



TEXAS A&M  
UNIVERSITY  
COMMERCE

## **PSCI 2302.08/09E**

### **Principles of United States and Texas Government**

Instructor: Rebecca Lynch

Office Location: Ferguson SS 131

Office Hours T/R 10-12, & 1-2 (also by appointment as needed)

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#### **Required Textbooks**

ISBN: 978-0393283648

*We the People: An Introduction to American Politics*, 11<sup>th</sup> Essentials Edition

By Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, and Tolbert.

ISBN: 978-150634629

*Lone Star Politics: Traditions and Transformations in Texas*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition

By: Collier, Galatas, and Harrelson-Stephens.

\*\*\*In addition to the above materials, you will be required to keep up with your MyLeo email to receive material. You will also have to access at least one major news source everyday in order to keep up with current events in order to fulfill the requirements of the course. Your professor reserves the right to assign additional readings as required.\*\*\*

#### **Course Description:**

This course is survey of the institutions and policies of the American and Texas regimes. You will learn about formal and informal institutions of the national and state government and how they play into the creation and implementation of public policy. This course will not teach you what to think about political institutions, but rather it will teach you how think about political institutions and policies for yourself. This course is meant to provide you with a working knowledge of how a government functions both at the federal and state level.

#### **Student Learning Objectives for this Course:**

1. Critical thinking: Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion.

2. Communication: Student communication will be clear, purposeful, and make appropriate use of evidence, data, and technology as applicable. In written, oral, and or visual communication, A&M-Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with evident message and organizational structure.
3. Personal responsibility: Students will be able to understand their role in their own education.
4. Social responsibility: Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues.

**Format:**

Each class session will consist of and involve lectures and discussion over the assigned readings and any other supplemental readings the instructor wishes to add. You will regularly be asked to contribute your opinions and answer questions about the readings.

**Grading Policy:**

The following will be how grades are broken down for this class based on a thousand point scale.

- |                      |                              |
|----------------------|------------------------------|
| Exam 1 – 100pts.     | Writing Assignment – 100pts. |
| Exam 2 – 100pts.     | Group Project – 200pts.      |
| Exam 3 – 100pts.     | Quizzes – 100pts.            |
| Final Exam – 200pts. |                              |

Attendance **and** Participation – 100pts.

Grading Scale

- |   |        |
|---|--------|
| A | 90-100 |
| B | 80-89  |
| C | 70-79  |
| D | 60-69  |
| F | 0-59   |

Participation/Attendance: Your attendance **AND** participation is an entire letter grade. It directly benefits you to attend class and to be an active participant in the discussions which we will be having. You should not arrive late to class. Most importantly do NOT be late for exams! Tardiness for a quiz or exam will result in not receiving credit for it. There will be no exceptions to this policy. Once a quiz or test has been handed out no one will be permitted to enter the classroom. This may have a negative effect on your final grade. As for sleeping in class, if you feel your time in my class is better spent sleeping that is fine. However, you will be marked absent for the day and this will of course have a negative impact on your grade. Finally, if you need to leave the class for any reason while it is in session, please make sure to take your belongings with you, as you will not be readmitted to class on that day. If you have to use the restroom you may do so before and after class, but not during. If you do have to leave class, you will, of course, be marked “absent” for that day. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Not signing in or responding to roll will result in you being marked absent. Should anyone feel the need to sign in for someone else please remember that this action can be considered an act of plagiarism and will be handled accordingly.

Attendance Grade Scale:

0-2 Absences no penalty

3-6 Absences – 10 points will be deducted from your participation and attendance grade for each day missed.

7+ - You will receive a **0** for your attendance and participation grade and may be dropped from the course.

Exams: There will be three exams given during the semester and a final. They comprise a significant portion of your grade so, it would be beneficial to come prepared for the exams. You will need to bring a **GREEN** scantron sheet, a pencil, and a blue or black ink pen to every exam. The exams will be administered during class and makeup examinations will be given at the instructor's discretion. As stated before, if you arrive late to an exam you will not be permitted to take the exam. You would do yourself a great service to arrive on time for each exam day. If you have an academic or athletic reason for missing an exam please get with me as soon as possible, so that we may make other arrangements.

Quizzes: Quizzes will be given in class and can be over the subject matter or current topics. Questions for the quizzes may come from previous lectures, assigned readings, and any breaking news (political, sports, or pop culture related). Quizzes will be given at random and cannot be made up if they are missed.

Group Project: There will be a group project that will be worth 200 pts of your final grade. Further details and instructions for this will be given later in the semester.

Extra Credit: Extra credit will be given at the instructor's discretion. I will NOT create extra credit for any student at any time because they "need to get" a certain grade. I do not "give" grades rather you EARN your grade.

Submitting Assignments & Late Assignments: Assignments without cover pages and/or no name will not be graded. I **DO NOT** accept late work. Each assignment is given with enough time to complete it. Assignments that have to be printed off and submitted in class are due at the beginning of each class session. Assignments that have to be submitted to the dropbox are **ALWAYS** due at 5pm the day they are due. No exceptions.

### **Course Requirements:**

#### Minimal Technical Skills Needed

Students will need to be familiar with University learning management system (eCollege), know how to use a personal computer, navigate the internet, and use basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word and Power Point.

#### Student Responsibilities

- Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class and engage in class discussions
- Complete all assignments
- Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class
- Be courteous to and respectful of your fellow students and instructors

### Course Calendar/Outline

Below are the reading assignments, assignment due dates, and exam schedule. In addition to the readings from the textbooks, students should also keep informed of the news and current events. This calendar is subject to change.

Dates	Topic	Reading/Assignments Due
August 28 <sup>th</sup>	Introductions	Syllabus/Contract
August 30 <sup>th</sup>	American Political Culture	We the People Ch. 1
September 4 <sup>th</sup>	Founding the Constitution	We the People Ch. 2
September 6 <sup>th</sup>	U.S. Congress	We the People Ch. 12
September 11 <sup>th</sup>	U.S. Congress	We the People Ch. 12
September 13 <sup>th</sup>	The Presidency	We the People Ch. 13
September 18 <sup>th</sup>	The Presidency	We the People Ch. 13
September 20 <sup>th</sup>	The Courts/Review	We the People Ch. 15
September 25 <sup>th</sup>	Exam One	
September 27 <sup>th</sup>	Texas Political Culture	Film
October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Texas Political Culture	Lone Star Politics Ch. 1
October 4 <sup>th</sup>	Texas Constitution	Lone Star Politics Ch. 2
October 9 <sup>th</sup>	Texas Legislature	Lone Star Politics Ch. 3
October 11 <sup>th</sup>	Leg. Organization and Processes	Lone Star Politics Ch. 4
October 16 <sup>th</sup>	Texas Executive	Lone Star Politics Ch. 5
October 18 <sup>th</sup>	Texas Executive	Lone Star Politics Ch. 6
October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Wrap up and Review	
October 25 <sup>th</sup>	Exam 2	
October 30 <sup>th</sup>	Texas Judicial	Lone Star Politics Ch. 7
November 1 <sup>st</sup>	Texas Judicial	Lone Star Politics Ch. 8
November 6 <sup>th</sup>	Political Parties	We the People Ch. 7
November 8 <sup>th</sup>	Texas Political Parties	Lone Star Politics Ch.
November 13 <sup>th</sup>	Local Government	Lone Star Politics Ch. 12
November 15 <sup>th</sup>	Local Government	Lone Star Politics Ch. 12
November 20 <sup>th</sup>	Domestic Public Policy & Bureaucratic State	We the People Ch. 11
November 22 <sup>nd</sup>	No Class	No Class
November 27 <sup>th</sup>	Domestic Public Policy & Bureaucratic State	We the People Ch. 11
November 29 <sup>th</sup>	Fiscal & Monetary Policy	We the People Ch. 13
December 4 <sup>th</sup>	Review/Wrap up	
December 6 <sup>th</sup>	Exam 3	
December 11 <sup>th</sup> OR 13 <sup>th</sup>	Finals Week	

## **Policies:**

**\*\*\*Electronics Policy:** Laptops are fantastic things—but their use is forbidden in this class during our time together. Do not, under any circumstances, engage in “social networking” during class. With regard to cellular telephones: one person in this class has permission to leave her phone on during class—and it is not you. It is entirely possible that you will survive for an hour and half without using your phone. Your instructor reserves the right to ask anyone causing a disruption during class to leave and this includes being disruptive via use of your phone. Repeat violations will result in the confiscation of the offending instrument. Texting during class is prohibited. Every time I see a phone out it will have a negative impact on your participation grade. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in your being removed from the course\*\*\*

**Academic Dishonesty:** Any student who is caught committing any kind of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” in this course and be reported to the University administration. This is nonnegotiable! “Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one’s own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), **signing the attendance sheet for a student who is absent (or asking another student to sign you in when you are absent)**, and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material” (Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12). If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.

**Students with Disabilities:** The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services Texas A&M University-Commerce Gee Library Room 132 Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 [StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu](mailto:StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu)

**Campus Carry:** Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

**Conduct:** “All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.”

**Nondiscrimination Notice:** Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

**\*\*\*Your instructor reserves the right to change or alter the syllabus as they see necessary and you will be informed of these changes.\*\*\***

Political Science 2302  
Principles of United States and Texas Government  
Fall 2018  
Instructor: Rebecca Lynch

Student Statement of Understanding:

I, \_\_\_\_\_, have read the syllabus and understand the guidelines and policies therein. I understand my obligation to adhere to these guidelines and policies in this class and that failure to do so could result in my being dropped from the course.

X \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_