



Political Science 2301.01W: Principles of United States and  
Texas Government  
Fall 2020

Instructor: Rebecca Lynch  
Office Location: Ferguson SS 135  
Office Hours: Virtual Office Hours M-R 8-9pm  
Virtual Meetings via Zoom available by appt.  
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Preferred Form of Communication: Email  
Communication Response Time: 24 Hours **excluding weekends**

**COURSE INFORMATION**

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required:

ISBN: 978-0393639988

*We the People: An Introduction to American Politics*, 11<sup>th</sup> Essentials Edition By Ginsberg, Lowi, Weir, and Tolbert.

ISBN: 978-1-5063-4629-8

*Lone Star Politics: Traditions and Transformations in Texas*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition By: Collier, Galatas, and Harrelson-Stephens.

**Course Description:** A survey of the underlying ideas, principles, and participatory practices of constitutional government in the United States and Texas. Topics considered include civil liberties, and civil rights, constitutionalism, federalism, ideology, pluralism, political culture, and socialization, political parties, interest groups, public opinion, republicanism, voting and the electoral process, and global forces that continue to shape our understanding of the relationship between the people and the government. Please note that you will not be taught what to think about political issues in this course, rather you will be provided with the knowledge to determine how to think about political issues for yourself. This course is meant to provide you with working knowledge of how a government functions both at the federal and state levels in the United States and Texas.

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to explain the political institutions and policy development and implementation of the government of the United States.

2. Understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to explain the political institutions and state policy development and implementation of the state of Texas.
3. Students will be able to analyze, evaluate, or solve problems when given a set of circumstances, data, texts, or art.. Core Objective: Critical Thinking
4. 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. Core Objective: Communication
5. Students will understand and practice academic honesty. Core Objective: Personal Responsibility
6. Students will demonstrate an understanding of societal and/or civic issues. Core Objective: Social Responsibility

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS Minimal Technical Skills Needed**

Students will need to be familiar with the University learning management system (D2L/Brightspace), know how to use a personal computer, navigate the internet, and use basic word processing software such as Microsoft Word and Power Point.

### **Instructional Methods**

Each week 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.

### **Student Responsibilities or Tips for Success in the Course**

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

### **University 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.

## GRADING

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale based on a 1000 total points.

**A = 90%-100%**

**B = 80%-89%**

**C = 70%-79%**

**D = 60%-69%**

**F = 59% or Below**

The following will be how grades are broken down for this class

Exam 1 – 100pts.

Exam 2 – 100pts.

Exam 3 – 100pts.

Quizzes – 250pts. (20pts./quiz with the exception of the syllabus quiz at 10pts.)

Final Exam – 150pts.

Discussion Board Posts – 300pts.(25pts/week)

### Assessments

**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.**

**Participation:** With this being an online course, you will need to login to D2L and access this course regularly throughout the week. There will be discussion board posts weekly and assignments throughout the semester that you will be required to complete on our online platform. Not logging in and keeping up with due dates and weekly readings and assignments will have a detrimental effect on your grade.

**Exams:** There will be three exams given during the semester in addition to a final exam to be administered during finals week. They comprise a significant portion of your grade, so it would be beneficial to be prepared for your exams. **Exams will open Monday at 8:00 am and close Friday of the same week at 11:00 pm.** Since there is a multi-day window for exams, makeup exams will not be given. If you have an athletic or academic reason as to why you are not able to take the exam during the window it is open, you must email me IMMEDIATELY so that other arrangements can be made. This means emailing me **BEFORE** the exam opens not after the fact. There will be absolutely no exceptions to this policy.

**Quizzes:** Quizzes will be given weekly and can be over the subject matter or **current topics/events**. Questions for the quizzes will come from the week's lectures, assigned readings and any breaking news (political, sports, or pop culture related). Quizzes will be given every

week during the semester. Quizzes cannot be made up if they are missed. Quizzes will open on **Monday at 8:00 am and close Friday at 11:00 pm each week.**

**\*\*\*\*Week one will have TWO quizzes. Your first quiz (Syllabus Quiz) will be over the syllabus and only worth ten points as opposed to twenty. Your second quiz that first week will be worth the normal twenty points.\*\*\*\***

***Discussion Board Posts:*** Like with a face to face class where students would engage with one another, you will be expected to do so in this course as well. For weekly discussion posts students are expected to respond to the week's prompt with a MINIMUM of at least 350 words and you are also responsible for responding to at least TWO other classmates' responses with a minimum of at least 150 words per response. **Original discussion posts AND peer responses (2) are due FRIDAY of each week by 11 pm.** You should make three total posts each week. Discussion posts are worth 25 points each week with the original post being fifteen points and the two responses being worth five points each. In your discussion posts please include a word count. (Points for this assignment along with all others will lose points for not following directions.)

***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 or because they have chosen not to do the original assignments assigned. I do not "give" grades rather you EARN your grade. I cannot stress this enough: keep up with your assignments and your grade in the gradebook throughout the whole semester and not just at the end.

***Submitting Assignments & Late Assignments:*** Writing 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 submitted to the dropbox are ALWAYS due at 11:00 pm the day they are due. **Assignments submitted online after 11:00 pm will not be opened or graded.** You are responsible for attaching the correct assignment to the correct folder in D2L Brightspace. Once you submit your assignment you should always click on the document to guarantee that it has been submitted correctly, or no document is counted as failure to complete the assignment on time. Poor internet connection, dead laptop batteries, etc. are not valid reasons for an assignment not being completed.

## **TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS LMS**

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

[https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser\\_support.htm](https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm)

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

## **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](mailto:helpdesk@tamuc.edu).

## **COMMUNICATION AND 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. Other support options can be found here:  
<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

### **Interaction with Instructor Statement:**

Student emails will be responded to within 24 hours except for on weekends. Weekly assignments will regularly be graded and inputted into the grade book. Any student wishing to discuss a grade or assignment should email me or request to schedule a video conference and will receive a response within 24 hours.

## **COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES**

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

The syllabus is a guide. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

### **University Specific Procedures Student Conduct**

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the Student Guidebook.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx> Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

### **TAMUC Attendance**

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the Attendance webpage and Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01.

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

## **Academic Integrity**

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures

Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.10

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10GraduateStudentAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

## **Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement**

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 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835 Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: [studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu](mailto:studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu)

Website: Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

### **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.

### **Campus Concealed Carry Statement**

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 the Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf> 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 Calendar  
 \*\*\*Subject to Change\*\*\*

Date	Topic/Chapter Title	Assignments Due
Aug. 24th - 28th	American Political Culture <i>We the People</i> (WTP)	Read Syllabus Discussion Board Post (DBP) 1 and Quiz 1
Aug. 31st - Sept. 4th	The Founding and the Constitution (WTP)	DBP 2 and Quiz 2
Sept. 7th - 11th	Federalism (WTP)	DBP 3 and Quiz 3
Sept. 14th - 18th	Public Opinion (WTP)	DBP 4 and Quiz 4
Sept. 21st - 25th	Exam 1	Exam 1
Sept. 28th - Oct. 2nd	Texas Political Culture/Introduction Lone Star Politics (LSP)	DBP 5 Quiz 5
Oct. 5th - 9th	Texas Constitution (LSP)	DBP 6 Quiz 6
Oct. 12th - 16th	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (WTP)	DBP 7 Quiz 7
Oct. 19th - 23rd	Exam 2	Exam 2
Oct. 26th - 30th	Political Parties (WTP)	DBP 8 Quiz 8
Nov. 2nd - 6th	Groups and Interests (WTP)	DBP 9 Quiz 9
Nov. 9th - 13th	Political Participation and Voting (WTP)	DBP 10 Quiz 10
Nov. 16th - 20th	Campaigns and Elections (WTP)	DBP 11 Quiz 11
Nov. 23rd - 27th	Campaigns and Elections, Texas Style (LSP)	DBP 12 Quiz 12
Nov 30th - Dec.4th	Exam 3	Exam 3
Dec. 7th -11th	Finals Exam	Final Exam

***\*\*\*Your professor reserves the right to make changes to the syllabus at any point during the semester and will inform students of alterations.\*\*\****