



**PSCI 2302 06E: United States and Texas Government: Institutions
and Polices
Course Syllabus: Spring 2015**

Instructor: Dr. Chad M. King
Office Location: SS-162
Office Hours: T/TH 12:45-1:45, W 10-1
Office Phone: (903) 886-5343
University Email Address: chad.king@tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

Materials – Textbooks, Readings, Supplementary Readings

Textbook(s) Required

We the People, Texas Edition
Authors: Lowi, Ginsberg, Weir
Publisher: W.W. Norton
Edition: 9th Texas Edition

You should be able to purchase this book from the bookstore or your favorite on-line merchant. Please note there is also an on-line version of the text available from the publishers that is significantly cheaper.

Course Description

This course is an examination of the United States and Texas political systems with emphasis on both political institutions and the roles they play in the creation and implementation of public policy. Topics considered include the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; bureaucracies; and public policies.

Student Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course students will be able to

- 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.

- Understand and employ significant theoretical and analytical approaches to explain the political institutions and state policy development and implementation of the state of Texas.
- Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion. Critical Thinking
- In written, oral, and/or visual communication, A&M-Commerce students will communicate in a manner appropriate to audience and occasion, with an evident message and organizational structure. Core Objective: Communication
- Students will be able to understand their role in their own education. Core Objective: Personal Responsibility
- Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues. Core Objective: Social Responsibility

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional / Methods / Activities Assessments

The methods of instruction in this class will be student self-directed readings and class lectures. This will be supplemented with interaction with classmates in discussion assignments as well as the instructor in class, weekly quizzes, and three midterm exams.

Course grades will be based upon the following components.

Exams

Students will take three midterm exams. All exams will include material from the textbook and lectures. The scheduled dates for the exams are listed below. These exams will feature 50 multiple choice questions. Exam One will cover Chapters 1, 2, 12, 13, 14 and Appendix Readings. Exam Two will cover Chapters 15, 16, 17, & 18. Exam Three will cover Chapters 20, 23, 24, 25, 26, & 27.

Discussion Assignments

This graded component of the course will consist of 14 weekly discussions completed via the eCollege platform. Topics for the discussion assignments will be posted on Sunday each week at 9 AM. Each discussion thread will close at 11:30 PM on Friday that week. 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.

Each student will randomly be assigned to a discussion group for the duration of the course. The instructor will create a discussion thread topic for each discussion group 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. This post should be 250 words minimum. Second, students are expected to respond to the posts of other students in their discussion group. Each of these posts should be at least 100 words. Students should include a word count in parentheses at the end of all of their posts. Students should engage in conversation with their group members in a thoughtful discussion about the topic as well as their individual responses to the topic. Students should make a minimum of 5 total posts (1 original response, 4 responses to other students). Students must make at least one post by 11:59 AM on Wednesday each week and should avoid making all of their posts on the same day or during the final hours of the assignment time line.

Students will receive a grade of between a .5 through a 3 being the highest, 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 in the student's group. Posts that do not fully answer the questions or do not make a minimum of 5 posts will not receive full credit. Students who wait until the end of the time frame may receive a grade penalty. Students who do not post by 11:59 AM on Wednesday will lose 50% (1.5 points). Students who make 3 or more of their 5 required posts on Thursday or Friday of the week will lose 33% (1 point).

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. Effectively, students who do not follow the proper citation/attribution requirements listed above will receive a 0 for all of the discussion assignments.

When the discussion assignment average is computed at the end of the semester, the student's lowest individual assignment score will be dropped. If a student completes all 14 assignments, the lowest score will be dropped. For students who do not complete all of the assignments, one score of 0 for a missing assignment will be dropped.

Quizzes

Students will take weekly quizzes throughout the semester (except the week of exams) via the eCollege platform. These quizzes will feature 6-8 multiple choice and/or True/False questions and students will have 10 minutes to complete them. These quizzes will always open on Fridays at 11:59 AM and remain open for 48 hours. The lowest single quiz grade will be dropped at the end of the semester. Missed quizzes cannot be made up regardless of the reason. When the quiz average is computed at the end of the semester, the student's lowest individual quiz score will be dropped. If a student completes all of the quizzes, the lowest score will be dropped. For students who do not complete all of the quizzes, one score of 0 for a missing quiz will be dropped.

Extra Credit "Syllabus "Quiz"

Students can earn up to a 3 bonus points toward their final average by taking a syllabus quiz. This quiz is designed to ensure that students familiarize themselves with the requirements

and expectations of the syllabus. This quiz will open on 1/30 at 11:59 AM and close on 2/1 at 11:59 AM.

GRADING

Course grades will be based upon the following breakdown.

Final Grade Breakdown

Midterm One	25%
Midterm Two	25%
Midterm Three	25%
Discussion Average	15%
Quizzes	10%
Final Grade	100%

Grading Scale

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

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

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

Because this is web-enhanced course, all students must meet the following technology requirements to successfully complete this course.

- Regular access to a good quality computer
- Regular, high-quality Internet access, specifically, a high-speed internet connection, not dial-up or a cellular phone.
- Students will need access to an Internet browser such as Internet Explorer.
Note that is the student's responsibility to ensure they meet these requirements. Aside

from when the eCollege system is down, technical issues will not be accepted as a reason for failing to complete any course work.

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).

Your 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 ‘myCourses’ tab, and then select the “Browser Test” link under Support Services.

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

eCollege Access and Log in Information

This course will be facilitated using eCollege, the Learning Management System used by Texas A&M University-Commerce. To get started with the course, go to: <https://leo.tamuc.edu>.

In order to login, students will need both their CWID and password to access the myLeo site. If you do not know what your CWID or password is, please contact Technology Services at (903)-468-6000 or by e-mail, helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Course Navigation

Quizzes and discussion assignments will be delivered and completed through eCollege. All grades and any comments on submitted assignments will be made available in the Gradebook in eCollege.

This course is not a self-paced class. Students will need to follow the timelines and calendars included below to ensure that they complete the exams, discussion assignments, and extra credit opportunity in a timely manner. Discussion assignments will be found under the module labeled “Discussions”, quizzes will be located under the module “Quizzes”, and the extra credit assignment is located under the “Course Home” module. Students should become familiar with the scheduled times and dates for all of these requirements.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

Interaction with Instructor Statement

In addition to in-class announcements, students should rely upon e-mail and reading class announcements as the primary means of communication with me. I will use all of these means to announce any changes to the course syllabus or other relevant information. Also, please note that the system will only send e-mail to your official University Email address, so you will need to check that account regularly.

Office Hours

The times and location for Office Hours are listed at the top of this syllabus.

Virtual Office

The Virtual Office, found in the Course Home module is a discussion thread that provides students an opportunity to post questions or concerns that might be useful for the entire class to see. While other students may attempt to help answer your question, please check back for my answers as well, which will always be provided within 24 hours during the week.

eCollege Student Technical Support

Technical support for eCollege is provided around the clock (24 hours a day/7 days a week) so if students experience technical issues with the class page itself they should contact the student help desk for assistance. Students can access support through one of three following methods:

- Chat support: Students can access real-time chat support from within the course page by clicking on "Tech Support" in the tool bar and then clicking on "Chat Online."
- Phone: Students can access phone support by calling the toll free phone number for eCollege, 1-866-656-5511.
- E-mail: Student can request assistance by e-mail eCollege directly at helpdesk@online.tamuc.org. Please note that you might not receive a response for 24 hours if you use the e-mail option.
- Help: Click on the '*Help*' button on the toolbar for information regarding working with eCollege (i.e. how to submit to dropbox, and how to post to discussions, etc.)

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Course Specific Procedures

All students are expected to comply with the following requirements.

1. Students are expected to attend class regularly, take notes, and complete the assigned readings in advance of class.
2. Students are expected to regularly check the course site for announcement and updates.
3. Students are expected to take each of the scheduled Midterm Exams.
4. Students are expected to participate fully in the class discussion assignments.
5. Students are expected to take each of the quizzes.
6. Students are expected to respect their fellow classmates and the instructor. This includes treating everyone with courtesy and esteem in any and all correspondence for the course. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook.
7. Texas A&M University-Commerce does not tolerate **plagiarism** and other forms of academic **dishonesty**. Conduct that violates generally accepted standards of academic honesty is defined as academic dishonesty. "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. 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. Any act of academic dishonesty on a midterm exam or quiz will result in a score of 0 for the exam or quiz. Any act of academic dishonesty on a discussion assignment will result in a 0 for the entire semester's discussion assignment grade. Instances of academic dishonesty may also be referred to the appropriate offices on campus and may result in significant administrative penalties.
8. Students who miss more than 3 class meetings will be considered "excessively absent" and will be administratively dropped from the class.
9. Students will comply with any and all eCollege technical requirements in terms of training, computer access, & Internet access.
10. 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 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. Legitimate reasons may include illness severe enough to require professional treatment, death in the immediate family, participation in University activities, and legal obligations. Please note, these reasons do not guarantee that a make-up exam will be given. Make-up exams will be exclusively essay format.
11. Incompletes will be granted completely at the discretion of the instructor and only be granted in the case of serious medical illness or other serious, unavoidable circumstances and only if the students has completed at least 50% of the course work. Incompletes must be made up within two weeks of the end of the semester as students only have access to their eCollege course for two weeks following the final day of the term.
12. Students need to complete and submit the "Student Personal Responsibility Statement" attached to this syllabus by 2/3/15.

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
Gee Library- Room 132
Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835
Fax (903) 468-8148
StudentDisabilityServices@tamuc.edu

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*). Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum:

<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

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.

Extra Credit Syllabus Quiz Schedule

The quiz will open at 9 AM on 9/5/2014 and close at 9 AM on 9/7/2014.

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Suggested Reading Schedule

Date	Topic	Readings (Chapter)
1/20	Introduction to the Course & American Political Culture	1
1/22	Foundations and the Constitution	2, A1-A24
1/27	The Congress	12
1/29	The Congress	12
2/3	The Congress	12
2/5	The Presidency	13
2/10	The Presidency	13
2/12	The Bureaucracy	14
2/17	The Bureaucracy	14
2/19	Midterm Exam One	
2/24	The Judiciary	15
2/26	The Judiciary	15
3/3	Economic Policy	16
3/5	Economic Policy	16
3/10	Social Policy	17
3/12	Social Policy	17
3/24	Foreign Policy	18
3/26	Foreign Policy	18
3/31	Midterm Exam Two	
4/2	Texas Constitution	20
4/7	Texas Legislature	23
4/9	Texas Legislature	23
4/14	Texas Executive	24
4/16	Texas Executive	24
4/21	Texas Judiciary	25
4/23	Texas Judiciary	25
4/28	Local Government in Texas	26
4/30	Public Policy in Texas	27
5/5	Public Policy in Texas	27
5/7	Midterm Exam Three	

*** 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 on the class site.

**Student Personal Responsibility Statement
Spring 2015
PSCI 2302 Sec 06E
Dr. King**

I hereby certify that I have reviewed the course syllabus in its entirety. I certify that I understand all of the course policies, requirements, and guidelines within and agree to abide by them as a condition of my enrollment of this class. Furthermore, I know that it is my responsibility to adhere to all of these stipulations or risk a number of repercussions including grade penalties, referral to adjudicatory offices on campus for disciplinary review, administrative “drop” from the class, or grade penalties.

CWID: _____
Student Name: _____
Student Signature: _____
Date of Signature: _____

This form must be signed and returned to the instructor by 2/3/2015. Any student who does not comply will be administratively dropped from the class.