TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
COMMERCE

COURSE SYLLABUS
WINTER MINI 2025
PSCI 2305 02W
UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Professor: Dr. Jangsup Choi
Office Location: Art Building 114
University Email Address: Jangsup.Choi@tamuc.edu

Online Course Time Zone: U.S. Central Time

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required
Free E-textbooks are required. Not necessary to purchase. Simply go to the website.

OpenStax American Government, *American Government 2e*. OpenStax CNX. 2021
https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e

Additional readings may be supplied on the web or in class.

Textbook Readings. Given the vast amount of information available in the course, we will not have enough time to "cover" all of the readings in the assigned book—chapter by chapter. Consequently, this course will depend on you to **complete all assigned readings** and be prepared to discuss them in online class in a timely manner. Please note that all assigned readings are critically important for successfully completing exams and class activities.

Course Description

This course is 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, institutions, ideology, pluralism, political culture and socialization, political parties and interest groups, public opinion, republicanism, and voting and electoral politics.

The specific purpose of this course is to provide you with a working knowledge of the important components and processes of the United States government. My goals for this course are twofold. First, I seek to provide you with a strong factual background on important political institutions and processes at both the national and state level of government. A basic working knowledge of government is important for instrumental reasons (your academic achievement) as well as for intrinsic reasons (being a good citizen). My second goal is to introduce you to the "scientific" side of political science. Notably, I want you to understand how political scientists seek to develop and test theories of the principles of American political system and political behavior and events. Your textbook does a wonderful job of developing a theoretical frame with which we can use to think about politics in a focused manner. Ultimately, I seek to provide you with the tools to use as both citizens and scholars.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Critical Thinking—Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion.

2. Communications—Student Communication will be clear, purposeful, and make appropriate use of evidence, data and technology as applicable.
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.

The following content oriented learning objectives will also be achieved:
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.

AI (CHATGPT) USE IN COURSE

The use of generative AI (Artificial intelligence) or ChatGPT is prohibited in this course, resulting in the lowest grades.

Texas A&M University-Commerce acknowledges that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that has the capacity to generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words, as determined by the instructor of the course.

Any use of such software must be documented. Any undocumented use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism).

Individual instructors may disallow entirely the use of such software for individual assignments or for the entire course. Students should be aware of such requirements and follow their instructors' guidelines. If no instructions are provided the student should assume that the use of such software is disallowed.

In any case, students are fully responsible for the content of any assignment they submit, regardless of whether they used an AI, in any way. This specifically includes cases in which the AI plagiarized another text or misrepresented sources.

13.99.99.R0.03 Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty
13.99.99.R0.10 Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

All students are expected to comply with the following requirements.

1. Complete all course readings for each module of the course.
2. Regularly check the course site for announcements and updates.
3. Complete assigned readings.
4. Take each of the scheduled exams.
5. Participate fully in the class discussion.
6. Complete class activities.
7. Students will respect their fellow classmates and the instructor. This includes treating everyone with courtesy and respect in any and all correspondence for the course. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.

8. All students will maintain the highest level of personal responsibility and academic honesty. Academic dishonesty affects all individuals at the University and accordingly will not be tolerated. For this class, academic dishonesty includes cheating, plagiarism, collusion and/or falsifying academic work. In particular, passing off work as your own that was written by someone else, without proper citation or attribution, on either exams or discussion assignments will be considered an act of plagiarism. This holds true whether material comes from the textbook, another publication, an internet source, or another student. Violations of academic integrity/honesty while carrying out academic assignments may, at the discretion of the instructor, receive a zero on the particular work in question, receive an "F" in the course and may result in significant administrative penalties.
9. Students will comply with any and all D2L technical requirements in terms of training, computer access, & Internet access.
10. Failure to complete three of any discussion, assignment, or activity will be considered "excessive" absenteeism and the student will be administratively dropped from the class.

GRADING

This course occurs in a digital learning environment designed in module format. Each module runs around a week during which time you will be expected to read assigned material, participate in discussions, complete class activities, and take exams. Each module opens and closes on a certain date and once a module closes it will not be opened again. Therefore you need to demonstrate a level of time management that allows you to meet deadlines as posted.

Exams: 300 Points (50% of total course grade)
Exam Format
Students will take three exams that feature 40 multiple choice questions in each exam. 50 minutes are allotted for exam.

Exam Times and Dates
Exams will be taken online and are scheduled on the dates listed below. The exam will begin at **11:30 PM** and will close 48 hours later at **11:30 PM**.

Exam #1
> Opens 12/24
> Due 12/26
> Covers chs. 1, 2, 3

Exam #2
> Opens 1/3
> Due 1/5
> Covers chs. 11, 12, 13, 4, 5

Final Exam
> Opens 1/8
> Due 1/10
> Covers chs. 7, 9

Technical Issues: Students will take midterm exams via the course page. Students are responsible for testing the compatibility of their own computers and software prior to starting the exam and must be sure to have a high speed internet connection to eliminate the chance of technical problems. Exams are timed and can only be taken once. Once the exam has begun, the allotted time will begin counting down and students will not be able to "pause" or put the exam time on hold, even if they disconnect from the course site or exam. Students should save their answers frequently by clicking on the "Save" or "Save All Responses" button. Students should not click the "Submit Quiz" button until they have completed the exam as it will not be possible to re-enter the exam once the test has been submitted. Students who encounter technical problems as a result of failing to comply with these guidelines will not be given an opportunity to re-take or re-access an exam. Any technical problems should be immediately referred to the help desk.

Make Up Exams

If a student misses a midterm exam, that student will receive a grade of 0 for the exam. Make-up exams will only be granted at the discretion of the instructor. Any request for a make-up exam must be made in writing and include documentation explaining why the absence was legitimate. Such a request must be received within 3 calendar days of the missed exam date, unless the student is physically unable to submit such a request during that time period. Legitimate reasons may include illness severe enough to require professional treatment, death in the immediate family, participation in University activities, and/or legal obligations. Technical problems with accessing the course will not be considered a valid excuse for missing an exam unless it can be shown that the problem is the fault of the D2L platform.

Make-up exams will be exclusively essay format.

Class Discussion: 160 Points (26.7% of total course grade)
This is the second graded component of the course and will consist of four discussions. Topics for the discussion will be posted on **starting date of each module at 9 AM**. Each discussion thread will close at **11:30 PM on closing date of each module**. Regardless of the reason, there will be no make-up opportunities for discussion assignments and students will not receive any credit for posts made after the deadline.

The instructor will create a discussion thread topic for each discussion to which students are expected to compile responses.

Students will be graded upon two criteria. First, students are expected to submit an original response to the topic posted, answering all parts of the topic (one original response requiring 200-300 words in length). Second, students are expected to respond to the posts of other students (at least two peer responses requiring at least 100 words each in length). Students should engage in conversation with their peer students in a thoughtful discussion about the topic as well as their individual responses to the topic. These posts should not be made all on the same day during the final hours of the discussion time line.

Students will receive a grade on each discussion assignment (Students who do not participate will receive a 0). Grades will be based both upon the quality of the content of a student's posts, as well as the student's engagement with other students by responding to posts. Posts that do not fully answer the questions or do not respond posted will not receive full credit. Students who wait until the end of the time frame may receive a grade penalty. **Discussion posts cannot be made up. No late work accepted.**

o Post your discussion answers to respond to the discussion questions
        [Possible points (30 points x 4 Modules) = 120 points]
o Respond to classmates' postings
        [Possible points ((5 points x 2 responses) x 4 Modules) = 40 points]

Possible assigned points will be divided by the total number of discussion questions. For instance, if there are two discussion questions in the Module, 15 points will be assigned to original discussion for question #1 and remaining 15 points for questions #2. 2.5 points will be assigned to two responses for question #1 and remaining 2.5 points to two responses for question #2.

See the Guidelines/Rubric for Discussion Answer and Guidelines/Rubric for Responding Peer's Posting for the evaluation criteria (Will be placed in Doc Sharing under Course Document).

All content submitted for Discussion Assignments must be a student's original submission. Any material taken from another source, including the textbook, should include a proper citation. Material which is copied or pasted from any source will be considered plagiarism as discussed above in the Course Policies and Procedures section.

Class Activities: 100 points (16.7% of total course grade)
You will have an opportunity to do a variety of class activities which will include the best practices in American and Texas politics areas. More specific information will be provided later.

o Complete class activity [Possible points (20 points x 5 Modules) = 100 points]

Self-Assessment: 40 points (6.6% of total course grade)
You will assess your performance for each module.

o Complete self-assessment [Possible points (6.6 points x 6 Modules) = 40 points]

Summary of Assignments and Grading

Assignments	How Many	Point Value	Total Possible	Percent of Total
Exams	3	100	300 points	50%
Discussion	4	40	160 points	26.7%
Class Activities	5	20	100 points	16.7%
Self-Assessment	6	6.6	40 points	6.6%
Total			600 points	100%

Grading Scale

Points	Grade	Standard
540-600	A	Superior
480-539	B	Above Average
420-479	C	Average Performance
360-419	D	Below Average
359 and Below	F	Unsatisfactory

LATE WORK

No late work accepted and work cannot be made up. Technical difficulties of the student's equipment or internet provider are not excused. When such difficulties occur, students are expected to locate an alternative source for submitting assignments, e.g., neighbor, workplace, public library, etc. Technical difficulties caused by the University or D2L can be excused provided the student obtains documentation from technical support. Students should always have a back-up in mind for unexpected glitches in technology.

However, if you cannot submit your work on time due to the pandemic, contact the instructor as soon as you can. The acceptance of late work is at the discretion of the instructor and a student must include verifiable justification.

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

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.

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

Student 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

System Maintenance
Please note that on the 4th Sunday of each month there will be System Maintenance which means the system will not be available 12 pm-6 am CST.

It is very important to go to this online course 4-5 times each week to:

1. Read new announcements
2. Check your university email
3. Review activities and assignments
4. Check the schedule of activities and assignments
5. Communicate as needed with your instructor and class members.

Submitting Assignments
You are responsible for attaching the correct assignment to the correct submission folder. When you submit your assignment, you should always click on the submitted file(s) to make sure the assignment is there. You can tell if it is attached by clicking on the submitted file(s) and actually open and view the document. Submitting an incorrect document, a blank document, or no document is counted as failure to complete the assignment on time.

Each assignment or work should be done in MS-Word, including your name in the content. Also make your computer file name, when adding your file(s) in the submission folder, using your last name and a specific assignment (i.e., Choi Activity1.docx).

Announcements
Announcements are posted often in the course. When you go to the course, you should first read any announcements that have been posted since you were last in the class.

Email Correspondence
Email from me is sent to your University email account. It is important to go to MyLeo mail regularly to check for messages.

If you need to contact me, email is the best way to reach me. Please send your message with your first and last name so I know who you are. Unless otherwise announced, I will do my best to respond within 48 hours except weekends.

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Code of Student Conduct: All students enrolled at the university shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. *Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.* Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, your immediate removal from the class, being immediately dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.

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

ADA Statement

Students with Disabilities
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

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.

The Counseling Center
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.

University's Pandemic Response

A&M-Commerce recommends the use of face-coverings in all instructional and research classrooms/laboratories.

"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."

COURSE SCHEDULE

Module 1 (December 16 – December 17)
      1. Course Introduction
      2. Principles of Politics
      3. American Government and Civic Engagement (American Government Ch. 1)

      Class Activity #1

Module 2 (December 18 – December 20)
      1. US Constitution (American Government Ch. 2)
      2. Federalism (American Government Ch. 3)

      Class Activity #2
      Discussion #1
      Exam #1

Module 3 (December 21 – December 23)
      1. US Congress (American Government Ch. 11)
      2. Presidency (American Government Ch. 12)
      3. Court s (American Government Ch. 13)

      Class Activity #3
      Discussion #2

Module 4 (December 24 – January 4)
      1. Civil Liberties (American Government Ch. 4)
      2. Civil Rights (American Government Ch. 5)

      Class Activity #4
      Discussion #3
      Exam #2

Module 5 (January 5 – January 8)
      1. Elections (American Government Ch. 7)
      2. Political Parties (American Government Ch. 9)

      Class Activity #5
      Discussion #4

Module 6 (January 9 – January 10)

      Final Exam

√ All class activities, discussions, exams, and assessment forms are due at **11:30 PM**.

√ Please note that the instructor reserves the right to change any part of this syllabus as needed over the course of the semester. Any and all changes will be announced.