

Guns Control Policy and Politics
Political Science 4910/5910 CRN 27603/27604
UCO Spring 2018
Professor Joe Tripodi
Tues & Thr 11am - 12:15pm
Room: LAR-120

Getting Started: Please ensure at first opportunity you have our text book and have logged in to our class web page on D2L (Desire to Learn). If you experience issues logging in, please contact IT support at (405) 974-2255 or support@uco.edu

Contact Info: Always feel free to contact me via D2L email at Jtripodi1@d2lmail.uco.edu
You may also call on weekdays at (405) 974-5353.

- Office Hours: Tuesday and Thursday (walk-in) from 9:20am – 10:50am, and 2:40pm - 4pm. Monday and Wednesday only by appointment.
- Office Location: The Political Science Department is located on the first floor, NE corner, of the Liberal Arts Bldg. My office is in the Political Science Office, room 102A.
 - Always feel free to speak with me before and after our class

Rule of Law in our Class. Yes, democracies have rule of law, and our class is governed by rules. The intent of these rules is to maximize learning/participation, and to minimize disruption

- Arrive to class on time. Class starts when I begin to take attendance or anytime I begin to lecture, whichever is sooner. If you arrive to class after we've started, and without a reasonable explanation for being late, you'll be marked absent.
- Come to class prepared. Each "academic detachment" will result in 10-points deducted from your final grade.
- Cease all chatter and/or side conversations when class starts, and ensure that your cellphones are off. If I have to ask you more than once (throughout the entire semester) to stop the chatter and/or turn off your cellphone, I'll reduce your final grade by 10-points for each disruption.
- Sleeping (eyes closed or laying your head on your desk). It's disrespectful and disruptive to class. I will give you one (1) warning before I ask you to leave class, mark you absent, and deduct 10- points from your final grade.
- I invite your opinion, and those of your classmates. I welcome the class to have counter viewpoints and discourse, but will not tolerate students verbally attacking a fellow student's intelligence or views. Raise your hand to ask a question or make a comment.

- If in my judgment you're rude and/or disruptive to the class environment, I will give you one warning, and if that method does not suffice, I will ask that you leave class, request campus security to escort you out, and I reserve the right to have you submitted for UCO disciplinary proceedings.
- **No cell phones used while in class. Cell Phones:** All cell phones shall be off or in silent mode. **NO RINGING** cell phones in class. **NO TEXT MESSAGING** in class. **Laptops: NOT ALLOWED! No recording of lectures.**

Course Description: The phrase “gun politics” refers to the views of different people within a particular country as to what degree of control (increased gun rights vs. greater gun control) should be enforced upon the private ownership and use of firearms, to what extent firearms ownership influences crime, and how best to achieve a balance of power between the individual and the state. In America today there are some 300+ million firearms in private hands, amounting to one weapon for every American. Two in five American homes house guns. On the one hand, most gun owners are law-abiding citizens who believe they have a constitutional right to bear arms. On the other, a great many people believe gun control to be our best chance at reducing violent crime.

This course will examine our nation’s historical gun culture and address the role that firearms play in American society. We will analyze the roles that laws and regulations, law enforcement, special interest groups, politics and the media play in shaping public policy and ultimately how we balance the competing interests of reducing firearms-related violent crime and protecting the constitutional right to keep and bear arms.

This course will examine gun control through historical, legal, and sociological lenses. Upon completion of the course students will have a better understanding of how truly multifaceted and complex the issue is and, thus, why consensus is so difficult to achieve.

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of this course students shall have obtained an understanding of firearms laws and regulations and how these laws and regulations impact the availability and use of firearms; the legal firearms industry and commercial firearms supply chain and how and why firearms are diverted from lawful commerce for criminal purposes. Students will explore existing firearms policy and programs; examine the role of law enforcement agencies in reducing firearms-related violent crime; look at firearms-related violent crime trends and discuss how law enforcement agencies use data and other investigative and technical tools to respond to ever changing criminal behavior. Students will examine the history of firearms and the types of firearms in circulation today; discuss firearm technical issues in an effort to dispel misinformation that frequently appears in print and electronic media. Students will explore the founding father's original intent regarding the second amendment and examine recent Supreme Court decisions. We will discuss whether more guns contribute to more or less violent crime and examine existing firearms legislation, including legislation designed to protect the rights of gun owners. We will explore how politics, the media and special interest groups influence the government's ability and willingness to pass firearms legislation and enforce firearms laws and regulations. Students will learn that many of the

issues that occupy our attention are not new and have in fact been the subject of contentious debate throughout much of our history

Assigned Readings:

- I will post reading material on our class site in D2L. Students are responsible for the contents of all on-line lecture notes, outside materials, and posted class discussions. If absent, you're still responsible for reading the material.)

Transformative Learning Goals:

- Discipline Knowledge – by study and analysis of guns in the U.S.
- Leadership – by examining decisions made by the US and State Judicial Systems.
- Research, Scholarly and Creative Activities – by analyzing/discussing current and relevant topics in Gun Rights and Gun Control
- Service Learning and Civic Engagement Activities – by acquiring the knowledge to become an informed and active citizen in judicial reforms to protect gun rights while maximizing public safety. .

Course Format and Requirements: This will be a combination of lecture and discussion in a seminar format. The online materials are to prepare you for the lectures. You're responsible for completing the assigned readings prior to each class. Bring to class paper for taking notes, and any assigned readings posted on D2L. There will be three exams. Graduate students, in addition to the three exams, will turn in a research paper and give a class presentation

English Proficiency Requirement: For students whom English is a second language, you're expected and required to be proficient enough in English to; (1) understand the reading assignments, (2) understand and take notes from the lectures, and (3) in English, write college level essay answers. *** You must be able to read, analyze, and write in English.

Class Lectures: Take notes! If its' on the board or discussed in lectures, then you're responsible for knowing the material, and will most likely be tested on the material. Do your assigned readings to give you background knowledge and preparation for class. You will have a much better grasp of the material covered in class if you read the material prior to class, and much easier to take notes when you're prepared for class.

Exams: Three exams (essay, short answers, true/false, multiple choice, and matching) each worth 100-pts. NO MAKE-UPS! If your absent from class or come in late without a valid reason, you will be given a zero (0) for the assignment you missed. Medical reasons, you will need to have a signed certified letter (with address & phone number) from the attending physician that you could not attend class. If you

have a known UCO conflict (sports, school related function.....), you must notify me before your absence and make arrangements to complete your assignment.

Participation: You're responsible to read every assigned case, and be prepared in class that I may call on you to discuss a case. I reserve the right to add additional points to your final course grade for exceptional participation. Your participation points will be determined by the quality (not just quantity) and substantive value of your participation.

Non-Participation: I reserve the right to deduct points from your final grade if you're obviously not prepared for class.

Attendance: I will take attendance at the beginning of every class. If you're not present (unless a reasonable exception) before I start class discussion, please enter class without disturbance, but you'll be marked absent. If you're absent, you're responsible for material covered during your absences. No make-up exams from an unexcused absence. Six (6) unexcused absences will result in a full grade reduction. Eight (8) unexcused absences will result in your failure of the class. If you leave class early without coordinating with me, you'll be marked absent.

Being on time: Except for compelling emergencies, everyone is expected to attend class on time and remain in the classroom until the class ends. If you're coming to class late or leaving early becomes habitual (my call), I will begin deducting 10-points from your final grade for each class you're late or leave early, and you will not receive credit for attending class.

Missed Assignments: NO MAKE-UPS! If your absent from class or come in late without a valid reason, you will be given a zero (0) for the assignment you missed. Medical reasons, you will need to have a signed certified letter (with address & phone number) from the attending physician that you could not attend class. If you have a known UCO conflict

Methods of Evaluation: Maximum total of 300 points:

- Three exams, each maximum of 100 points (300 max pts)

Grading Scale: A=300-270 B=269-240 C=239-210 D=209-180 F=179-0

Graduate Students Methods of Evaluation: Maximum total of 500 points:

- Three exams, each maximum of 100 points (300 max pts)
- Paper and Presentation (200 max pts)

Grading Scale: A=500-450 B=449-400 C=399-350 D=349-300 F=299-0

(Final grades will be based on a strict application of the above grading scale.)

Questions about Grading. Questions concerning exam and paper grades should be discussed during my office hours or pursuant to a scheduled appointment—not during class.

Privacy Act: Because of recent court actions around the U.S., I will strictly adhere to the Privacy Act. As most students are adults, there should be no reason or occasion to discuss any information regarding a student with a parent, guardian, legal counsel, or another student unless UCO first receives, in writing from the student, a release that would allow the instructor to freely discuss information pertaining to the student with a designated person. A student can identify a friend or an acquaintance to be their spokesperson. This designation must also be in writing and signed by the student. No information will be given out over the phone regarding a student's grades or course progress regardless of who is calling.

ADA Statement Regarding Special Accommodations. The University of Central Oklahoma complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Students with disabilities who need special accommodations must contact Disability Support Services (DSS) in room 305 of the Nigh University Center or by telephone at (405) 974-2516. Students should also notify the instructor of special accommodation needs as soon as possible. Per Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 ("Title IX"), pregnant and parenting students may request adjustments by contacting the Title IX Coordinator, at (405) 974-3377 or TitleIX@uco.edu. The Title IX Office is located in the Lillard Administration Building, Room 114D.

Academic Integrity Statement

The Political Science Department of the University of Central Oklahoma is asking all students taking political science courses to read the following Academic Integrity Statement. Our purpose in doing so is to ensure that all our students are aware of what is improper academic behavior. As members of the academic community, students are expected to recognize and uphold standards of intellectual and academic integrity. The Political Science Department expects that its students will conduct themselves honestly. This means, above all, that students submit for credit work that is the product of their own efforts. Principles of academic integrity require that all dishonest work be rejected as a basis for academic credit, and that students refrain from any and all forms of dishonorable conduct in the course of their academic work.

The examples and definitions given below are intended to clarify the standards by which academic honesty and integrity is judged. The list is merely illustrative of some of the more common infractions. It is not intended to be exhaustive. Any question a student has about what constitutes inappropriate behavior should be directed towards their instructor. The rule of thumb to follow is: If in doubt, ASK!

Link for Student Information Sheet and Syllabus Attachment 2017-2018

<http://sites.uco.edu/academic-affairs/files/aa-forms/studentinfosheet.pdf>

Reading Responsibility and Class Schedule:

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| Week 1 (Jan 8th) | Historic of Gun Rights Video: “Wyatt Earp and Dodge City”, Second Amendment and Landmark Cases |
| Week 2 (Jan 15th) | Why do we have government. “America’s Gun Problem”, “The State of Gun Violence”, “Gun Control Debate”, |
| Week 3 (Jan 22nd) | “Gun Control”, “Hollywood on Guns”, “Proof Gun Control is BS” Policy of Gun Control |
| Week 4 (Jan 29th) | Criminological Consequences of Guns |
| Week 5 (Feb 5th) | Gun Politics. The NRA Video: “Gun Down: The Power Of The NRA” Gun Politics |
| Week 6 (Feb 12th) | Institutions and Gun Policy |
| Week 7 (Feb 19th) | Institutions and Gun Policy |
| Week 8 (Feb 26th) | Comparative Analysis Video: “Swiss Ownership of Guns”, |
| Week 9 (Mar 5th) | Castle Doctrine, Oklahoma Gun Laws Videos: “Trump on 2nd Amendment”, “Fight Over Guns” |
| Week 10 (Mar 12th) | Self-Defense to Shoot First |
| Week 11 (Mar 19th) | Mar 19th – 23rd Spring Break |
| Week 12 (Mar 26th) | Chicago and NYC |
| Week 13 (Apr 2nd) | The Gun Industry |
| Week 14 (Apr 9th) | Future of Guns |
| Week 15 (Apr 16th) | Reforms |
| Week 16 (Apr 23rd) | Graduate Student Presentations |
| Week 17 (Apr 30th) | Final Exam |

Prof. Tripodi reserves the right to change the schedule as necessary. Students should check online every day for any changes in the schedule.

(Prepared by Prof. Tripodi – 1/8/2018)