

American Government Fall 2024

Instructor Information:

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Emails receive a response within 48 hours

Office Hours: By Appointment via Zoom, Google Hangout and Skype.

A survey of the principles, structures, processes, and functions of American Government with emphasis on the national government

Course Overview:

This course will provide students with an understanding of the basic principles, structures, processes, and functions of American Government. The goal of this course is to help each student arrive at a deeper, more comprehensive understanding of the various roles of American Government and the forces that shape its functions.

Textbooks & Readings:

“We The People: Essentials Thirteenth”

Authors: Benjamin Ginsberg, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, Caroline J. Tolbert, Andrea L. Campbell, Robert J. Spitzer

Publication Date: 2021

Publisher: W.W. Norton & Company

ISBN: 0393538885

Other readings as assigned on D2L

Research Representative Assignment

The representative assignment requires the student to complete a form to learn more about their state representative about an issue of their choice. This letter will help the student relate understanding of an issue in the world and communicate their place in it.

CLASSROOM RULES •

Unless we assign a day to use technology as part of the learning process, use of personal electronic devices (cell phones, laptops, ipads, ipods, smartwatches, etc.) in class at ANY TIME is STRICTLY forbidden. Use of electronic devices during class time will result in point deductions from your attendance grade. • Except for group activities, speaking with people around you in class is STRICTLY forbidden. • Coming to class late is NOT allowed. You will be considered absent if you arrive late more than 15 MINUTES after our class time. • If you disrupt class or violate any of the classroom rules, you may be directed to leave the classroom IMMEDIATELY. **FORMAT OF THE COURSE** The class will be a mix of lectures, debates, and group activities. An outline of the reading schedule is provided in this syllabus. Students are required to come to class prepared to discuss the assigned materials. In addition to the assigned readings, we may also discuss current political events since developments in U.S. politics occur daily

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. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance & In-Class Activities: Attendance will be taken regularly. If you're found absent more than 3 times without an excuse, your final grade will automatically drop by "5 points" (e.g., if you earned 82 out of 100 in the end of the semester, your final grade will drop to 77). In-class activities are part of your final grade and will be offered in class randomly throughout the semester. Sleeping in class, side-talk with your neighbors, coming to class late, use of personal electronic devices and any other class disruptions (refer back to classroom rules please) will result in significant deduction of points from your attendance/participation grade.

MAKE-UP POLICY Make-ups are allowed under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. You are required to request your make-up prior to the deadline. Documentary proof for your request might be required based on the circumstances. Post-deadline late extension requests will not be granted. 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 students' 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 with 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 or (903) 886- 5835 Fax (903) 468-8148 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-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.

AMERICAN GOVERNMENT COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Content
0	Introduction to POLS 2051
1	The Study of American Government
2	The Constitution
3	Federalism
4	Political Culture
5	Civil Liberties
6	Political Participation
MIDTERM	MIDTERM EXAM
8	Elections & Campaigns
9	The Presidency
10	Congress
11	The Judiciary
12	Policy Paper
13	Extra Credit Week
14	Final Exam Review
Final	FINAL EXAM

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Research Paper (25%)

Quizzes (10%)

Midterm Exam (30%)

Final Exam (35%)