



PSCI 2305.03W 23172  
United States Government  
Spring 2022  
January 12th - May 3rd

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit [www.tamuc.edu/counsel](http://www.tamuc.edu/counsel).

Instructor: Rebecca Lynch  
Office Location: Ferguson SS 135  
Office Hours: TBA Virtual Office Hours Only  
Virtual Meetings via Zoom available by appt.  
University Email Address: [Rebecca.lynch@tamuc.edu](mailto:Rebecca.lynch@tamuc.edu)  
Preferred Form of Communication: Email  
Communication Response Time: 36 Hours **excluding weekends**

### **COURSE INFORMATION**

Required Textbook: We The People 13th Ed. Essentials Edition (Physical or Ebook is acceptable and you will **not** need the access codes)  
ISBN: 978-0393538885

### **Course Description:**

This course is a survey of the institutions and policies of the American governing bodies. You will learn about formal and informal institutions of the national government and how they play into the creation and implementation of public policy. Topics considered include the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, bureaucracies, public policies (formulation and implementation), and global forces that continue to shape our understanding of the relationship between the people and 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.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Critical Thinking: Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion.
2. Communication: Student communication will be clear, purposeful, and make appropriate use of evidence, data and technology as applicable. In written, oral, and/or visual communication,

A&M-Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to the audience and occasion, with an evident message and organizational structure.

3. Personal Responsibility: Students will be able to understand their role in their own education.
4. Social Responsibility: Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues
5. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.
7. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.
9. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.
10. Analyze the election process.
11. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens
12. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

### **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 recorded lectures or videos and topic papers 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/writing assignments.

Complete all assignments

Be prepared to discuss the topics presented in class

Be courteous to and respectful of your fellow students and instructors

**GRADING: A = 90%-100% B = 80%-89% C = 70%-79% D = 60%-69% F = 59% or Below**

### **This following is the breakdown for this class Grading:**

Topic Papers: 175 points total (7 @ 25 points each)

Quizzes: 320 points total (16 @ 20 points each)

Exams: 300 points total (3 @ 100 points each)

Final Paper: 100 points total

Final Exam: 105 points total

### **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. 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 Sunday of the same week at 11:59 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 Sunday at 11:59 pm each week.**

**Topic Papers:** Topic papers will be assigned every other week instead of discussion board posts. There will be 7 topic papers assigned in total and they will each be worth 25 points. You will essentially have two weeks to complete them. Each topic paper will pertain to the topics we are covering in that two week time span. Topic papers should be 1-3 pages double spaced in Times New Roman with 12 pt. font. You should use APSA style formatting and have a minimum of two cited sources. Formatting will be a part of the grade so please make sure you are adhering to them so you do not lose points. Topic papers will be due in D2L on Sundays by 11:59 pm the week they are due.

**Final Paper:** Please read this carefully: Your final paper will be the averaged total of all of your topic papers you have written over the course of the semester. What this means; you should really make sure you are completing those properly, turning them in on time, and doing them well so that your final paper grade is essentially a "free" grade. This can either significantly help or hurt you, so please plan accordingly.

**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. 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 36 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 24-36 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/>

**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.**

## **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.

## **Withdrawals**

**Dropping the Class:** If you need to adjust your schedule by dropping this course, please contact your Academic Coach. Please be aware that dropping your course may impact your financial aid, veterans and military benefits, three-peat, 45-hour, and 30-hour rules. It is the student's responsibility to drop the course. If you fail to officially drop the class, a failing grade shall be assigned.

**Student Withdrawal:** A student wishing to withdraw from all courses before the end of a term for which he/she is registered must clear his or her record by filing an application for voluntary withdrawal. Please contact your Academic Coach. This action must be taken by the date stated in the Academic Calendar as the last day to drop a class or withdraw. Any student who withdraws from the university is subject to the conditions outlined in the section regarding Scholastic Probation or Suspension in the university catalog. It is the student's responsibility to withdraw from classes if he or she does not plan to attend during the semester in which he/she has enrolled. A student has one year from the first day of a semester to appeal a withdrawal refund. Courses withdrawn are counted as attempted hours and count towards the three-peat, 45-hour and 30-hour rules and financial aid and veterans and military benefits.

**Instructor Withdrawal:** Your instructor of record reserves the right to withdraw a student from his or her course based on inadequate performance and progress in the course materials, and or behavior.

**All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment.**

Course Calendar  
 \*\*\*Subject to Change\*\*\*

For the assigned readings please follow along according to the chapter titles. My copy of the book is slightly different from the essentials edition and the ebook and physical copies sometimes differ as well. Please email me if you have questions.

Date	Topic/Chapter Title	Assignments Due
Week 1 January 12th-16th	American Political Culture	Read the Syllabus and chapter Quiz 1 Topic Paper 1 assigned
Week 2 January 17th-23rd	The Founding and the Constitution	Assigned Chapter Quiz 2
Week 3 January 24th-30th	Federalism	Assigned Chapter Quiz 3 <b>Topic Paper 1 Due</b>
Week 4 January 31st - February 6th	The Presidency and Federal Bureaucracy	Assigned Chapters Quiz 4 Topic Paper 2 Assigned
Week 5 February 7th-13th	The Legislative	Assigned Chapter Quiz 5 <b>Topic Paper 2 Due</b>
Week 6 February 14th-20th	The Judicial Branch <b>Exam 1 (Week 1-5)</b>	Assigned Chapter Quiz 6 Topic Paper 3 Assigned <b>Exam 1</b>
Week 7 February 21st-27th	Civil Rights and Civil Liberties	Assigned Chapter(s) Quiz 7 <b>Topic Paper 3 Due</b>
Week 8 February 28th - March 6th	Public Opinion The Media	Assigned Chapters Quiz 8 Topic Paper 4 Assigned
Week 9 March 7th-13th	Political Participation	Assigned Chapter Quiz 9 <b>Topic Paper 4 Due</b>
March 14th-20th	Spring Break	Spring Break



Week 10 March 21st-27th	Campaigns and Elections <b>Exam 2</b> <b>(Week 6-9)</b>	Assigned Chapter Quiz 10 Topic Paper 5 Assigned
Week 11 March 28th - April 3rd	Political Parties	Assigned Chapter Quiz 11 <b>Topic Paper 5 Due</b>
Week 12 April 4th-10th	Interest Groups	Assigned Chapter Quiz 12 Topic Paper 6 Assigned
Week 13 April 11th- 17th	Economic Policy	Assigned Chapter Quiz 13 <b>Topic Paper 6 Due</b>
Week 14 April 18th-24th	Social Policy	Assigned Chapter Quiz 14 Topic Paper 7 Assigned
Week 15 April 25th - May 1st	Foreign Policy	Assigned Chapter Quiz 15 <b>Topic Paper 7 Due</b>
Week 16 May 2nd-3rd May 4th-8th (Study Days)	<b>Exam 3</b> <b>(Week 10-15)</b>	Exam 3 Quiz 16
May 9th-12th	<b>Cumulative Final Exam</b>	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.\*\*\*\***