This course in United States politics focuses on the South, paying particular attention to partisan competition, the politics of race, redistricting, and voting rights.

Each of the three non-cumulative analytical exams, the research paper assignments, and class participation (in part, unscheduled quizzes on the assigned reading to reward those who do and understand the readings) constitutes roughly 20 percent of your course grade.

Ultimately your grade turns on my impression of how well you have done in this course. What impresses me? Think of this course as your job and approach it with professionalism. Take this course seriously and let me know that. How? Attend class; be prepared for class—read the assignments for understanding, be ready to ask and answer questions, take an informed role in discussions; arrive early to class; remain for the entire class; be attentive in class without distracting me or your classmates by cell phones, text messages, side conversations, bathroom trips or any other reason for coming-and-going, and so forth; take exams when scheduled and complete assignments when due; demonstrate your understanding on the exams, quizzes, and research paper assignments.

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After three unexcused absences I drop you from the course. An excused absence is almost exclusively restricted to religious reasons, certain university activities, documented medical conditions, or documented family emergencies. Absences for religious reasons or for university extracurricular activities necessitate communication with me in advance. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, see me in advance.

Each of you must meet with me for 15 minutes in the first two weeks of the semester. Sign up for an appointment time during the first day in class.

All readings should be on reserve in Fondren. The books ordered through the bookstore include Key, Southern Politics; Black and Black, The Rise of Southern Republicans; and Morgan, Governance by Decree: The Impact of the Voting Rights Act in Dallas. Also required but not listed below: you are expected to supplement the listed readings with media accounts of ongoing politics in the southern states. Understand that assigned readings listed here for specific pages in Black and Black include the endnotes (not listed here) associated with those pages.

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There may be changes in the readings and assignments below. This course requires use of Blackboard at http://cmsbb.systems.smu.edu/.