

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
PSCI 2305
Spring 2020

Dr. Ozum Yesiltas
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Office Hours: T-R 11 am – 1 pm
W 4 pm – 6 pm
and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to study the underlying ideas, principles, and participatory practices of constitutional government in the United States. This course will introduce you to the formation of the federal constitution, and the challenges and opportunities granted by federalism and representative government in the United States. We will also analyze civil liberties and civil rights and the roles that public opinion and the media play in U.S. politics.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Paula D. McClain and Steven C. Tauber, *American Government in Black and White*, 4th edition, Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN: 978-0190928513. (3rd edition is acceptable)

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

This is a fully online class. You're required to follow the announcements and course requirements on MyLeo Online on a regular and timely basis. Study guides, lecture notes and PowerPoints can be found on MyLeo.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Discussions: Every week, on Sunday, I will post a discussion question on MyLeo relevant to that week's reading material. You are responsible to post an answer until the following Sunday, 11.55 pm, every week. Discussion posts must be about 200-300 words, concise, and to the point. You must be making the relevant connections to class material within your post. You won't get full credit if you use fillers (irrelevant words or statements) in your posts just to reach the required word count.

Exams: You will have 5 exams. Each exam will be composed of 30 multiple-choice questions. You will be able to take the exams through MyLeo online. Exams will be timed and must be completed at one sitting. Exams won't be cumulative. Study guides will be provided. Exam dates can be found on the course schedule.

Research Paper: This assignment should not be left to last few weeks of classes. To complete the assignment, you need to identify an American foreign or domestic policy problem/issue and analyze it from the perspective of Democratic and Republican principles. A detailed grading rubric and guidelines for this assignment can be found on MyLeo, Doc Sharing section.

Research papers are expected to 5-7 pages in length. Students must send a one-page research proposal to the professor by the deadline, **March 1, 11.55 pm**, to get feedback on their topic. Final papers are due **May 5, 11.55 pm on MyLeo**.

GRADING

Your final course grade will be determined by your performance on the following components:

Course Requirements	Weight
Weekly Discussions	20%
Exams	60% (12% each)
Research Paper	20%
Total	100%

GRADE SCALE

90-100 = A
80-90 = B
70-80 = C
60-70 = D
Below 60 =F

MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-ups are allowed only under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. However, you must request it prior to the deadline and present documentary proof. Post-deadline make-up requests will not be granted under any circumstances. If you submit your assignments late without an excuse, I will cut off 5 points for each day after the deadline up to 3 days.

CIVILITY AND RESPECT

All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. I expect everyone to be respectful of each other's perspectives and opinions during class discussions. Any behavior that disrupts the class or impedes other student's ability to fully engage with the course will not be tolerated.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Each student is required to be responsible for purposefully pursuing and honestly submitting research and work that is original and is the sole work of the individual. 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. If you are unclear about the ethics of an academic action, please consult me during my office hours.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

A&M-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 discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

The American 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 [\(903 886-5150\)](tel:9038865150) or [\(903\) 886-5835](tel:9038865835) Fax [\(903\) 468-8148](tel:9034688148) StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

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-0Commerce Rule 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to <http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsState-ments/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02R1.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](tel:903-886-5868) or 9-1-1.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 January 13-19

American Government and Politics in a Racially Divided World McLain & Tauber Ch 1

Week 2 January 20-26

The Constitution McLain & Tauber Ch 2

Week 3 January 27-February 2

Federalism McLain & Tauber Ch 3

Exam 1

Week 4 February 3-9

Civil Liberties McLain & Tauber Ch 4

Civil Rights McLain & Tauber Ch 5

Week 5 February 10-16

Congress McLain & Tauber Ch 6

Week 6 February 17-23

The Presidency McLain & Tauber Ch 7

Exam 2

Week 7 February 24-March 1

The Bureaucracy McLain & Tauber Ch 8

Week 8 March 2-8

The Judiciary McLain & Tauber Ch 9

Week 9 March 9-15

Spring Break

Week 10 March 16-22

Public Opinion McLain & Tauber Ch 10

Media McLain & Tauber Ch 11

Exam 3

Week 11 March 23-29

Social Movements McLain & Tauber Ch 12

Week 12 March 30-April 5

Interest Groups McLain & Tauber Ch 13

Week 13 April 6-12

Political Parties McLain & Tauber Ch 14

Exam 4

Week 14 April 13-19

Voting and Elections McLain & Tauber Ch 15

Week 15 April 20-26

The Making of Domestic and Foreign Policy McLain & Tauber Ch 16

Week 16 April 27-May 3

Exam 5

Final Papers due May 5, 11.55 pm on MyLeo