

Government 2305.03W  
Texas Government  
Course Syllabus: Fall 2019

**Instructor Information**

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Caldwell  
Office Hours: By Appointment  
University Email Address: [Daniel.Caldwell@tamuc.edu](mailto:Daniel.Caldwell@tamuc.edu)

**Course Information**

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

***American Government, A Brief Introduction, (15a) Lowi, Ginsbert, Shepsle, Ansolabehere - ISBN: 978-0393674934***

*Other readings:* Readings have been prepared and will be distributed. These are a blend of primary and secondary materials that complement lectures and provide the foundations for classroom discussions.

*Note:* It is imperative that you complete the assigned readings; the material contained therein will drive classroom discussion, a very crucial course requirement.

**Course Description**

Government 2305 is a broad interdisciplinary course in the development of the Institutions and Policies of the Federal Government and the State of Texas. In addition to developing critical thinking skills, this course is designed to give you an understanding of the interaction between circumstance and institutions by which the American experiment in self-government with justice occurs.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.
6. Analyze the election process.
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens 8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

## Instructional/ Methods/ Assessments

The reading assignments and class sessions are listed for each week. I expect you to complete the reading prior to class and be **PREPARED** to discuss or address specific issues raised in the readings. Written assignments will be submitted at the beginning of the class period to the instructor.

### Assignment Explanations

#### Reading Assignments:

The reading assignments and class sessions are listed for each day. I expect you to complete the readings prior to class and be **PREPARED** to discuss and address specific issues raised in the readings. Written assignments will be submitted to the instructor at the beginning of the class period. The material covered in the assigned readings can be on the exam even if the information not covered in class. **READ** the assigned readings.

#### Weekly Discussion:

Each student is required to participate in weekly discussions. You will be required to submit one original post and respond to two of your classmates. In order to respond you must first create your original post.

**Legislation Project** Part I: You will track two different pieces of legislation as they travel through the US Congress. You will prepare an informal presentation for the class on each. You will be the expert concerning this legislation and should be about to explain why the legislation is necessary, who sponsored it, has the legislation met resistance, and what is the expectation of the legislation being passed.

Part II: You will contact a governmental representative concerning the bills you have researched and explain your position on the topic. You may choose to write your personal representative or a sponsoring representative. You may also contact a NGO who would be interested in the legislation. You will submit a copy of your written work to the NGO or representative as part of your grade.

If you do not show up, you will not pass the class!

#### **Grading:**

Exam I	25%
Legislation Project	25%
Exam II	25%
Weekly Discussion	25%

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Totals	100%
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The grading scale used for this course is as follows:

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

**Academic Honesty:** Plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated. Plagiarism occurs when a student purposefully or unintentionally takes information directly from a source without proper citation. For example, forgetting to cite an author and page number with a quote is plagiarism, as is direct copying and pasting from a website. Plagiarism will result in an F for the course and notification to the Dean of Students. Plagiarism is often a result of improper citation and/or acknowledgement of sources; therefore, we will be going over plagiarism in class so you can avoid common pitfalls (and an F!). If a student needs additional assistance, please consult me during my office hours.

**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.

### **Accommodations**

**Students with Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal antidiscrimination 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  
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu**

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