

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
PSCI 2305
Fall 2020

Dr. Ozum Yesiltas
Ferguson Social Science Room: 147
Ozum.Yesiltas@tamuc.edu

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.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

This is a fully online class. You're required to follow the announcements and course requirements on D2L on a regular and timely basis. Study guides, lecture notes and PowerPoints can be found on D2L.

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*, 3rd or 4th edition, Oxford University Press, 2019. ISBN: 978-0190928513.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Discussions: Every week, on Sunday, I will post a discussion question on D2L 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 250-300 words, concise, and to the point. You must make relevant connections to class material within your post. You won't get full credit if you use fillers (irrelevant 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 online through D2L. Exams won't be cumulative, they will be timed and must be completed at one sitting. 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 guidelines and grading rubric for this assignment can be found on D2L, Doc Sharing section.

Research papers are expected to be 5-7 pages in length. Students must send a one-page research proposal to the professor by the deadline, **October 18, 11.55 pm**, to get feedback on their topic. Final papers are due **December 15, 11.55 pm**.

GRADING

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

Course Requirements	Weight
Weekly Discussions	20%
Exams	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 under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. Please request your make-up prior to the deadline. Documentary proof for your request might be required based on the circumstances. Post-deadline submission of assignments without an excuse will lead to loss of points.

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 via e-mail.

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

TAMUC'S PANDEMIC RESPONSE

A&M-Commerce requires the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories. Exceptions may be made by faculty where warranted. Faculty have management over their classrooms. Students not using face-coverings can be required to leave

class. Repetitive refusal to comply can be reported to the Office of Students' Rights and Responsibilities as a violation of the student Code of Conduct.

Students should not attend class when ill or after exposure to anyone with a communicable illness. Communicate such instances directly with your instructor. Faculty will work to support the student getting access to missed content or completing missed assignments.

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 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. 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.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1 August 24-30

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

Week 2 August 31-September 6

The Constitution McLain & Tauber Ch 2

Week 3 September 7-13

Federalism McLain & Tauber Ch 3

Exam 1

Week 4 September 14-20

Civil Liberties McLain & Tauber Ch 4

Civil Rights McLain & Tauber Ch 5

Week 5 September 21-27

Congress McLain & Tauber Ch 6

Week 6 September 28-October 4

The Presidency McLain & Tauber Ch 7

Exam 2

Week 7 October 5-11

The Bureaucracy McLain & Tauber Ch 8

Week 8 October 12-18

The Judiciary McLain & Tauber Ch 9

Week 9 October 19-25

Public Opinion McLain & Tauber Ch 10

Media McLain & Tauber Ch 11

Exam 3

Week 10 October 26-November 1

Social Movements McLain & Tauber Ch 12

Week 11 November 2-8

Interest Groups McLain & Tauber Ch 13

Week 12 November 9-15

Political Parties McLain & Tauber Ch 14

Exam 4

Week 13 November 16-22

Voting and Elections McLain & Tauber Ch 15

Week 14 November 23-29

Thanksgiving Break

Week 15 November 30-December 6

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

Week 16 December 7-13

Exam 5

Final Research Paper due December 15, 11.55 pm