PSCI 2301  Principles of United States and Texas Government  
Section 009  

Professor Contact Information  
Dr. Chad M. King  
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E-mail: Chad_King@tamu-commerce.edu  
Phone: 903-886-5343  

Fall 2012  
Location: SS124  
Time: 9:30-10:45 TTh  

Office Hours  
T/Th 1-2:30 PM  
W 10-12 PM  

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 constitutionalism, federalism, ideology, pluralism, political culture and socialization, political parties and interest groups, public opinion, republicanism, and voting and electoral politics.  

Learning Objectives  
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 US constitutional development.  
4. Students will understand and employ important theoretical and analytical approaches to explain Texas constitutional development.  

Required Textbooks and Materials  
The required text is We the People, Eighth Texas Edition, by Lowi, Ginsberg, Weir. While earlier editions of this text are available, this is the required edition.
Course Requirements

All students are required to meet the following expectations.

1. Students are expected to attend class on a regular basis. Attendance will be graded and taken every class. Consistent with University policies and procedures, students who are absent for more than 3 class meetings will be administratively dropped from the class. There will be no “excused” absences aside for official university activities or documented medical issues. Students are required to provide documentation by the next class meeting to receive an excused absence.

2. Students are expected to attend class having completed assigned course readings and prepared to discuss the readings. The assigned reading schedule is below.

3. Students are expected to complete all elements listed under Grading and Evaluation.

4. Students are expected to be respectful of their fellow classmates and the instructor by refraining from distracting behavior such as talking, eating, passing notes or using cell phones/pagers. Students are expected to be attentive to the instructor and not working on material from other courses or personal work. Students who choose to use laptops in class should only use them for class related purposes such as note taking. For the first offense of these policies, students who display disruptive behavior will be asked to cease and desist. For the second offense, the offending student will be asked to leave the classroom for the remainder of the day. For additional offenses, students will be referred to the Department Chair and/or Dean for possible disciplinary proceedings. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.

Grading and Evaluation

Student performance will be based upon 3 categories of graded elements: midterm exams, quizzes and attendance.

Exams: Three midterm exams are scheduled below. All exams will include material from both the textbook and lecture and the scheduled dates for the exams are listed below on the calendar. Exams will feature 50 multiple choice questions. Students who arrive more than 10 minutes after the exam has started may be denied admittance to the exam. Each exam will count for 25% of the final average.

Exam procedure: Students will need to provide their own scantron forms, Form No. 2052, to all three exams, and complete the exams
with a #2 pencil. Students must arrive on time for an exam. Students who arrive more than 10 minutes after the exam has begun may be denied admittance or required to take an essay make-up exam at a later date.

Quizzes: Students will take unannounced quizzes throughout the semester featuring True/False, fill in the blank, or short essay questions. Sometimes the quizzes will be based on group work. Quizzes will feature questions not only from the assigned readings but also current events. The lowest single quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester. Missed quizzes cannot be made up. The final quiz average will count for 15% of the final average.

Attendance: Attendance will be taken at every class meeting and count for the final 5% of the final average.

Grading Schedule

Final grades will be based on a 100-point scale, using the following conversion.

A: 100-90  B: 89-80  C: 79-70  D: 69-65  F: Below 65

Additional Course & Instructor Policies

Make-up exams: If a student misses an 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 submitted in writing, not e-mail, 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. Legitimate reasons may include illness severe enough to require professional treatment, death in the immediate family, participation in official University activities, and legal obligations. Please note, these reasons do not guarantee that a make-up exam will be given. All make-up exams will be essay format.

Extra Credit: There is no extra credit in this class so please do not ask for it.

Student Conduct & Discipline

The University has rules and regulations for the orderly and efficient conduct of business. It is the responsibility of each student to be knowledgeable about the rules and regulations that govern student conduct and activities. General information on student conduct and discipline is contained in the student handbook.
I expect all students to maintain the highest level of personal responsibility and academic honesty which is discussed in Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12 Academic Honesty. "Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism (the appropriation or stealing of the ideas or words of another and passing them off as one's own), cheating on exams or other course assignments, collusion (the unauthorized collaboration with others in preparing course assignments), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material."

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. Any and all instances of academic dishonesty will be referred to the appropriate offices on campus and may result in significant penalties.

**Telephone and Email Use**

The University prefers electronic mail as the primary means of communication between faculty, staff and students. Please use the e-mail address & telephone number provided on this syllabus for any and all correspondence. Questions about specific grades should be made in person during office hours.

**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 132  
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835  
Fax (903) 468-8148  
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu
Reading Assignments and Examination Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topics</th>
<th>Assigned Chapter Readings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aug</td>
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<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Introduction to the Course &amp; American Political Culture</td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Foundations and the Constitution</td>
<td>2, A1-A24</td>
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<td>Sep</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Foundations and the Constitution</td>
<td>2, A1-A24</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Foundations and the Constitution, Federalism</td>
<td>2, A1-A24, 3</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Federalism</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>13, 18</td>
<td>Civil Liberties</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Civil Liberties, Civil Rights</td>
<td>4, 5</td>
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<td>25, 27</td>
<td>Civil Rights</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td><strong>Midterm Exam One</strong></td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>The Media</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Voting and Participation</td>
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<td>9, 11</td>
<td>Campaigns and Elections</td>
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<td>16, 18</td>
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<td>23, 25</td>
<td>Groups and Interests</td>
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<td>Nov</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Groups and Interests</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Midterm Exam Two</strong></td>
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<td>13, 15</td>
<td>Texas Constitution</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td><strong>Thanksgiving Recess (No Wednesday Office Hours)</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Texas Political Parties</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>Interest Groups in Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dec</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Interest Groups in Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td><strong>Midterm Exam Three</strong></td>
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***** 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 in class.