

TF: Sima Biondi

Contact: sbiondi@g.harvard.edu

Office hours: Thursdays 1-3 pm in Jenny's Cafe¹, or email me for an appointment.

Section website: https://simab.github.io/gov20_fall24.html

Assignments

Important deadlines to keep in mind

- October 8: Essay 1 (10%)
- October 17: Midterm (20%)
- November 12: Essay 2 (20%)
- Date TBD: Final exam (35%)

Weekly: Section participation (15%)

What we're here for

In section, we discuss that week's arguments from the readings and lecture. We aim to analyze arguments and evaluate their merit based on evidence. I hope that by the end of the semester, you will feel more comfortable:

1. thinking critically about complex and important ideas, and
2. writing persuasive arguments that marshal concrete evidence.

Section policies and expectations

Email policy

Emailing me (sbiondi [at] g.harvard.edu) is the best way to contact me. I promise to respond to your emails within (usually) 24 hours, except the day before an assignment is due. All emails should have a subject line that begins with "Gov20:" so I can promptly respond to your email.

Section attendance

Section attendance is mandatory. Sometimes life happens, so every student is permitted one unexcused absence—no questions asked. The following absence can be excused if: (1) the student notifies the TF before this absence and (2) the student provides a 1-page response paper about that week's readings via email. After the second excused absence, absences will hit the student's participation grade.

Readings

You are expected to read all assigned materials for each section every week. The week before, I will draw your attention to the following week's key readings. During section, I will highlight some salient points, but you remain responsible for all assigned readings.

¹Harvard Art Museums, Harvard University, 32 Quincy St, Cambridge, MA 02138, USA

Participation

Section participation is crucial for the learning process (and fun!). It constitutes 15% of your grade, and students are expected to come prepared to actively engage in section via questions, discussion, and debate. Students can participate by being a:

- *Text Reviewer*: What does the text say?
- *Analyst*: What do you think about what the text says?
- *Respondent*: What do you think about your classmate's analysis of the text?
- *Synthesizer*: Where is this discussion going? What are we missing?

We will talk more about this during our first section. If you have any questions about these roles or how to contribute to section discussion, please feel free to contact me or ask me during office hours.

Laptops

Laptops are not permitted in this section. If you take notes on your laptop during lecture, I highly recommend printing them prior to section for reference and annotation.

Papers

There are two short papers (6-8 pages) in the course. Due via [Canvas](#) on October 8 and November 12 at the beginning of lecture.

- While I cannot review drafts of papers, please come to my office hours to discuss writing strategies and paper ideas prior to the paper's due date.
- The papers are graded based on the strength of your argument and supporting evidence, **not** your ability to summarize. If you have any questions, reach out.
- For any source material (direct quotes, paraphrasing, etc.) include citations in the study of your choice.

Late papers: As a general rule, no extension means no excuse. A finished paper is better than a (possibly) perfect paper! If we have not agreed upon an extension before the deadline, per course policy you will be knocked down a grade level each day.

Late bank policy: Each student has a 24 hour late bank. What does this mean? Let's say the house WiFi is acting up and you can't turn in your paper on time. Don't panic!! For all papers, you have a (total) 24-hour grace period. This means that you could turn in the first paper 1 hour late and the next paper 3 hours late, but you cannot turn in the first paper 23 hours after the deadline and the next one 2 hours after the deadline.

Section suggestion box

Please feel free throughout the semester to give your anonymous input about topics, concepts, readings, or news stories you'd like to cover in section [here](#).