



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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COMMERCE

US Federal Government  
PSCI-2305-95E  
Fall 2023 8/28/2023 – 12/15/2023

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Professor: Arthur Turner  
Email: arthur.turner@gpisd.org  
Meeting Days & Time: T/T  
Room Number: 106  
Credit Hours: 3  
Last day to drop: 11/2/2023

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**Course Description:** This course is a survey of United States Federal Government. It addresses the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties, and civil rights. (To ensure transferability, students should plan to take both Government 2305 and 2306 within the DCCCD.)

**Course Pre-requisites:** Eligibility for enrollment in Government courses in the Dallas County Community Colleges requires that Texas Success Initiative (TSI) minimum standards in reading and writing be met. This may include either passing the THEA exam or an equivalent (such as Accuplacer), having completed a Developmental Studies series in THEA-deficient subject areas (DREA 0093 and/or DWRI 0093), or having completed the equivalent English as a Second Language series (ESOL 0044).

**Course Materials/Supplies Needed:**

*Required*

None

*Supplemental*

Additional material will be recommended throughout the course either for reading, listening, or viewing.

*Syllabus and schedule subject to change*

**Core Objectives:**

Through the general education core curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world; develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse global world; and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning. As a part of DCCCD's Core Curriculum, students completing GOVT 2305 should advance the following Core Objectives:

1. *Critical Thinking skills*, to include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information
2. *Communication skills*, to include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
3. *Personal Responsibility*, to include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making
4. *Social Responsibility*, to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities

**Student Learning Outcomes:**

After successful completion of this course the student should be able to:

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

## Evaluation Procedures:

I intend to evaluate student performance by using a combination of online assessments, activities, written essays, and student participation.

The evaluation measurements will be weighted in the following way:

- Online assessments 25% The chapter assessments you take.
- Online assignments 25% Various assignments throughout the course.
- Written essays 30% There will be three essays.
- Participation 20% Percentage of work completed and class involvement.

An overall course percentage will be calculated at the end of the course. Letter grades will be awarded according to the following chart.

Total Percentage Achieved	Letter Grade Awarded
90-100	A
80-89	B
70-79	C
60-69	D
Less than 60	F

Your best strategy for success in this course is to do your best on each type of assignment.

[Essay assignments can be accessed on D2L Brightspace via the link "Write Essays Here."](#)

## Instructor's Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism Policy:

Throughout this course, you will pursue your studies with integrity and honesty; this means any words, thoughts, ideas, and data that are not your own should credit the source and author of the original work.

## Course Schedule

### **WEEK 1**

Politics, power, and resources  
Political and economic systems  
Immigration and citizenship  
Partisan division  
Roles and responsibilities of citizens

### **WEEK 2**

Split from England  
Competing narratives  
Constitutional compromises  
Separation of powers/checks and balances  
Ratification of the Constitution

### **WEEK 3**

Rights and liberties  
Bill of rights & incorporation  
Church & state  
Freedom of expression

### **WEEK 4**

Keep and bear arms  
Criminal defendants  
Right to privacy  
Rights and obligations

### **WEEK 5 (Essay 1 Due)**

Supreme Court criteria for discrimination  
African American equality  
Other racial and ethnic groups  
Women's rights  
Other groups facing discrimination  
Pluralism and civil rights

### **WEEK 6**

Federalism divides power  
Flexibility of the Constitution  
National government influences states  
Federalism and citizen participation

### **WEEK 7**

Local vs national lawmaking  
Checks and balances in the 3 branches  
Politics and congressional districts  
Parties in Congress  
Congressional policymaking  
People and Congress

### **WEEK 8**

President's job  
Modern presidency  
Overcoming Constitutional limitations  
The Executive Office  
Leadership style and image and presidential power  
Public opinion and the president

### **WEEK 9 (Essay 2 Due)**

How bureaucracy influences decision making  
Organization and roles of the federal bureaucracy  
Political appointees vs professional bureaucrats  
Federal agencies and the three branches of government  
Transparency vs efficiency in the bureaucracy

### **WEEK 10**

Law in a democratic society  
Establishing the judiciary  
Dual court system  
Rules and influences that shape the Supreme Court  
Citizens and the courts

### **WEEK 11**

Public opinion in a democracy  
Ideal democratic citizen  
Our political opinions  
Gauging public opinion  
Public opinion, citizens and government.

### **WEEK 12**

Parties in government policy  
Evolution of the party system  
Types of interest groups  
Lobbying and campaign activities  
Resources used by interest groups.  
Citizens as members of interest groups

### **WEEK 13 (Essay 3 Due)**

Who votes (and who doesn't)  
Factors affecting the vote/no vote decision  
Presidential campaign strategy  
Importance of elections

**WEEK 14**

How we get our news (the echo chamber)

Corporations and government influence on the news

Roles and responsibilities of journalists

How politicians shape narratives

Citizens and the media

**WEEK 15**

What is a policy

Policy programs to improve citizens' lives

**WEEK 16**

Fiscal and monetary policy

Foreign policy

Policymaking and public opinion

**Essay Due Dates**

Essay 1: October 1

Essay 2: October 29

Essay 3: November 26

**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)

Zoom Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-Zoom-system-requirements-Windows-macOS-Linux>

**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).

**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.

## **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>

## **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](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/documents/studentGuidebook.pdf>.

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 webpages below.

[Attendance.](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

## **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 Students Academic Integrity Policy and Form**

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

### **Graduate Students Academic Integrity Policy and Form**

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty](#)

<https://inside.tamuc.edu/aboutus/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/graduate/13.99.99.R0.10.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.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 Services  
Velma K. Waters Library- Room 162

**Phone (903) 886-5930**

Fax (903) 468-8148

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

**Website:** <https://www.tamuc.edu/student-disability-services/>

## **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.

## **A&M-Commerce Supports Students' Mental Health**

### **Counseling Center Services**

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)