Political Science 2302.003
United States and Texas Government: Institutions and Policies

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Office Hours: 8 a.m.-9:30 a.m. M-Th
and by appointment

Required texts:

Benjamin Ginsberg, et.al., *We the People: An Introduction to American Politics,* 7th Essentials Edition (W.W. Norton and Company)
ISBN: 9780393932669

Gary M. Halter, *Government and Politics of Texas: A Comparative View*, 7th edition (McGraw-Hill) ISBN: 978007337898

In addition, you will be required to access the internet to read primary documents as assigned for a more complete understanding of the American political system. You will also need to have access to at least one major news source (i.e., *Dallas Morning News, The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post*) to keep up with current events and fulfill the requirements of the course as there will be current events quizzes given. Your professor reserves the right to assign additional readings as required.

Course Description: This course is a survey of the institutions and policies of the American and Texas regimes. It is organized historically. That is to say that we cannot understand the way things are cannot be understood without some reference to the circumstances that have created and shaped the American republic.

Course Objectives: In addition to developing critical thinking skills, this course is designed to give you an understanding of the interaction between circumstance and institutions by which the American experiment in self-government with justice occurs. It will also give you a broad overview of the historical events that have helped to shape the regime into what it is today in terms of public policy and the ends pursued by it.

With this in mind, the following general learning objectives will be achieved:

1. Students will understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to explain the political institutions and policy development and implementation of the government of the United States.
2. Students will understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to explain the political institutions and state policy development and implementation of the state of Texas.

Attendance: Attendance will be taken daily and you would be well-advised to attend every class—if for no other reason than the fact that experience demonstrates that you will not do well if you are not here. Students who have more than three absences will have five points deducted from their final grade for each absence over three. You may use your three absences for any purpose you choose. When an absence happens to coincide with an examination or quiz, that examination or quiz cannot be made-up. Furthermore, if you do miss class, it is your responsibility to prevail upon your classmates to share their materials with you.

Given the size of this class, we will use a sign-in sheet. If I decide to call roll and you are not here but the sign-in sheet indicates that you are, you will be assessed two absences. Do not have your friends sign in for you.

Of course attendance is more than merely being in your seat on time (although timeliness is a virtue). You are expected to come to class prepared for class. Readings assigned for particular dates should be completed prior to coming to class. You will have quizzes over the readings and current events, so it is important that you arrive at class on time and that you have adequately prepared for class prior to attending.

You should not arrive late to class. Most importantly do NOT be late for exams! Tardiness for a quiz or exam will result in not receiving credit for it. Needless to say, this might have a deleterious effect on your final grade.

Finally, if you need to leave the class for any reason while it is in session, please make sure to take your belongings with you, as you will not be readmitted to class on that day. If you have to use the restroom you may do so before and after class, but not during. If you do have to leave class, you will, of course, be marked "absent" for that day.

Electronics Policy: We are fortunate to live in a technologically advanced time. With that said, the following guidelines must be observed. First, laptop computers are wonderful things—but their use is forbidden in this class during our time together. Do not, under any circumstances, engage in "social networking" during class.

With regard to cellular telephone: one person in this class has permission to leave his phone on during class—and it is not you. It is entirely possible that you will survive for an hour and half without using your telephone. Your instructor reserves the right to answer any telephone that rings during class (and trust me—you do not want him to do it). Repeat violations will result in the confiscation of the offending instrument. Texting during class is prohibited and will likewise result in the confiscation of the offending instrument. Failure to adhere to these guidelines will result in your being removed from the course.

Conduct: "All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment." What this means in terms of our class is that from time to time we will discuss controversial issues. During these discussions, you are expected to conduct yourself with civility and politeness (remember, politeness is the first form of politics). A university education is a privilege and should not be abused through disruptive and impolite behavior.

With this in mind, the following are not allowed in the context of this class:

- Sunglasses, Bluetooth earpieces, caps/hats, etc.
- Eating during class
- Texting, or any other form of instant messaging
- Listening to your IPod or other media devices

Grading: Your grade will consist of the following elements:

Exam One:	100 points
Exam Two:	100 points
Exam Three:	100 points
Quizzes and Reaction Papers	100 points

The grading scale for computation of final grades is as follows:

A	364-400 points
B	324-363 points
C	284-323 points
D	240-283 points
F	0-239 points

Course Calendar

(This calendar represents the best estimate of our progress.
Your instructor reserves the right to edit the calendar as necessary.
This would include adding or deleting readings as required
by the exigencies of the class.)

January 14: Introduction to the Course

Week One: January 16-18
The Executive Branch in Texas and the United States
(U.S. Constitution, Article II; Ginsberg, Chapter 10; Halter Chapter 8)

Week Two: January 23-25
The Executive and Legislative Branches in Texas and the United States
(U.S. Constitution, Articles I and II; Ginsberg Chapter 9; Halter, Chapter 7)

Week Three: January 28-February 1
The Judiciary: Federal and State
(U.S. Constitution, Article III; *The Federalist*, No. 78; Joseph Story; Marbury v. Madison; Dickerson v. U.S.; Ginsberg, Chapter 12; Halter, Chapter 9)

Week Four: February 4-8
The Courts and the Bill of Rights (U.S. Constitution, Article I, section 9; Article III; Amendments 1-5 and 13-15; Barron v. Baltimore; Slaughterhouse Cases; Gitlow v. New York; Ginsberg, Chapter 4)

Week Five: February 11-15
The Bill of Rights, continued (Mapp v. Ohio, Gideon v. Wainwright, Miranda v. Arizona; Hudson v. Michigan)

February 18: Exam One

Week Six: February 20-22

The Problem of "Race" and the Struggle for Civil Rights (U.S. Constitution, Article I, section 2, section 9, Amendment 14; Scott v. Sandford; Plessy v. Ferguson; Alexis de Tocqueville)

Week Seven: February 25-March 1
Civil Rights and Wrongs (W.E.B. Dubois; Booker T. Washington; McClaurin v. Bd. of Regents; Brown v. Bd. of Education I; Brown v. Bd. of Education II)

Week Eight: March 4-8
Federalism and the Rise of the Nation State (Ginsberg, Chapter 3; Halter Chapter 2)

March 12-16: Spring Break

Week Nine: March 18-22
Domestic Public Policy and the Bureaucratic State (Ginsberg, Chapter 11; Halter, Chapter 8)

Week Ten: March 25-29
Fiscal and Monetary Policy in the United States (Ginsberg, Chapter 13)

April 1: Exam Two

Week Eleven: April 3-5
City, County and State: Texas (Halter, Chapter 11)

Week Twelve: April 8-12
The Rise of the United States to Global Power (The Federalist, No. 75; Washington, "Farewell Address"; Ginsberg, Chapter 14)

Week Thirteen: April 15-19
The American Century

Week Fourteen: April 22-26
The Struggle Against Extremism (readings to be announced)

Week Fifteen: April 29-May 3
The Prospects for the American Republic (Washington, "Farewell Address")

May 6
Final Exam, 10:30 a.m.

Desiderata: Your professor reserves the right to edit or change this syllabus based upon the exigencies of the class. You will be notified in the event of any changes that are required.

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
StudentDisabilityServices@tamu-commerce.edu

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Spring 2013
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Student statement of understanding:

I, _____ , have read the syllabus and understand the guidelines and policies therein. Furthermore, I understand my obligation to adhere to these guidelines and policies in this class and that failure to do so could result in my being dropped from the course.

X_____

Date:_____