
American Government

GOVT-2305

Summer I 2017 Section SECTION_300 CRN-30036 3 Credits 06/02/2017 to 06/30/2017 Modified 06/02/2017

Meeting Times

MTWThF: 8:00 am - 9:55 am

Location: Room 106, A Building

Contact Information

Dr. Dominique Lewis

Email: dominique.lewis@blinn.edu

Office: 295 A Building

Office Hours: Monday, Tuesday, Thursday from 12:10 pm - 12:50 pm or by appointment

Description

Government 2305 is a study of the organization, functions, and administration of the several branches and agencies of the national government, including a study of the federal constitution. The primary factors considered relate to the three branches of government - judicial, executive, legislative -- major historical documents, the events that shaped the nation, and current events. Emphasis will be placed on the interaction of these subsystems. 48 contact hours. Credit: Three semester hours.

Requisites

Student must be college reading ready according to Texas Success Initiatives Standards (TSI). Please see the Catalog section under Texas Success Initiative.

Core Curriculum Statement

Through the Texas Core Curriculum, students will gain a foundation of knowledge in human cultures and the physical and natural world, develop principles of personal and social responsibility for living in a diverse world, and advance intellectual and practical skills that are essential for all learning. For details relating to this core course, please see:

http://www.blinn.edu/academics/core_curriculum.html (http://www.blinn.edu/academics/core_curriculum.html)

Outcomes

Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.

Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.

Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.

Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.

Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.

Analyze the election process.

Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

Materials

ALL:

Ginsberg, Lowi and Weir. *We The People*, 10th full edition. Norton Publishing, 2015. Special custom edition for Blinn College.

Course Requirements

Participation: Participation is 8% of your final grade. Regular and punctual attendance is an integral part of the learning process, for you and your classmates. Attendance is expected and required per the Blinn attendance policy. Excused absences will not count against your participation grade, but please see the Blinn Attendance Policy in this syllabus.

You will receive two forms from me throughout semester, which evaluate your participation. You will receive the first evaluation in the middle of the semester and the second evaluation toward the end of the semester. Please see the participation rubric provided on our course eCampus page to see how you will be evaluated.

Discussion Questions: You will notice on the schedule that we have “group discussion questions” seven times throughout the semester. Each of you will get assigned to one of these days. On the day that you are scheduled, you are to have read the assigned reading on eCampus for that week and have answers prepared for the associated discussion questions. Five of you will be assigned to each week, but each of you must answer all five questions. You will not know which question you will get when I call on you, so you must be prepared to answer all five questions. You only have to do this once through the semester, so do not miss your scheduled day. The only way you can make up a group discussion day is if you have an excused absence (please see below for excused absences and make-up policy).

The schedule is posted on eCampus under “content” then “discussions questions.” The schedule is contained in the file named “Discussion Questions Schedule.”

Exams: There will be 2 major exams and 1 cumulative final exam. The major exams will consist of multiple choice and short answer questions. The major exams are not cumulative, though new material will build on previous instruction. The final exam is cumulative.

Write your Senator or Representative a Letter: During this semester, each of you must write one letter to one of your two senators or your representative. The due date is the last day of class, June 29, but you can turn in your letter at any point during the semester. I encourage you to turn it in before the end of the semester. I have guidelines and instructions for this assignment listed on eCampus under “content” and then “Letter Writing Guidelines.” Once you write your letter, you will place it in a stamped envelope with the person’s address and your return address and then I will place it in the mail for you.

***Note: If you are not a United States citizen, please see me about an alternative assignment to fulfill this requirement.

Syllabus quiz: The first quiz is a syllabus quiz, which ensures that you have read and understand the components of this document. The quiz can be found on eCampus and will ask you questions related to the content of this syllabus. The syllabus quiz will be available on the first day of class and must be completed no later than June 5 by 11 p.m.

There will be absolutely no make-ups for the syllabus quiz because you have multiple days to complete it online.

Group Quizzes: There are 4 group quizzes throughout the semester. Group quizzes will cover material from the previous week’s lectures and will facilitate direct participation in class. I will assign groups before the start of the quiz on each quiz day. Each group will have 20 minutes to complete the quiz. Once the quizzes are submitted to me, we will discuss the answers in class.

If you have an excused absence on the day of a quiz, you can schedule a make-up quiz with me. The make-up quiz will be different from the original quiz. You **MUST** contact me about make-ups; I will not contact you if you miss a quiz

Online Quizzes: You will have three online quizzes that you will complete by the due dates listed on the schedule here. You are to complete the quizzes on ecampus by yourself.

There will be absolutely no make-ups for the online quizzes because you will have multiple days to complete them online.

✓ Evaluation

Grade Breakdown		
Exam 1	15%	Exam total: 55%
Exam 2	15%	
Final Exam	25%	
Group Quiz 1	4%	Group quiz total: 16%
Group Quiz 2	4%	
Group Quiz 3	4%	
Group Quiz 4	4%	
Online Quiz 1	3%	Online quiz total: 9%
Online Quiz 2	3%	
Online Quiz 3	3%	
Syllabus Quiz	2%	Participation/syllabus quiz total: 10%
Participation (first half)	4%	
Participation (second half)	4%	
Senator/Representative Letter Assignment	5%	Letter total: 5%
Group discussion questions	5%	Discussion questions total: 5%

Grading Scale

A = 90%-100%

- B = 80%-89%
- C = 70%-79%
- D = 60%-69%
- F = 59% and below

Blinn College Policies

All policies, guidelines, and procedures in the [Blinn College Catalog \(http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf\)](http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf), [Blinn College Board Policies \(http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1204\)](http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1204), and the [Blinn College Administrative Procedures Manual \(http://www.blinn.edu/admnpolicy/intro.htm\)](http://www.blinn.edu/admnpolicy/intro.htm) are applicable to this course.

Notice of any action taken under these protocol and procedures, by Blinn College or its employees, may be delivered by hand, through the U.S. Postal Service, or electronically to the student's BlinnBuc e-mail account. Notice shall be deemed received upon actual receipt, on deposit in the U.S. Mail, or upon entering the information processing system used by Blinn College for BlinnBuc e-mail accounts, whichever first occurs.

Civility Statement

Blinn College holds all members of the college community, which includes students, faculty, and staff accountable for their actions and words. Therefore, all members should commit themselves to behave in a manner that respects and demonstrates concern for the dignity, rights, and freedoms of others, including respect for the physical and intellectual property of all members of the college community.

Civility Notification Statement. If a student is asked to leave the classroom because of uncivil behavior, the student may not return to that class until he or she arranges a conference with the instructor; it is the student's responsibility to arrange for this conference within two school days of being notified of the suspension from class. This statement reflects step one of three possible steps in the incivility process. The Incivility Protocol is detailed in the [Blinn College Catalog \(http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf\)](http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf) and in [Blinn College Board Policy FLB \(LOCAL\) \(http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1204?filename=FLB\(LOCAL\).pdf\)](http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1204?filename=FLB(LOCAL).pdf).

Attendance Policy

Class attendance is essential for student success; therefore, students are required to promptly and regularly attend all classes. A record of attendance is maintained from the first day of classes and/or the first day the student's name appears on the roster through final examinations. Students who accrue one week's worth of absences during the semester will be sent an e-mail through their Buc account requiring them to contact their instructor and immediately schedule a conference to discuss their attendance issues. Students who accumulate two weeks' worth of unexcused absences, may be administratively withdrawn from class. There are four forms of excused absences recognized by the institution:

1. Observance of religious holy days - Students should notify their instructor(s) no later than the 15th day of the semester concerning the specific date(s) for absences for any religious holy day(s);
2. Representing the College District at an official institutional function;
3. Dual credit students representing the high school or independent school district at an official institutional function; and
4. Military service.

Other circumstances may be considered an excused absence at the discretion of the faculty member with appropriate documentation. College District-mandated attendance policy applies to all coursework; including coursework in developmental/non-credit courses. Failure to attend developmental classes will also result in removal from the course as defined by the College District.

It is the student's responsibility to officially drop a class he or she is no longer attending. Students interested in dropping a course or withdrawing from school may do so by logging into myBlinn and clicking on the "My Records" tab, clicking on "add or drop classes" under registration tools, and then selecting the current registration term and "webdrop" from the action drop down menu. The final step is scrolling to the bottom of the page and clicking submit. Students should contact Enrollment Services at 979-830-4800 for assistance with webdrop or to drop due to: severe illness, care for a sick, injured, or needy person, death of a

close relative/relation, military duty, military duty of a close relative/relation, or change in work schedule. The last day to drop a class with a Q is set according to the [Academic Calendar \(https://schedule.blinn.edu/Astra/Calendars/ActivityCalendar.aspx?calendarId=fcbee170-67bb-11e5-828c-4f3bd2cb6abf#filter=%7B\)](https://schedule.blinn.edu/Astra/Calendars/ActivityCalendar.aspx?calendarId=fcbee170-67bb-11e5-828c-4f3bd2cb6abf#filter=%7B).

Scholastic Integrity

The Scholastic Integrity Policy is located in the [Blinn College Catalog \(http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf\)](http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf), in [Blinn College Board Policy FLDB \(LOCAL\) \(http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1204?filename=FLDB\(LOCAL\).pdf\)](http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1204?filename=FLDB(LOCAL).pdf), and the [Blinn College Administrative Procedures Manual \(http://www.blinn.edu/admnpolicy/Scholastic-Integrity.pdf\)](http://www.blinn.edu/admnpolicy/Scholastic-Integrity.pdf). A student accused of scholastic dishonesty is entitled to due process as outlined in these documents.

It is the responsibility of students and faculty members to maintain scholastic integrity at the College District by refusing to tolerate any form of scholastic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, or any other act of dishonesty. If there is compelling evidence that a student is involved in cheating or plagiarism, the instructor will address the infraction.

Students with Disabilities

Non-Discrimination Statement

Blinn College does not discriminate against qualified individuals with disabilities in the recruitment and admission of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, or the operation of any of its programs and activities, as specified by applicable federal laws and regulations. The designated coordinator for Blinn College's compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), and the Americans with Disabilities Act Amendment Act (ADAAA) is Patricia E. Moran, M.Ed., 902 College Avenue, Brenham, TX 77833, (979) 830-4157. Students should make arrangements for disability service directly with each campus on which they attend classes. Students enrolled on the Brenham, Schulenburg, and Sealy campuses should contact (979) 830-4157 for more information. Students on the Bryan Campus should contact (979) 209-7264.

Services for Students with Documented Disabilities

Students with documented disabilities must self-identify and provide current, appropriate documentation of the disability to the Office of Disability Services (ODS) prior to receiving services. Students are encouraged to contact this office as early as possible to initiate services. Direct services to students with disabilities are provided in the following areas:

- Assessment of needs and appropriate services
- Provision of classroom and testing accommodations
- Assistance in orientation and registration procedures
- Counseling on disability related issues

Information, education, referrals, and consultation about specific disabilities are available to interested parties on request. For answers to specific questions or to request an information packet, contact the [Office of Disability Services \(http://www.blinn.edu/Disability/index.html\)](http://www.blinn.edu/Disability/index.html) on the specific campus you will be attending.

Bryan Campus: (979) 209-7251; Brenham, Sealy, Schulenburg Campuses: (979) 830-4157

Final Grade Appeal

If a student wishes to appeal a final course grade, the guidelines and timeline for a three-step appeal process are detailed in the [Blinn College Catalog \(http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf\)](http://www.blinn.edu/catalogPDF/Admissions-Records-Financial-Aid.pdf), in [Blinn College Board Policy FLDB \(LOCAL\) \(http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1204?filename=FLDB\(LOCAL\).pdf\)](http://pol.tasb.org/Policy/Download/1204?filename=FLDB(LOCAL).pdf), and the [Blinn College Administrative Procedures Manual \(http://www.blinn.edu/admnpolicy/Final-Course-Grade-Appeal.pdf\)](http://www.blinn.edu/admnpolicy/Final-Course-Grade-Appeal.pdf).

* Course Policies

Drop Date: June 22 is the last day to drop with a "Q"

Ecampus: All powerpoint slides, review sheets, readings, and announcements can be found on our ecampus course page. Announcements will appear under the "News" banner on the first page of our course. All other materials will fall under the heading "Content." If any changes are made to the schedule listed here, I will list those changes as an announcement under the "News" banner.

Absences and Make-up Policy: When possible, please contact me prior to class if you know you will be absent. Blinn College excused absences are outlined above under "Attendance Policy." Please read the "Attendance Policy" above in detail! Other absences not outlined in the Blinn Attendance Policy may be excused at my discretion, which means it is your responsibility to contact me and provide documentation. It is also your responsibility to contact me regarding the scheduling of make-up exams and quizzes.

Any student caught forging documents in an attempt to get an excused absence will lose all attendance points and the incident will be reported to the Scholastic Dishonesty board.

Academic Dishonesty: No form of academic dishonesty will be tolerated. I take this matter very seriously. This includes, but is NOT limited to, copying any portion of another's assignments, copying portions of books or websites without proper citation in your writing assignments, or in any other way claiming another's work as your own. Any incidents of any type of academic dishonesty will result in a student receiving an F for the assignment/exam/quiz in question. Further sanctions may be warranted.

In-class computer use: I highly suggest that you limit your computer usage as much as possible. I provide all lecture slides to you on ecampus. It is up to you as to whether you will bring a laptop to class to take notes, but all computer activity must be class-related. I will ask you to cease any activity that is not class-related as it is distracting to others and myself.

Office hours: If my office hours conflict with your schedule you can always schedule a different time to meet with me. Please email me when you need to schedule a meeting outside of my office hours.

Email availability: I will answer emails as quickly as possible Monday - Friday. Weekend and late evening responses will be more sporadic and I cannot guarantee a response during those times.

I will respond quicker to emails that are sent directly to dominique.lewis@blinn.edu as opposed to emails that are sent via ecampus.

Schedule

Date	Meeting Details	Assignments (during class)	Assignments (outside of class)	Readings	Weekly Hours
FIRST DAY					
Friday, June 2	Introduction to the course How does the federal government affect you? Articles of Confederation		Syllabus Quiz online using ecampus (due June 5 by 11 pm)	Chapter 2	2.3
WEEK 1					
Monday, June 5	Articles of Confederation United States Constitution		Syllabus quiz due by 11 pm	Chapter 2	11.5

Tuesday, June 6	United States Constitution Federalism	Group 1 discussion questions due		Chapter 3	
Wednesday, June 7	Federalism			Chapter 3	
Thursday, June 8	Civil liberties	Group Quiz 1 (covers federalism lecture)		Chapter 4	
Friday, June 9	Civil liberties	Group 2 discussion questions due	Online quiz 1 due by 11 pm (covers the civil liberties lecture)	Chapter 4	
WEEK 2					
Monday, June 12	PBS documentary <i>1964</i> (second hour of class)	Exam 1 (first hour of class) Movie worksheet (second hour of class)			11.5
Tuesday, June 13	Civil rights	Group 3 discussion questions due		Chapter 5	
Wednesday, June 14	Legislative Branch			Chapter 12	
Thursday, June 15	Legislative Branch	Group quiz 2 (covers legislative branch lecture)		Chapter 12	
Friday, June 16	Executive Branch		Extra Credit due by 11 pm	Chapter 13	
WEEK 3					
Monday, June 19	Judicial Branch	Group 4 discussion questions due	Online quiz 2 due by 11 pm (covers the executive branch lecture)	Chapter 15	11.5
Tuesday, June 20	Documentary: <i>Evergreen</i> (second hour of class)	Exam 2 (first hour of class) Movie worksheet (second hour of class)			

Wednesday, June 21	Elections and voting			Chapter 8	
Thursday, June 22	Public opinion	Public opinion game (first hour of class)	Online quiz 3 due by 11 pm (covers the elections and voting lecture)	Chapter 6	
Friday, June 23	Political parties	Group 5 discussion questions due		Chapter 9	
WEEK 4					
Monday, June 26	Political Parties Campaigns, Campaign Finance, and Interest Groups	Group quiz 3 (covers political parties lecture)		Chapter 10	11.5
Tuesday, June 27	Campaigns, Campaign Finance, and Interest Groups	Group 6 discussion questions due		Chapter 11	
Wednesday, June 28	Federal bureaucracy	Group 7 discussion questions due		Chapter 14	
Thursday, June 29	In-class game	Group quiz 4 (covers federal bureaucracy lecture)			
Friday, June 30	FINAL EXAM				
			Total Contact Hours		48.3