

## PLS 4350-B90 Political Corruption

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**Dates:** June 22, 2020 – July 31, 2020

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*“In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.”*

- James Madison, *Federalist* #51

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** In this course, we will examine the wide-ranging causes and consequences of political corruption. Political corruption, broadly defined as the misuse of public office for private gain, is a fundamental challenge of public administration. Corruption is an economic, political, and human rights problem. Corruption can undermine economic growth and lead to political instability. Furthermore, corruption is unavoidable in an increasingly bureaucratized and globalized world. We will learn about the different types of corruption, the historical origins of corruption, and the consequences of corruption. We will discuss how political theorists, policymakers, and scholars have tried to understand and prevent corruption. Finally, we will look at corruption at the highest levels in the U.S. Presidency focusing on the investigations of the Nixon, Clinton, and Trump Administrations.

**COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:** By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Define corruption
- Compare and contrast the level of corruption among countries
- Identify and explain the causes of corruption
- Assess the costs and consequences of corruption
- Evaluate policies aimed at reducing corruption

**COURSE DESIGN:** It is likely that many of you selected an online course because you need the flexibility of an online course for your schedule. This course is designed to give you maximum flexibility. However, it is also important that we move through the material synchronously. I expect this course to be comparable to an on-campus course, semester-long course. Therefore, the weekly reading load is about 2.5 times heavier than it would be during a conventional semester. You will have assignments spread out over the entire six-week period.

The course will be laid out with 5 units, 1 unit per week. The course material for the week will be posted on Monday morning and will be due on the following Wednesday before midnight, so you will have nine days to complete the assignments in each particular unit.

This also means that two units will overlap for a few days. So, you should consider your own schedule and plan accordingly. **You can neither knock out the entire course during the first week of the term nor can you blow off this course for five weeks and try to complete everything at the end.** You should reserve time in your schedule to work on this course on a weekly basis.

**ASSIGNMENTS:** You will have three types of assignments (Discussion Forums, Reading Quizzes, and Application Assignments) to complete for each unit and one final paper that gives you an opportunity to synthesize the course material. The assignments for each category are weighted equally.

Every student will complete the following assignments. The assignments are given most weeks and weighted evenly:

- **Discussion Forums (25%)** – Each week you will be asked to participate in a discussion forum about the week’s topic. Directions will be provided in the prompt. In order to get the most out of discussion, forum assignments are due earlier than the reading quizzes and application assignments.
- **Reading Quizzes (20%)** – A corresponding quiz (multiple choice and matching) will accompany the readings each week. Quizzes are open-notes and not time-limited, but you only get one attempt. A reading quiz will correspond with the majority of the readings. After the quizzes are due, I will post a grade that reflects your average score on each of the reading quizzes.
- **Application Assignments (30%)** – The application assignments involve short answer and essay questions related to the readings and lectures.

\*\*The final assessment is different for undergraduate and graduate students.

- **Movie or Documentary Review (25%) [Undergraduate only]** – You will have the opportunity to watch and respond to a movie or documentary that focuses on corruption. I will give you a list of permitted videos, but you are also welcome to ask for approval to review another film or document. A full description of the assignment is on Pilot.
- **Final Paper (25%) [Graduates only]** – undergraduates can ask for permission to complete this assignment instead of the movie/documentary review] – Graduate students will be expected to write a final paper that includes a literature review and theory section connecting political corruption to their research topic of interest.

**READINGS:** The readings for the course are listed each week. You should be able to click on the embedded links to either go to the library webpage (where you can download a PDF of the reading) or to the external website. Book chapters will be posted in the Readings folder on Pilot. Newspaper articles will be linked. I have also included PDFs on Pilot for articles that come from gated sources. You are expected to read the required readings and take the corresponding quizzes. I have included a number of recommended readings for those students interested in further resources – especially for graduate students that are working on a paper.

**LECTURES:** Lectures will be recorded and posted with the corresponding unit. They serve to both synthesize and reinforce the readings and to introduce some new concepts that are not directly covered in the reading. Students are expected to watch each video lecture before completing the application assignments. Closed-captioning is provided for each lecture.

**ABOUT YOUR INSTRUCTOR:** I am an associate professor in the Department of Political Science at Wright State University. I joined the department in the fall of 2015 after completing my Ph.D. at Penn State University. I grew up in Virginia and graduated from Virginia Tech with a B.A. in History and M.Ed. in Curriculum and Instruction. I have published research in two key areas: the adoption and development of marijuana policies in the states and how political issues diffuse into secondary education curricula and pedagogy.<sup>1</sup> As I continue to work on the development of marijuana policies, I am confronting more concerns about corruption and best practices to limit it.

<sup>1</sup> If you’re interested, you can access my publications on my [Google Scholar](#) page.

I live in Vandalia with my wife (Jillian), two-year-old son (Henry), 4 cats (Amelia, Orville, Poppy, Tilly) and a dog (June). I'm a big sports fan (NFL, NBA, CFB, and tennis), and I enjoy music and guitar. And since I've received one too many emails to "Ms./Mr./Dr. Lee," please note that my first name is "Lee" and last name is "Hannah". I prefer to be called Dr. Hannah or Professor Hannah.

**ACADEMIC HONESTY:** All of the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else's words or ideas without proper citation) will be tolerated. Please consult the Code of Student Conduct for questions about academic integrity.

**DISABILITY:** Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office of Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated. It is your responsibility to notify me during the first week of the semester if such accommodations are needed. If you have questions about this, contact the Office of Disability Services at 937-775-5680 or [disability\\_services@wright.edu](mailto:disability_services@wright.edu).

**MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:** Wright State University is committed to advancing the mental health and wellbeing of its students. We acknowledge that a variety of issues, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety and stress, substance abuse problems, and depression, directly impacts students' academic performance. If you or someone you know is feeling overwhelmed, depressed, and/or in need of support, services are available. For help, contact the Counseling and Wellness Services at Wright State located in Student Union 053: <https://www.wright.edu/student-affairs/health-and-wellness/counseling-and-wellness>

**COURSE SCHEDULE:** The following pages include information about each unit. There are five units in this course. Each unit will become available on Mondays at 6:00 AM. These units will be organized in modules on Pilot which will include the readings for the week, a discussion forum, a reading quiz, and an application assignment. When applicable, due dates are set up on Pilot. However, it is your responsibility to know the due dates for each week and to submit the work on time. **Late assignments will be penalized 5 points per day.** I have made every effort to make the expectations for each unit clear. The first post on a discussion forum is always due by Friday, the response post is due by the following Tuesday. The reading quiz and application assignments are due on Wednesdays, nine days after the unit was posted. Please contact me if you still have questions.

# Unit 1 – Concepts, Perceptions, and Definitions

Materials for Unit 1 will be available on **Monday, June 22**

## Video Lectures

Lecture 1: Defining Corruption

Lecture 2: Principal-agent Problems

## Required Readings

1. Woo, Jongseok and Eunjung Choi. (2018). "Political Corruption in Contemporary Politics." Ch. 1 (pp. 1-20) in *Political Corruption and Democratic Governance*. New York: Lexington Books. [PDF on Pilot] go back and delete questions from quiz
2. Svensson, Jakob. (2005). "Eight Questions about Corruption", *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 19(3): 19-42. [LINK]
3. Zagorsky, Jay L. (2016 April 4). "From Panama papers to Brazilian bribes: why corruption is so costly." *The Conversation*. [LINK]
4. Braun, Dietmar and David H. Guston. (2003). "Principal-agent theory and research policy: An introduction." *Science and Public Policy*, 30(5): 302-308. [LINK] Focus on pages 303-304.
5. Editorial Board. (2020 May 29). "How the Supreme Court Lets Cops Get Away with Murder." *The New York Times*. [LINK]

## Recommended Readings:

- Rose-Ackerman, Susan and Bonnie J. Palifka. (2016). "Bureaucratic Corruption." Ch. 2 in *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform* (2nd Ed., pp.51-92). New York: Cambridge University Press. [PDF on Pilot]
- Gardiner, John. 1993. "Defining Corruption." Ch. 3 (pp. 21-38) in Maurice Punch, Emile Kolthoff, Kees van der Vijver and Bram van Vlied, eds., *Coping with Corruption in a Borderless World: Proceedings of the Fifth International Anti-Corruption Conference*. Deventer and Boston: Kluwer Law and Taxation Publishers, 1993. [PDF on Pilot]
- Miller, Gary J. (2005). "The Political Evolution of Principal-Agent Models." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 8:203-225. [LINK]
- Henning, Peter J. (2018 February 16). "It's getting harder to prosecute politicians for corruption." *The Conversation* [LINK]

## Assignments

1. Discussion Forum – Post 1 due by Friday, June 26, Response due by Tuesday, June 30
2. Reading Quizzes – Answer questions on the weekly readings (Due Wednesday, July 1)
3. Application Activity – Complete short essays based on the readings and lectures (Due Wednesday, July 1)

**\* All assignments must be completed by 11:59 PM on the corresponding due dates.**

## Unit 2 – Measuring Corruption and Explaining Corruption

Materials for Unit 2 will be available on **Monday, June 29**

### Video Lecture

Lecture 3: Types of Corruption

### Podcast

“Corruption in the Time of Coronavirus.” *Good is in the Details*. [[LINK](#)]

### Required Readings

1. Glencorse, Blair. (2020 April 16). “Why Tackling Corruption is Crucial to the Global Coronavirus Response.” *World Politics Review*. [[LINK](#)]
2. Rotberg, Robert I. (2017). “The Nature of Corruption.” Ch. 1 in *The Corruption Cure* (pp. 16-49). Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. [PDF on Pilot]
3. Graycar, Adam. “Corruption: Classification and analysis.” *Policy and Society* 34.2 (2015): 87-96. [[LINK](#)]
4. Rotberg, Robert I. (2017). “Measuring and Assessing Corrupt Behavior.” Ch. 2 in *The Corruption Cure* (pp. 50-77). Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. [PDF on Pilot]
5. Rotberg, Robert I. (2017). “Nordic, Antipodean, and Other Exceptionalism: How Did Anticorruption Take Root?” Ch. 7 in *The Corruption Cure* (pp. 176-196). Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. [PDF on Pilot]

### Recommended Readings:

- Friedrich, Carl J. 2002. “Corruption. Concepts in Historical Perspective.” Ch. 1 in A.J. Heidenheimer & M. Johnston (Eds.), *Political Corruption: Concepts and Contexts* (3rd Ed., pp. 15-23). New Brunswick, N.J.: Transaction Publishers. [PDF on Pilot]
- Dincer, Oguzhan and Michael Johnston. (2015). “Measuring Illegal and Legal Corruption in American States: Some Results from the Edmond J. Safra Center for Ethics Corruption in America Survey.” Edmond J. Safra Working Papers, No. 58. [[LINK](#)]
- Hough, Dan. (2017 January 26). “There’s more to measuring corruption than Transparency International’s annual index, just released.” *The Washington Post*. [PDF on Pilot]

### Assignments

1. Discussion Forum – Post 1 due by Friday, July 3, Response due by Tuesday, July 7
2. Reading Quiz – Answer questions on the weekly readings (Due Wednesday, July 8)
3. Application Activity – Complete short essays based on the readings and lectures (Due Wednesday, July 8)

**\* All assignments must be completed by 11:59 PM on the corresponding due dates.**

## Unit 3 – Patterns of Corruption in the Developed and Developing World

Materials for Unit 3 will be available on **Monday, July 6**

### **Video Lecture**

Lecture 4: Patterns of Corruption

### **Required Readings**

1. Rotberg, Robert I. (2009). "Governance and Leadership in Africa: Measures, Methods, and Results." *Journal of International Affairs* 62(2): 113-126. [[LINK](#)]
2. Filkins, Dexter. (2009 January 2). "Afghan corruption: Everything for sale." *The New York Times*. [[LINK](#)]
3. Luehrmann, Laura. (2012). "Corruption in China: Red Capitalists on Parade." in Charles Funderburk (Ed.), *Political Corruption in a Comparative Perspective: Sources, Status and Prospects* (pp. 95-116), Burlington, VT: Ashgate Press. [PDF on Pilot]
4. Kantha, Pramod. (2012). "Corruption and Governance in South Asia." in Charles Funderburk (Ed.), *Political Corruption in a Comparative Perspective: Sources, Status and Prospects* (pp. 117-140), Burlington, VT: Ashgate Press. [PDF on Pilot]
5. O'Neil, Shannon. (2018 August 16). "Latin America Needs Better Judges." *Bloomberg*. [[LINK](#)]
6. Foer, Franklin. (2019 March). "Russian-Style Kleptocracy is Infiltrating America." *The Atlantic*. [[LINK](#)]
7. McFaul, Michael. (2018 October). "Is Putinism the Russian norm or an aberration?" *Current History* 117: 251-257. [PDF on Pilot]

### Recommended Readings:

- Whitlock, Craig. (2019 December 9). "The Afghanistan Papers: A Secret History of the War." *The Washington Post* [[LINK](#)] \*This is a multi-story series, files will be posted on Pilot.
- Baldwin, Kate. (2013). "Why vote with the chief? Political connections and public goods provision in Zambia." *American Journal of Political Science* 57(4): 794-809. [[LINK](#)]
- Rose-Ackerman, Susan and Bonnie J. Palifka. (2016). "Corruption in Postconflict State Building." Ch. 10 in *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform* (2nd Ed., pp. 316-340). New York: Cambridge University Press. [PDF on Pilot]

### **Assignments:**

1. Discussion Forum – Post 1 due by Friday, July 10, Response due by Tuesday, July 14
2. Reading Quiz – Answer questions on the weekly readings (Due Wednesday, July 15)
3. Application Activity – Complete short essays based on the readings and lectures (Due Wednesday, July 15)

**\* All assignments must be completed by 11:59 PM on the corresponding due dates.**

## Unit 4 – Globalization and the Consequences of Corruption

Materials for Unit 4 will be available on **Monday, July 13**

### Video Lectures

Lecture 5: Corruption and Terrorism

Lecture 6: Corruption and Transnational Criminal Organizations

### Required Readings

1. Story, Louise and Stephanie Saul. (2015 February 7). "Towers of Secrecy: Stream of Foreign Wealth Flows to Elite New York Real Estate." *The New York Times*. [[LINK](#)]
2. Teets, Jessica C. and Erica Chenoweth. (2009). "To Bribe or to Bomb: Do Corruption and Terrorism Go Together?" Ch. 7 in Robert I. Rotberg, (Ed.), *Corruption, Global Security, and World Order* (pp. 167-193), Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. [PDF on Pilot]
3. Greenhill, Kelly. (2009). "Kleptocratic Interdependence" in Robert I. Rotberg, (Ed.), *Corruption, Global Security, and World Order* (pp. 96-123), Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. [PDF on Pilot]
4. Packer, George. (April 2020). "How to Destroy a Government." *The Atlantic*. [PDF on Pilot]

### Recommended Readings:

- Heineman, Jr. Ben W. (2009). "The Role of the Multi-National Corporation in the Long War against Corruption." Ch. 14 in Robert I. Rotberg, (Ed.), *Corruption, Global Security, and World Order* (pp. 359-389), Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press. [PDF on Pilot]
- Zucman, Gabriel. "Taxing across borders: Tracking personal wealth and corporate profits." *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 28.4 (2014): 121-48. [[LINK](#)]

### Assignments:

1. Discussion Forum – Post 1 due by Friday, July 17, Response due by Tuesday, July 21
2. Reading Quiz – Answer questions on the weekly readings (Due Wednesday, July 22)
3. Application Activity – Complete short essays based on the readings and lectures (Due Wednesday, July 22)

**\* All assignments must be completed by 11:59 PM on the due dates.**

## Unit 5 – Anticorruption Efforts and Corruption at the Highest Levels

Materials for Unit 5 will be available on **Monday, July 20**

### Video Lectures

Lecture 7: Anticorruption Efforts

Lecture 8: Media and Scandals at the Highest Levels

### Podcast

“Trump’s Purge of the Watchdogs.” *The Daily* by *The New York Times*, May 19, 2020. [[LINK](#)]

### Required Readings

1. Capps, Kriston. (2018 May 30). “The Hidden Costs of Losing Your City’s Newspaper.” *Citylab*. [[LINK](#)].
2. Kennedy, Dan. (2018 June 6). “A New Study Measures the Cost of Corruption When the Local Newspaper Dies.” *WGBH News*. [[LINK](#)]
3. Rotberg, Robert I. (2017). “The Most Improved: Results.” Ch. 6 in *The Corruption Cure* (pp. 176-196). Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press. [PDF on Pilot]
4. Basinger, S. J., & Rottinghaus, B. (2012). “Skeletons in White House Closets: A Discussion of Modern Presidential Scandals.” *Political Science Quarterly*, 127(2), 213-239. [[LINK](#)]

### Recommended Readings:

- Rose-Ackerman, Susan and Bonnie J. Palifka. (2016). “The Role of the International Community.” Ch. 14 in *Corruption and Government: Causes, Consequences, and Reform* (2nd Ed., pp. 446-490). New York: Cambridge University Press. [PDF on Pilot]
- Gao, Pengjie, Chang Lee, and Dermot Murphy. (2019). “Financing Dies in the Darkness? The Impact of Newspaper closures on Public Finance.” *Journal of Financial Economics*. [PDF on Pilot]

### Assignments:

1. Discussion Forum – Post 1 due by Friday, July 24, Response due by Tuesday, July 28
2. Reading Quiz – Answer questions on the weekly readings (Due Wednesday, July 29)
3. Application Activity – Complete short essays based on the readings and lectures (Due Wednesday, July 29)
4. **Turn in final paper (Due Friday, July 31) – Grades are due by noon on Wednesday, August 5th.**

\* All assignments must be completed by 11:59 PM on the due dates.