TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
COMMERCE

COURSE SYLLABUS
SPRING 2019
PSCI 2301 04W
PRINCIPLES OF US AND TEXAS GOVERNMENT

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Online Course Time Zone: U.S. Central Time

COURSE INFORMATION

### Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required

Lowi, Theodore J., Benjamin Ginsberg, Kenneth A. Shepsle, and Stephen Ansolabehere. 2017.
American Government: Power and Purpose (14th Edition).
New York: W.W. Norton & Company (ISBN: 978-0-393-62421-2).

Textbook Cover Photograph

Collier, Ken, Steven Galatas, and Julie Harrelson-Stephens. 2018.
Lone Star Politics: Tradition and Transformation in Texas (5th Edition).
Thousand Oaks, CA: CQ Press (ISBN: 978-1-5063-4629-8).
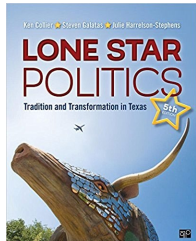
Textbook Cover Photograph

Textbook Readings. Given the vast amount of information available in the course, we will not have enough time to "cover" all of the readings in the assigned book—chapter by chapter. Consequently, this course will depend on you to **complete all assigned readings** and be prepared to discuss them in online class in a timely manner. Please note that all assigned readings are critically important for successfully completing exams and class activities.

Course Description

This course is a survey of the underlying ideas, principles, and participatory practices of constitutional government in the United States and Texas. Topics considered include constitutionalism, federalism, ideology, pluralism, political culture and socialization, political parties and interest groups, public opinion, republicanism, and voting and electoral politics.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course

1. Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, or solve problems when given a set of circumstances, data, texts, or art.

2. In written, oral, and/or visual communication, A&M-Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with an evident message and organizational structure.

3. Students will understand and practice academic honesty.

4. Students will demonstrate an understanding of societal and/or civic issues.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

All students are expected to comply with the following requirements.

1. Complete all course readings for each module of the course.
2. Regularly check the course site for announcement and updates.
3. Complete assigned readings.
4. Take each of the scheduled exams.
5. Participate fully in the class discussion.
6. Complete class activities.
7. Students will respect their fellow classmates and the instructor. This includes treating everyone with courtesy and respect in any and all correspondence for the course. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.
8. All students will maintain the highest level of personal responsibility and academic honesty. Academic dishonesty affects all individuals at the University and accordingly will not be tolerated. For this class, academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic work. In particular, passing off work as your own that was written by someone else, without proper citation or attribution, on either exams or discussion assignments will be considered an act of plagiarism. This holds true whether material comes from the textbook, another publication, an internet source, or another student. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course and may result in significant administrative penalties.
9. Students will comply with any and all D2L technical requirements in terms of training, computer access, & Internet access.
10. Failure to complete three of any discussion, assignment, or activity will be considered "excessive" absenteeism and the student will be administratively dropped from the class.

GRADING

This course occurs in a digital learning environment designed in module format. Each module runs around a week during which time you will be expected to read assigned material, participate in discussions, complete class activities, and take exams. Each module opens and closes on a certain date

and once a module closes it will not be opened again. Therefore you need to demonstrate a level of time management that allows you to meet deadlines as posted.

Exams: 240 Points (48% of total course grade)
Exam Format
Students will take three exams that feature 40 multiple choice questions in each exam. 50 minutes are allotted for exam.

Exam Times and Dates
Exams will be taken online and are scheduled on the dates listed below. The exam will begin at **11:30 PM on Saturday** and will close 72 hours later at **11:30 PM on Tuesday**.

Exam #1
> Opens 2/16
> Due 2/19
> Covers Lowi chs. 1, 2, 3, Collier ch. 2

Exam #2
> Opens 3/23
> Due 3/26
> Covers Lowi chs. 4, 5, 12, 13

Final Exam
> Opens 5/4
> Due 5/7
> Covers Lowi ch. 11, Collier chs. 9, 10, 11

Technical Issues: Students will take midterm exams via the course page. Students are responsible for testing the compatibility of their own computers and software prior to starting the exam and must be sure to have a high speed internet connection to eliminate the chance of technical problems. Exams are timed and can only be taken once. Once the exam has begun, the allotted time will begin counting down and students will not be able to "pause" or put the exam time on hold, even if they disconnect from the course site or exam. Students should save their answers frequently by clicking on the "Save" or "Save All Responses" button. Students should not click the "Submit Quiz" button until they have completed the exam as it will not be possible to re-enter the exam once the test has been submitted. Students who encounter technical problems as a result of failing to comply with these guidelines will not be given an opportunity to re-take or re-access an exam. Any technical problems should be immediately referred to the help desk.

Make Up Exams
If a student misses a midterm exam, that student will receive a grade of 0 for the exam. Make-up exams will only be granted at the discretion of the instructor. Any request for a make-up exam must be made in writing and include documentation explaining why the absence was legitimate. Such a request must be received within 3 calendar days of the missed exam date, unless the student is physically unable to submit such a request during that time period. Legitimate reasons may include illness severe enough to require professional treatment, death in the immediate family, participation in University activities, and/or legal obligations. Technical problems with accessing the course will not be considered a valid excuse for missing an exam unless it can be shown that the problem is the fault of the D2L platform.

Make-up exams will be exclusively essay format.

Class Discussion: 120 Points (24% of total course grade)
This is the second graded component of the course and will consist of six discussions. Topics for the discussion will be posted on **Wednesday each module at 9 AM**. Each discussion thread will close at **11:30 PM on Tuesday next week of each module**. Regardless of the reason, there will be no make-up opportunities for discussion assignments and students will not receive any credit for posts made after the deadline.

The instructor will create a discussion thread topic for each discussion to which students are expected to compile responses.

Students will be graded upon two criteria. First, students are expected to submit an original response to the topic posted, answering all parts of the topic (one original response requiring 200-300 words in length). Second, students are expected to respond to the posts of other students (at least two peer responses requiring at least 100 words each in length). Students should engage in conversation with their peer students in a thoughtful discussion about the topic as well as their individual responses to the topic. These posts should not be made all on the same day during the final hours of the discussion time line.

Students will receive a grade on each discussion assignment (Students who do not participate will receive a 0). Grades will be based both upon the quality of the content of a student's posts, as well as the student's engagement with other students by responding to posts. Posts that do not fully answer the questions or do not respond posted will not receive full credit. Students who wait until the end of the time frame may receive a grade penalty. **Discussion Posts cannot be made up. No late work accepted.**

o Post your discussion answers to respond to the discussion questions
      [Possible points (12 points x 6 Modules) = 72 points]
o Respond to classmates' postings
      [Possible points ((4 points x 2 responses) x 6 Modules) = 48 points]

Possible assigned points will be divided by the total number of discussion questions. For instance, if there are two discussion questions in the Module, 6 points will be assigned to original discussion for question #1 and remaining 6 points for questions #2. 4 points will be assigned to two responses for question #1 and remaining 4 points to two responses for question #2.

See the Guidelines/Rubric for Discussion Answer and Guidelines/Rubric for Responding Peer's Posting for the evaluation criteria (Will be placed in Doc Sharing under Course Document).

All content submitted for Discussion Assignments must be a student's original submission. Any material taken from another source, including the textbook, should include a proper citation. Material which is copied or pasted from any source will be considered plagiarism as discussed above in the Course Policies and Procedures section.

Class Activities: 112 points (22.4% of total course grade)
You will have an opportunity to do a variety of class activities which will include the best practices in American and Texas politics areas. More specific information will be provided later.

o Complete class activity [Possible points (16 points x 7 Modules) = 112 points]

Self-Assessment: 28 points (5.6% of total course grade)
You will assess your performance for each module.

o Complete self-assessment [Possible points (3.5 points x 8 Modules) = 28 points]

Summary of Assignments and Grading

Assignments	How Many	Point Value	Total Possible	Percent of Total
Exams	3	80	240 points	48%
Discussion	6	20	120 points	24%
Class Activities	7	16	112 points	22.4%
Self-Assessment	8	3.5	28 points	5.6%
Total			500 points	100%

Grading Scale

Points	Grade	Standard
450-500	A	Superior
400-449	B	Above Average
350-399	C	Average Performance
300-349	D	Below Average
299 and Below	F	Unsatisfactory

LATE WORK

No late work accepted and work cannot be made up. Technical difficulties of the student's equipment or internet provider are not excused. When such difficulties occur, students are expected to locate an alternative source for submitting assignments, e.g., neighbor, workplace, public library, etc. Technical difficulties caused by the University or D2L can be excused provided the student obtains documentation from technical support. Students should always have a back-up in mind for unexpected glitches in technology.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Browser Support

D2L is committed to performing key application testing when new browser versions are released. New and updated functionality is also tested against the latest version of supported browsers. However, due to the frequency of some browser releases, D2L cannot guarantee that each browser version will perform as expected. If you encounter any issues with any of the browser versions listed in the tables below, contact D2L Support, who will determine the best course of action for resolution. Reported issues are prioritized by supported browsers and then maintenance browsers.

Supported browsers are the latest or most recent browser versions that are tested against new versions of D2L products. Customers can report problems and receive support for issues. For an optimal experience, D2L recommends using supported browsers with D2L products.

Maintenance browsers are older browser versions that are not tested extensively against new versions of D2L products. Customers can still report problems and receive support for critical issues; however, D2L does not guarantee all issues will be addressed. A maintenance browser becomes officially unsupported after one year.

Note the following:
- Ensure that your browser has JavaScript and Cookies enabled.
- For desktop systems, you must have Adobe Flash Player 10.1 or greater.
- The Brightspace Support features are now optimized for production environments when using the Google Chrome browser, Apple Safari browser, Microsoft Edge browser, Microsoft Internet Explorer browser, and Mozilla Firefox browsers.

Desktop Support

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Microsoft® Edge	Latest	N/A
Microsoft® Internet Explorer®	N/A	11
Mozilla® Firefox®	Latest, ESR	N/A

Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)	Maintenance Browser Version(s)
Google® Chrome™	Latest	N/A
Apple® Safari®	Latest	N/A

Tablet and Mobile Support

Device	Operating System	Browser	Supported Browser Version(s)
Android™	Android 4.4+	Chrome	Latest
Apple	iOS®	Safari, Chrome	The current major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point** release of that major version) and the previous major version of iOS (the latest minor or **point** release of that major version). For example, as of June 7, 2017, D2Lsupports iOS 10.3.2 and iOS 9.3.5, but not iOS 10.2.1, 9.0.2, or any other version. Chrome: Latest version for the iOS browser.
Windows	Windows 10	Edge, Chrome, Firefox	Latest of all browsers, and Firefox ESR.

- You will need regular access to a computer with a broadband Internet connection. The minimum computer requirements are:
    - 512 MB of RAM, 1 GB or more preferred
    - Broadband connection required courses are heavily video intensive
    - Video display capable of high-color 16-bit display 1024 x 768 or higher resolution

- You must have a:
    - Sound card, which is usually integrated into your desktop or laptop computer
    - Speakers or headphones.
    - *For courses utilizing video-conferencing tools and/or an online proctoring solution, a webcam and microphone are required.

- Both versions of Java (32 bit and 64 bit) must be installed and up to date on your machine. At a minimum Java 7, update 51, is required to support the learning management system. The most current version of Java can be downloaded at: JAVA web site http://www.java.com/en/download/manual.jsp

- Current anti-virus software must be installed and kept up to date.

Running the browser check will ensure your internet browser is supported.
    Pop-ups are allowed.
    JavaScript is enabled.
    Cookies are enabled.

- You will need some additional free software (plug-ins) for enhanced web browsing. Ensure that you download the free versions of the following software:
    - Adobe Reader https://get.adobe.com/reader/
    - Adobe Flash Player *(version 17 or later)* https://get.adobe.com/flashplayer/
    - Adobe Shockwave Player   https://get.adobe.com/shockwave/
    - Apple Quick Time   http://www.apple.com/quicktime/download/

- At a minimum, you must have Microsoft Office 2013, 2010, 2007 or Open Office. Microsoft Office is the standard office productivity software utilized by faculty, students, and staff. Microsoft Word is the

standard word processing software, Microsoft Excel is the standard spreadsheet software, and Microsoft PowerPoint is the standard presentation software. Copying and pasting, along with attaching/uploading documents for assignment submission, will also be required. If you do not have Microsoft Office, you can check with the bookstore to see if they have any student copies.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Brightspace Support

Need Help?

Student Support
If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support
If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778 or click on the **Live Chat** or click on the words "click here" to submit an issue via email.

System Maintenance
Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

It is very important to go to this online course 4-5 times each week to:

1. Read new announcements
2. Check your university email
3. Review activities and assignments
4. Check the schedule of activities and assignments
5. Communicate as needed with your instructor and class members.

Submitting assignments
You are responsible for attaching the correct assignment to the correct submission folder. When you submit your assignment, you should always click on the submitted file(s) to make sure the assignment is there. You can tell if it is attached by clicking on the submitted file(s) and actually open and view the document. Submitting an incorrect document, a blank document, or no document is counted as failure to complete the assignment on time.

Each assignment or work should include your name in the content. Also make your computer file name, when adding your file(s) in the submission folder, using your last name and a specific assignment (i.e., Choi Activity1.docx).

Announcements
Announcements are posted often in the course. When you go to the course, you should first read any announcements that have been posted since you were last in the class.

Email Correspondence
Email from me is sent to your University email account. It is important to go to MyLeo mail regularly to check for messages.

If you need to contact me, email is the best way to reach me. Please send your message with your first and last name so I know who you are. Unless otherwise announced, I will do my best to respond within 48 hours except weekends.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Code of Student Conduct: All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. *Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.* Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, your immediate removal from the class, being immediately dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.

Student Conduct
All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook). Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html

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.

Campus Concealed 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.

ADA Statement

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

COURSE SCHEDULE

Module 1 (January 14 – January 22)
    1. Course Introduction

    Class Activity #1

Module 2 (January 23 – February 5)
    1. Principles of Politics (Lowi Ch. 1)
    2. Federalism (Lowi Ch. 3)

    Class Activity #2
    Discussion #1

Module 3 (February 6 – February 19)
    1. US Constitution (Lowi Ch. 2)
    2. Texas Constitution (Collier Ch. 2)

    Exam #1
    Class Activity #3
    Discussion #2

Module 4 (February 20 – March 5)
    1. Civil Liberties (Lowi Ch. 4)
    2. Civil Rights (Lowi Ch. 5)

    Class Activity #4
    Discussion #3

Module 5 (March 6 – March 26)
    1. Political Parties (Lowi Ch. 12)
    2. Groups and Interests (Lowi Ch. 13)

    Exam #2
    Class Activity #5
    Discussion #4

Module 6 (March 27 – April 9)
    1. Texas Political Parties (Collier Ch. 10)
    2. Texas Interest Groups (Collier Ch. 11)

    Class Activity #6
    Discussion #5

Module 7 (April 10 – April 23)
    1. Elections (Lowi Ch. 11)
    2. Texas Elections (Collier Ch. 9)

    Class Activity #7
    Discussion #6

Module 8 (April 24 – May 7)

      Final Exam

√ Many class activities, discussions, exams, and reflection papers are due at **11:30 PM on Tuesday**.

√ Please note that the instructor reserves the right to change any part of this syllabus as needed over the course of the semester. Any and all changes will be announced.