PSCI 2301  
Principles of United States and Texas Government  
Fall 2015  
MWF 11:00-11:50 AM  
BA 257

Ashley Cotton  
Office: SS Room 131  
Email: acotton4@leomail.tamuc.edu  
Office Hours: Wednesdays 1pm-6pm, or by appointment

Course Description:

The purpose for this course is to study the underlying principles, ideas, and practices of constitutional government in the United States and Texas. The course will introduce you to the historical, social, political, cultural, and global forces that formed the foundations for the American political system and continue to effect national and statewide political activity. You will be provided with the knowledge base to determine how to think about political issues for yourself.

Format:

Each class session will involve a series of lectures and discussions based on the assigned readings. You will regularly be asked to contribute and discuss your opinion of the readings and answer questions.

Objectives:

1. Critical Thinking: Students will be able to differentiate between fact and opinion.  
2. Communication: Student communication will be clear, purposeful, and make appropriate use of evidence, data and technology as applicable.  
3. Personal Responsibility: Students will be able to understand their role in their own education.  
4. Social Responsibility: Students will demonstrate awareness of societal and/or civic issues.

Requirements/Assignments:

In this course, all students are required to take three exams, each will consist of 50 questions in a multiple choice format. If you miss an exam, you will receive 0% for that exam. Writing assignments will be announced during the course of the semester which may vary depending on the amount of class participation/discussion.

Complete the assigned readings on time and come to class prepared to engage in class discussions.
CLASS ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY. You can miss up to THREE class sessions without penalty for any reason. More than three absences will result in a reduction of your grade.

- 0 Absences= you will get a bonus 2% added to your grade
- 1-3 Absences= no penalty
- 4 absences= -1% from your grade
- 5 absences= -2% from your grade
- 6 absences= -3% from your grade
- 7-8 absences= -5% from your grade
- 9-10 absences= -7% from your grade
- 11 or more absences= -10% from your grade

Use laptops or tablets for note taking only
Do not carry on private conversations during class
Do not use phones, ipods, etc during class
Respect the political opinions of your classmates, but do not be afraid to engage in discussion
Be courteous to -and respectful of- your fellow students and professor.

Participation:
Your participation in this course is worth 9% of your grade. Positive participation includes responding to questions, asking questions of your own, and contributing to class discussions. Your participation grade will be reduced if you use personal electronic devices in class, misbehave in class, or disrupt class in any way.

Grades:
Exam 1 = 27%
Exam 2 = 27%
Exam 3 = 27%
Attendance = 10%
Participation = 9%
A 90-100%; B 80-89.9%; C 70-79.9%; D 60-69.9%; F Below 60%

Notes on Academic Dishonesty of ANY kind:
Any student who is caught committing any kind of academic dishonesty will receive an “F” in this course and will be reported to the University administration. “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), signing the attendance sheet for a student who is absent (or asking another student to sign you in when you are absent), and abuse (destruction, defacing, or removal) of resource material” (Texas A&M University-Commerce Procedures A13.12). If you have any doubt as to what may constitute academic dishonesty, please consult with me prior to submitting any assignments.
**Code of Student Conduct:**
Faculty have the authority to request students who exhibit inappropriate behavior to leave the class and may refer serious offenses to the University Police Department and/or the Dean of Students for disciplinary action. Failure to comply with the Code of Student Conduct and commonsensical directions listed above may result in a verbal request to cease inappropriate behavior, your immediate removal from the class, being immediately dropped from the class, and/or a review by an appropriate university disciplinary agency. For more information on this subject, please see the Student Guidebook. 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.

**Note to 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

**Required Readings:**
There are two required texts for this course. MAKE SURE TO PURCHASE THE CORRECT EDITIONS:

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