



PSCI 2301.02 W
Principles of United States and Texas Government
COURSE SYLLABUS: Summer II 2012

Instructor: Charles R. McCoy
Office Location: SS 146
Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, 9-11:00 AM, or by appointment
Office Phone: 903-468-3030
Office Fax: 903-468-3230
University Email Address: cmccoy2@leo.tamu-commerce.edu

Due to this course being online, I suggest that if any problems or questions arise during this course email me as soon as possible or come by my office. Also, throughout the semester, I encourage you to come by my office during office hours. If you cannot make it by my office during the posted hours, alternate arrangements can be made.

Course Information

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings:

Required Texts:

We the People, Texas Edition

Authors: Lowi, Ginsberg, Weir

Publisher: W.W. Norton, 8th Texas Edition, ISBN—978-0-393-93525-7

Other readings:

Readings have been prepared and will be distributed. These are a blend of primary and secondary materials that complement lectures and provide the foundations for classroom discussions.

Note: It is imperative that you complete the assigned readings; the material contained therein will drive classroom discussion, a very crucial course requirement. You are responsible for all the material contained in the readings; if you do not read them, you will have a difficult semester.

Course Description:

Welcome to Principles of United States and Texas Government! The purpose of this course is to study the underlying ideas, principles, and participatory practices of constitutional government in the United States and Texas. This course will introduce you to the historical, social, political, cultural, and global forces that affect national and statewide political activity. 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 base to determine *how* to think about political issues for *yourself*.

Due to the quantity of information that must be examined, this course, essentially, is not a comprehensive assessment of that history. Still, the developments discussed in PSCI 2301 ought to serve as a prologue to many tribulations that Americans continue to encounter today, and as such, has relevance for students regardless of their personal interests in the past or present.

1. Students in PSCI 2301 can expect this course to accentuate the following: gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends).
2. Learning essential ideologies, generalizations, or philosophies.
3. Gaining a broader understanding and appreciation of intellectual/cultural activity.
4. Developing writing skills.

Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Students will understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to understanding political behavior and interaction between citizens and institutions of government.
2. Students will understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to understanding political behavior and interaction between citizens and institutions of government in Texas.
3. Students will understand and employ important theoretical and analytical approaches to explain U.S. constitutional development.
4. Students will understand and employ important theoretical and analytical approaches to explain Texas constitutional development.

Course Requirements

Instructional/ Methods/ Activities Assessments/ Grading:

This course is made up of a series of assignments and assessments to assist you in achieving the course learning objectives. Each week you will work on various combinations of assignments, activities, discussions, readings, research, etc.

Assignments and Grading

Students **MUST** complete all assignments listed below and if not they will fail the course.

Examinations: Students will complete four examinations worth 100-points each. Exams will consist of 50 questions drawn from materials presented in lecture and assigned readings. Exams will open at 8:00am on the day they are to be taken and will close at 11:59pm that evening. Each exam will constitute 100-points of the total grade. Exams will be taken in *ecollege*. Exams are **NOT** cumulative.

Class Participation: Students are expected to participate in the class, especially during online discussions of supplemental texts and other activities. There will also be a series of discussions each week on *ecollege* that must be completed. Students will be required to participate fully in discussions. Each student is required to respond once to the discussion question and two responses to other student responses. The discussions will open on Monday at 8:00am each week and will close on Sunday at 11:59pm. Discussion posts are expected to be insightful, clear, and concise with direct relevance to the topic being discussed. All content submitted for discussions must be a student's original work. Any material taken from another source, including the textbook, should include a proper citation. Material which is copied and pasted from any source will be considered plagiarism. Discussions count for 150-points towards the total grade

Quizzes: There will be a series of quizzes throughout the course, which will test the student's progress in the course. Quizzes will open at 8:00am on the day they are to be taken and will close at 11:59pm that evening. *These cannot be made up.* These quizzes will constitute 150-points of the students overall grade.

Research Project: Each student will write a 4-5 page research project, which assesses the preliminary draft of the Declaration of Independence drafted by Thomas Jefferson and final copy adopted by the Continental Congress in 1776. This research project will be due on the last week of class and will constitute 100-points of the student's final grade.

Students should inform the instructor if there is a legitimate reason (e.g., illness or emergency) for missing an exam. *Students should contact the instructor within 48 hours of the missed exam to schedule a make-up; failure to do so may forfeit the possibility of making up the exam.* Non-documented excuses are not generally acceptable, but can be accepted at the instructor's discretion. If you must travel on school business (with an athletic team or for another reason), then let me know ahead of time.

Students are expected to do the reading as noted in this syllabus and to be prepared to participate in the online discussions. *Occasional writing assignments or short quizzes may be assigned and will contribute towards your quiz grade; these may not be made up.* Although lectures, readings and discussions will overlap significantly, the readings will also include materials that may not be covered in class; nevertheless, students are responsible for all content covered in reading assignments.

Grading

Examinations	400-points (100-pts each)
Class Participation	150-points (discussions)
Quizzes	150-points
Research Project	<u>100-points</u>
	800-points total

Written work: Grading criteria for written work holds true for exams, written quizzes or occasional written —homework assignments. It is based on the following:

A = Mastery of content and reading material; factual accuracy; thoughtful interpretation or argument that synthesizes original thoughts and ideas with content; technically clean

B = Good-to-excellent command of the majority of content and reading material; competent factual accuracy; a generally solid historical argument backed with adequate evidence

C = Fair command of content material; reasonable factual accuracy; ability to articulate a specific thesis or argument even if it is not original or is poorly supported by the evidence

D = Poor command of content; factual errors; no real argument driving the essay

The grading scale used for this course is as follows:

A	90 – 100
B	80 – 89
C	70 – 79
D	60 – 69
F	0 – 59

All of the requirements must be completed to pass this course

Technology Requirements

The following technology is required to be successful in this course.

Internet connection – high speed recommended (not dial-up)

Word Processor (Microsoft Office Word – 2003 or 2007)

Access to University Library site

Access to an Email Account

Additionally, the following hardware and software are necessary to use eCollege:

Our campus is optimized to work in a Microsoft Windows environment. This means our courses work best if you are using a Windows operating system (XP or newer) and a recent version of Microsoft Internet Explorer (6.0, 7.0, or 8.0).

Courses will also work with Macintosh OS X along with a recent version of Safari 2.0 or better.

Along with Internet Explorer and Safari, eCollege also supports the Firefox browser (3.0) on both Windows and Mac operating systems.

It is strongly recommended that you perform a “Browser Test” prior to the start of your course.

To launch a browser test, login in to eCollege, click on the ‘my Courses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

Turnitin:

Students must submit all written work to Turnitin. Submissions to Turnitin are due by 11:59pm on the same day the work is submitted to the professor (essays can be submitted before the due date/time as indicated in the class calendar). Papers should be handed to the professor at the start of the class period in which they are due and also submitted to Turnitin. Your papers will not be graded and no grade will be given for the course until all written work has been submitted to Turnitin. To submit a paper to Turnitin, go to www.turnitin.com and click on new user. Choose student and click next. Enter the Class I.D: and Password. Once you input your information into the system, you should see **2301.02W** listed in your classes. Click on the appropriate assignment, click on the icon under “submit,” and follow the direction to upload your file.

Please let me know if you have any problems.

Access and Navigation

Access and Log in Information:

This course will be utilizing eCollege to enhance the learning experience, eCollege is the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to:

<https://leo.tamu-commerce.edu/login.aspx>.

You will need your CWID and password to log in to the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact Technology Services at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamucommerce.edu.

Communication and Support

Throughout the semester, I encourage you to come by my office during office hours. If you cannot make it by my office during the posted hours, alternate arrangements can be made.

Course and University Procedures/Policies

Course Specific Procedures:

Classroom Behavior: All students are expected to observe basic tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive leaning environment (See Student’s Guide Handbook, Policies and Procedures, Conduct).

Academic Honesty:

Plagiarism (pla-gia-rism)

[pley-juh-riz-uhm, -jee-uh-riz-] -noun

1. the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work.
2. In all courses, I expect that all work that you do and turn in is your own. It is the policy of the University, the History Department, and myself that no form of plagiarism, cheating, collusion, or any other form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. Cheating is obtaining unauthorized assistance on any assignment. Collusion is the selling of academic products with the intention that they be submitted to satisfy an academic requirement. Students are expected to uphold and support the highest academic standards at all times. Any student found guilty of academic dishonesty will automatically fail the assignment in question, will likely fail the entire course, and will be subject to disciplinary action by the University (See

Texas A&M University-Commerce Code of Student Conduct 5.b[1,2,3]). Further information on the History Department plagiarism policy can be found on the History Department web page. If you are even unclear about what constitutes plagiarism or academic dishonesty, please ask me.

If you are caught plagiarizing you will fail the assignment that is plagiarized and I reserve the right to fail you for the course entirely, so **DO NOT Plagiarize**.

Late Work: Late work will not be accepted unless special arrangements have been made with the instructor ahead of time, or unless it is accompanied by a written excuse considered acceptable by the University and the instructor. Specifically, this includes participation in a University-sponsored event, illness accompanied by doctor's note, death in the student's family, or a verifiable court appearance.

Make-up Work: No make-ups will be permitted without a written excuse along the lines listed above.

Instructor Rights: As instructor, I reserve the right to amend and/or modify this syllabus as necessary.

Ecollege: Each week there will be a series of discussions for each chapter covered that week in Ecollege. It is required that every student answer each question pertaining to the chapters discussed that week, along with responding to **TWO** of the other students responses.

University Specific Procedures:

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

Gea Library 132

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

[Student Disability Resources & Services](#)

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. (See *Code of Student Conduct from Student Guide Handbook*).

Course Outline/Calendar

Tentative course schedule (and themes):

The following schedule is meant to be a guide for students throughout the semester and indicates when assignments are due. Please refer to the schedule frequently. I will do my best to keep to this schedule, but I reserve the right to change it as the semester progresses and as such circumstances arise.

Week One

July 9—Introduction—Chapter 1: American Political Culture – Quiz #1
July 10—Chapter 19: Texas Political Culture – Quiz #2
July 11—Chapter 2: Foundations and the Constitution
July 12—Chapter 2: Foundations and the Constitution – Quiz #3

Week Two

July 16—Chapter 20: Texas Constitution
July 17—Chapter 20: Texas Constitution – Quiz #4 & Exam #1
July 18—Chapter 3: Federalism – Quiz #5
July 19—Chapter 4: Civil Liberties – Quiz #6

Week Three

July 23—Chapter 5: Civil Rights
July 24—Chapter 5: Civil Rights – Quiz #7 & Exam #2
July 25—Chapter 6: Public Opinion – Quiz #8
July 26—Chapter 7: The Media – Quiz #9

Week Four

July 30—Chapter 8: Voting Participation – Quiz #10
July 31—Chapter 10: Campaigns and Elections – Quiz #11 & Exam #3
August 1—Chapter 9: Political Parties
August 2—Chapter 9: Political Parties – Quiz #12

Week Five

August 6—Chapter 21: Texas Political Parties
August 7—Chapter 21: Texas Political Parties – Quiz #13
August 8—Chapter 11: Groups and Interests – Quiz #14
August 9—Chapter 22: Interest Groups in Texas – Quiz#15 & Final Exam