

# TECH POLICY: HACKING ELECTIONS

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University of Central Oklahoma  
College of Liberal Arts  
Department of Political Science

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"[E]lection hacking is really about three separate threats: hacking voters, hacking votes, and causing disruption or chaos."

—Emefa Agawu, Slate.com

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

According to a National Security Agency report, leaked to the press in Spring 2017, Russian intelligence attempted to gain illicit access to US voting systems, days before the 2016 US Presidential election. Other nation-states have similarly been targeted by Russian agents and proxies, during election periods, for the purpose of influencing election outcomes to the benefit of Russia. In, Tech Policy: Hacking Elections, we scrutinize the proposition that hacking an election refers to efforts at influencing if, when, why, and how voters vote.

Implications to the emergence of voting being a target by foreign powers, include the extent to which the terms of war have changed, democracy is insecure, how to secure against future attempts to hack elections, and, critically, how to stay apace with rapid technological change. Indeed, it is not so much that Russia committed election interference, as it is the rapid pace of technological change which makes securing democracy nigh impossible. In the end, we must grapple with whether or not democracy is tenable as a form of government in the era of information technologies.

This is a reading intensive course. Reading assignments will regularly exceed 200 pages per week. You should complete all assigned readings by the beginning of class on the date indicted on the course schedule.

Prerequisite(s): ENG 1113 and 1213. Junior standing.

Please note that the Political Science Department is committed to furthering the academic mission, vision, goals, values, and philosophy of the University community as outlined in its Academic Mission/Vision 2009

See: <http://www.uco.edu/academicaffairs/MissionVision2009.pdf>.

This course directly incorporates the following Transformative Learning Goals:

- Discipline Knowledge – of the interaction among nation-states to establish order in anarchy while striving to advance their national interests as explained and described by international relations theories.
- Leadership – by critically examining the leadership styles of important actors working to establish international order through cooperation, as well as the challenges of cooperative processes.
- Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities – by requiring the critical analysis of issues related to international cooperation or conflict in a research paper or art project, and demonstrating the critical and creative thinking ability necessary to integrate course material, independent research, and international relations theories in the quest for deepened understanding of ourselves as political actors and the political institutions and collectivities one which we depend.
- Service Learning and Civic Engagement Activities – by acquiring the knowledge to become an informed voter, and the motivation to become an active participant in the political life of the national and global community.
- Global and Cultural Competencies – by examining the ways in which the state actors interact with peers and the global community to address common problems, and by examining how others perceive and deal with these challenges.

## REQUIRED READINGS

- All available on Desire 2 Learn.

## COURSE MEETING SCHEDULE

<u>Date</u>	<u>Day</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
9-Feb-18	Friday	5:30 pm - 9:30 pm	Carnegie Centre, OKC ROOM 5
10-Feb-18	Saturday	9:00 am - 5:00 pm	Carnegie Centre, OKC ROOM 5
11-Feb-18	Sunday	1:30 pm - 5:30 pm	Carnegie Centre, OKC ROOM 5

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Grading Scale: A, 90 – 100; B, 80 – 89.9; C, 70 – 79.9; D, 60 – 69.9; F, 59.9 – 0

Evaluation: Class Participation 20%; Group Presentation 35%; Presentation Peer Assessment 10%; Final Exam 35%. Extra credit work is not allowed. Make up assignments are available only in exigent circumstances, at the discretion of the instructor.

Participation (20%): Students are expected to attend all class sessions, raise relevant questions in class, take copious notes, and be prepared to answer questions posed by the instructor to the student during lecture and discussion in class. Be prepared through doing the readings, discussing the readings with fellow students individually or in groups, and, if necessary, speaking with me during office hours or by appointment, for the purpose of further clarification. Texting, messaging, emailing, or otherwise engaging in activities that detract, distract, or disturb the class and prevent your full participation in class will negatively affect your course participation grade.

Group Presentation (35%): With a classmate, and as a group, you will choose a set of readings, available on D2L, develop a presentation, and lead the discussion of those readings during a specified period in our class meeting.

Leading a discussion includes preparing your class colleagues to engage in the discussion. To this end, you will present on the assigned reading/s and set the agenda for class discussion. Presentations will be comprised of verbal and visual presentation through which you highlight the contributions of the readings to our understanding of cyber war. During your presentation, you should provide a synopsis of core arguments, claims, and questions of each reading in addition to situating each reading in relation to other readings (past, present, or future). The presentation should offer an argument, present core concepts, and critically analyze reading claims and evidence. Last, your presentation should end with a conclusion that sets the stage for three discussion questions the class is to explore during allocated class time. To be completed during the Saturday, class meeting.

Breakout groups, during Saturday morning, class meeting, will provide ample in class opportunity for completing you group's selected readings, developing a presentation, and receiving guidance from course instructor on how to develop and give effective presentations.

Presentation Peer Assessment (10%): You will be required to provide a peer review of group presentations. A form with assessment criteria will be provided.

Final (35%): Respond to an essay question through D2L Dropbox assignment, Sunday, by 5:30 PM. The final exam opens at 1:30 PM.

## COURSE POLICIES & OTHER DISCLOSURES

You are expected to attend each scheduled course period for the entire assigned time. However, the time you spend in class is only a portion of your expected course time commitment. For every hour you spend in class, it is expected that you will spend two hours outside of class in preparing for or critically examining the course material and content. This includes: reading the chapters, working on assignments, coordinating and working with group members, performing library research, and preparing for quizzes and exams. This expectation of time is the standard for all 3-credit courses at the University of Central Oklahoma. Please consider this time commitment when budgeting your time across the semester.

Late assignments are penalized according to the mercy (or lack thereof) of the instructor. Generally, I penalize a late assignment some measure of percentage points up to half the total possible grade for the assignment depending on how late a violator turned in the assignment. Deadline extensions will only be granted under special circumstances and only if requested prior to the deadline. For example, if you are observing a religious holiday that is in conflict with an assignment or exam deadline, it is your responsibility to notify the instructor prior to the assignment or exam deadline of any difficulty completing the assignment or exam on time, due to your religious observance.

Plagiarism: I abhor those who cheat and rip off the intellectual property and work product of others. Cheaters and plagiarists will be dealt with swiftly in accordance with the University of Central Oklahoma Academic Honor Code. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to, the use, by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work, ideas, or thoughts of another person without full and clear acknowledgement. When in doubt, use a citation.

Electronic device use in class should be limited to note taking unless otherwise given permission by the course instructor. All mobile and / or electronic devices should be turned off prior to entering the classroom. Any inadvertent beep, jingle, ring or texting, instant messaging, emailing, or other unauthorized use of a mobile and / or electronic device in class will result in an immediate pop quiz for the entire class. Grading and course credit of the pop quiz will at the discretion of the instructor.

Institution Nondiscrimination Policy: Our institution does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, religion, sex, sexual orientation or disability, and I concur fully with that commitment and expect my students to act in class in a manner that is consistent with tolerance, mutual respect, and the university nondiscrimination policy.

Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must make their request by contacting Disability Support Services at 405/974-2516 or, in person at the DSS office located in the Nigh University Center, Room 309.

Students experiencing an emotional or psychological issue that may affect course performance are encouraged to contact the Student Counseling Center, located in the Nigh University Center, Room 402 or, by phone at 405/972-2215.

Emergency Evacuation Procedures: A map of this floor is posted in the main hallway marking the evacuation route and the Designated Rescue Area. This is an area where emergency service personnel will go first to look for individuals who need assistance in exiting the building. Students who may need assistance should identify themselves to the teaching faculty.

Emails received by 11 AM, M-F will be returned by 5 PM of the date of receipt, under normal conditions. Weekend emails may or may not receive a response until the following Monday.

In class discussions will be conducted in a civil, respectful manner consistent with University policy. The course instructor will serve as moderator and will not tolerate disrespectful, demeaning, or otherwise instructor determined harmful

behavior exhibited by students. Such behavior may result in dismissal from class meetings, loss of participation grade, or sanction in accordance with University student conduct code. For further clarification on expectations for in class discussion demeanor, behavior, and expression, please refer to Debate and Dialogue addendum to this syllabus.

Note: Course requirements, readings, policies, or schedule may change given the exigencies of the semester. My responsibility is to keep you informed of any changes and I will do so, if warranted.

## COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Time	Topic/Activity
9-Mar	5:30 PM	Course Introduction
	6:30 PM	Break
	7:00 PM	Putin's Revenge Part I
	8:00 PM	Putin's Revenge Part II
	9:00 PM	Discussion
	9:30 PM	End Session I
	10-Mar	9:00 AM
9:30 AM		Break Out Groups
10:00 AM		Break Out Groups
11:00 AM		Break
11:15 AM		Break Out Groups
12:00 PM		Lunch
1:00 PM		Presentations on Selected Topic
2:00 PM		Presentations on Selected Topic
3:00 PM		Break
3:15 PM		Presentations on Selected Topic
4:00 PM		Presentations on Selected Topic
5:00 PM		End Session II
11-Mar		1:30 PM
	2:00 PM	
	3:00 PM	
	3:30 PM	
	4:30 PM	
	5:30 PM	Final Exam Due