sexual harassment, sexual exploitation, dating/domestic violence, and stalking.

Students can report discrimination/harassment, access supportive resources, or learn more about their options for resolving complaints on the University's [Civil Rights & Title IX webpage](#).

Students should be aware that all university employees (except medical or mental health providers) are mandatory reporters, which means that if they observe, experience or become aware of an incident that they reasonably believe to be discrimination/harassment alleged to have been committed by or against a person who was a student or employee at the time of the incident, the employee must report the incident to the university.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Policy

Texas A&M University is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. If you experience barriers to your education due to a disability or think you may have a disability, contact the [Disability Resources office](#) on your campus (resources listed below). Disabilities may include, but are not limited to, attentional, learning, mental health, sensory,

physical, or chronic health conditions. All students are encouraged to discuss their disability-related needs with Disability Resources and their instructors as soon as possible.

To request academic accommodations, contact the designated ADA office based on your location:

- Texas A&M University, College of Nursing, College of Dentistry, Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy College Station, College of Medicine, School of Public Health, Institute of Biosciences and Technology, EnMed Program, Bush School in Washington DC, Mays Business School – CityCentre, TAMU Engineering Academies, Texas A&M University Higher Education Center at McAllen and Texas A&M University at Galveston should contact Disability Resources at (979) 845-1637 or disability@tamu.edu.
- Texas A&M University School of Law should contact the Office of Student Affairs at (817) 212-4111 or law-disability@law.tamu.edu to request accommodations.
- Irma Lerma Rangel College of Pharmacy in Kingsville should contact the Disability Resource Center at Texas A&M University-Kingsville at (361) 593-3024 or drc.center@tamuk.edu to request accommodations.
- Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine & Biomedical Sciences in Canyon should contact the Office of Student Accessibility at West Texas A&M University – Canyon at (806) 651-2335 or osa@wtamu.edu.

If you are experiencing difficulties with your approved accommodations, contact the office responsible for approving your accommodations or the Texas A&M ADA Coordinator Julie Kuder at ADA.Coordinator@tamu.edu or (979) 458-8407.

Pregnancy Accommodations

Texas A&M provides reasonable accommodations to students due to pregnancy and/or related conditions, such as childbirth, recovery, and lactation. Students should contact the University's Pregnancy Coordinator as soon as they become aware of the need for accommodation. Depending on the circumstances, accommodations could include extended time to complete assignments or exams, changes in course sequence, or modifications to the physical classroom environment.

Texas A&M will also allow a voluntary leave of absence, ensure the availability of lactation space, and maintain grievance procedures to provide for the prompt and equitable resolution of complaints of sex discrimination. For information regarding pregnancy accommodations, email TIX.Pregnancy@tamu.edu.

Statement on Mental Health and Wellness

Texas A&M University recognizes that mental health and wellness are critical factors influencing a student's academic success and overall wellbeing. Students are encouraged to engage in healthy self-care practices by utilizing the resources and services available through [University Health Services](#). The [TELUS Health Student Support app](#) provides access to professional counseling in multiple languages anytime, anywhere by phone or chat, and the [988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline](#) offers 24-hour emergency support at 988 or 988lifeline.org.

Texas A&M College Station

Students needing a listening ear can contact University Health Services at 979.458.4584. Call 911 or visit your nearest emergency room if you are currently experiencing a life-threatening situation or if your safety is at risk. 24-hour emergency help is also available through the 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline (988) or at [988lifeline.org](https://www.988lifeline.org).

Statement on the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

FERPA is a federal law designed to protect the privacy of educational records by limiting access to these records, to establish the right of students to inspect and review their educational records, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate and misleading data through informal and formal hearings.

Currently enrolled students wishing to withhold any or all directory information items can do so within howdy.tamu.edu using the Directory Information Withholding Form. The complete [FERPA Notice to Students](#) and the student records policy is available on the Office of the Registrar webpage.

Items that can never be identified as public information are a student's social security number, citizenship, gender, grades, GPR, or class schedule. All efforts will be made in this class to protect your privacy and to ensure confidential treatment of information associated with or generated by your participation in the class.

Directory items include name, UIN, local address, permanent address, email address, local telephone number, permanent telephone number, dates of attendance, program of study (college, major, campus), classification, previous institutions attended, degrees, honors and awards received, participation in officially recognized activities and sports, medical residence location, and medical residence specialization.

College and Department Policies

Department Statement on Course Content

As a department, we are committed to scholarly rigor, open inquiry, and the scientific study of politics. Political science, as an academic discipline, seeks to understand the political world through systematic analysis, empirical evidence, and theoretical frameworks—not through partisan or ideological advocacy.

In our courses, you may encounter readings, data, or arguments that challenge your assumptions or present perspectives from across the political spectrum. These materials are included not as endorsements of any viewpoint, but because they help illuminate how political questions can be analyzed, debated, and understood through evidence-based inquiry.

Our goal is to help you develop the skills to evaluate claims critically, identify assumptions and limitations, and engage constructively with competing arguments. We value respectful, rigorous discussion and welcome questions about how knowledge in political science is produced, contested, and applied.

If you have concerns about course content or the framing of particular materials, we encourage you to discuss them with your professors in class or during office hours. By fostering a learning environment grounded in intellectual curiosity and academic integrity, we aim to prepare students to think analytically, argue persuasively, and engage in political debate with both openness and rigor.

Department Statement on Classroom Community and Respect

In this course, every voice in the classroom contributes valuable perspectives to our discussions. All students and the instructor are expected to:

- respect the experiences, beliefs, and values that each person brings to our learning community,
- engage in thoughtful, reasoned discussion while refraining from derogatory comments about individuals, cultures, groups, or viewpoints,
- treat each other with respect and use respectful language in all interactions,
- foster a learning and scholarly environment that is open, respectful, and welcoming to all individuals.

Free Speech and Civil Discourse

Texas A&M recognizes that the pursuit of truth through open and robust discourse is critical to academic inquiry. However, as a community of scholars, the university has an aspirational expectation that such discourse will be conducted in accordance with Aggie Core Values. In this “marketplace of ideas,” we encourage civil dialogue creating an environment that allows individuals to express their ideas and to have their ideas challenged in respectful and responsible ways. Students can learn more about Freedom of Expression and Free Speech on the [University’s website](#) about the [First Amendment](#).

AI Statement

With the emergence of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies, the ways in which we define our creative processes continue to transform. AI generators are rapidly evolving from simple editing for grammatical errors and spelling mistakes (Grammarly, MS Word Spell Check) to sophisticated text production (ChatGPT, Google Bard, etc.), as well as image, computer code, and audio generation. The presence of such tools, however, does not replace our need to learn how to draft, revise, and reflect on texts, programs, drawings and how to exercise information literacy and personal responsibility in how we locate, evaluate, incorporate, and cite primary/ secondary sources. For example, the Association for Writing Across the Curriculum states the following:

Writing to learn is an intellectual activity that is crucial to the cognitive and social development of learners and writers. This vital activity cannot be replaced by AI language generators (AWAC).

Engaging in the various aspects of creative pursuits (e.g., writing) is critical to education in a broad sense. While AI technologies will continue shaping how we approach these creative tasks, the critical work of creativity relies on integrity, originality, and ethical conduct in regard to appropriate representation as an author or creator. Thus, submitting work with a significant percentage of AI-generated content, unless otherwise permitted, can be considered academic misconduct under Texas A&M University Student Rule 20. Students must therefore cite the use of Generative AI tools and document what they have contributed to an assignment.

Course-Specific Policy on AI Use

In this course, generative AI use is permitted **ONLY** for the purposes of **brainstorming** for **review paper-related assignments**. It is strictly **NOT** permitted for generating the written text submitted for these assignments. Two important caveats apply:

- AI use of any kind, including for brainstorming, is **NOT** permitted during in-class quizzes or the final exam.
- Each time you use AI for brainstorming for review paper-related assignments, you must submit the **complete conversation you had with the AI tool** as a supplementary file. AI platforms (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, etc.) allow you to download a copy of your conversation directly from your account history. These conversations must demonstrate that you used AI as a “tutor” to help you brainstorm rather than asking AI to produce text.

Failure to follow these guidelines may constitute academic dishonesty.