

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT
PSCI 2305-01W
Summer I 2026

Dr. Ozum Yesiltas
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Zoom Office Hours
by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to study the underlying ideas, principles, and participatory practices of constitutional government in the United States. This course will introduce you to the formation of the federal constitution, and the challenges and opportunities granted by federalism and representative government in the United States. We will also analyze civil liberties and civil rights and the roles that public opinion and the media play in U.S. politics.

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 8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Paula D. McClain and Steven C. Tauber. 2025. *American Government in Black and White*, 7th edition, Oxford University Press. ISBN: 978-0197798683.

FORMAT OF THE COURSE

This is a fully online class. You're required to follow the course requirements on D2L on a regular and timely basis. Study guides, the grading rubric for your writing assignment, PowerPoints and lecture notes can be found on D2L.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Weekly Discussions: Every week, you have two discussion boards to complete. The deadlines for discussion boards can be found on D2L. Each discussion boards will close and won't be accessible after its respective deadline. To receive full credit, you are required to make your own post for the discussion board as well as comment on the post of at least one of your classmates before the deadline for each discussion. Discussion posts must be about 250-300 words, concise, and to the point. You must be making the relevant connections to class material within your post. More detailed guidelines for discussion boards can be found on D2L.

Weekly Quizzes: You will have 4 weekly multiple-choice quizzes. Each quiz will be composed of 30 multiple-choice questions. You will be able to take them online through D2L each week. Each quiz will open every week on Thursday at 9 am, and you will have until Sunday, 11.59 pm to take it. Quizzes will be timed and must be completed at one sitting. Quizzes won't be cumulative. Study guides will be provided.

Final Exam: During the last week of classes, there will be a cumulative final exam.

GRADING

Course Requirements	Weight
Weekly Discussions	20% (2% each)
Quizzes	60% (15% each)
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

GRADE SCALE

90-100 = A
80-90 = B
70-80 = C
60-70 = D
Below 60 =F

MAKE-UP POLICY

Make-ups are allowed under special circumstances such as medical or family emergencies. However, you must request them prior to the deadlines set for the course requirements. Makeups requested after deadlines will not be granted.

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 while posting comments to discussion forums. Offensive/disrespectful comments 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 me during my office hours.

NON-DISCRIMINATION STATEMENT

East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M University 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 East Texas A&M Rule 34.06.02R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations. For a list of locations, please refer to

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02R1.pdf> (and/or consult your event organizer). Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all East Texas A&M University campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1

American Government and Politics in a Racially Divided World McLain & Tauber Ch 1

The Constitution McLain & Tauber Ch 2

Week 2

Federalism McLain & Tauber Ch 3

Civil Liberties McLain & Tauber Ch 4

Civil Rights McLain & Tauber Ch 5

Week 3

Congress McLain & Tauber Ch 6

The Presidency McLain & Tauber Ch 7

Week 4

The Judiciary McLain & Tauber Ch 9

Public Opinion McLain & Tauber Ch 10

Media McLain & Tauber Ch 11

Week 5

Political Parties McLain & Tauber Ch 14

Voting and Elections McLain & Tauber Ch 15

Final Exam Date: TBA