

American Government

GOVT-2305

Fall 2020 Sections 56K CRN-19279, 56L CRN-19281 3 Credits 10/19/2020 to 12/10/2020 Modified 10/18/2020

Meeting Times

This is an 8-week Hybrid/Flex course

The class meets Tuesday/Thursday 12:00pm-1:15pm SCHW 288

Streamed session through Zoom - same days/times as above. Information for the ZOOM link is on eCampus.

Note: The last day to drop this class with a "Q" is November 30th.

Contact Information

Instructor: Dr. Jason Smith

Office: SCHW 330

Office Phone: 979-209-8977 (Voicemail)

Office Hours: Online link provided in eCampus

Office Email: jason.smith@blinn.edu

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 The primary factors considered relate to the three branches of government - judicial, executive, legislative -- major historical documents, the events that shaped the nation, and current events.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

Ginsberg, Benjamin, Theodore J. Lowi, Margaret Weir, and Caroline J. Tolbert. *We The People: An Introduction To American Politics*. New York: W.W. Norton, 2019 (12th edition). ISBN: 9780393431261 (special custom edition for Blinn College).

This is a special Blinn College edition of the textbook. You use any other version at your own risk.

Course Requirements

Each student will take three (3) exams total; two (2) regular exams and one (1) cumulative final exam. In addition, each student will be required to complete ten (10) quizzes, the information for which will be derived from textbook readings and/or class notes. Further, each student will complete six (6) assignments, as well as write three (3) essays during the course of the semester. Attendance is required for this course and is part of the final grade calculation.

All assignments are due by electronic copy on eCampus by midnight on the date specified in the course schedule below. I do not accept hard copies of assignments, so **ALL assignments must be submitted online**. Assignments turned in during class time will not be accepted. **Assignments will not be accepted after the due date listed below without a legitimate excused absence**. Assignments are due online at midnight on the date specified in the course schedule below. You may turn in assignments early. **In order to check for plagiarism, assignments must be submitted using .doc, .docx, .rtf, .pdf or .odt file formats. Assignments submitted using the .pages format will receive a zero (0) for a grade.**

EXAMS

Each student will complete three (3) exams during the semester. Two of these exams will consist of 50 multiple-choice questions derived from the textbook and lectures for that particular section of the course. **The final is cumulative consisting of 100 multiple-choice questions from all materials covered in the course.**

Honorlock will proctor your exams this semester. Honorlock is an online proctoring service that allows you to take your exam from the comfort of your home. You **DO NOT** need to create an account, download software, or schedule an appointment in advance. **Honorlock is available 24/7 and all that is needed is a computer, a working webcam, and a stable Internet connection.**

To take the syllabus quiz and exams for this course, you **MUST** use **Google Chrome** and the **Honorlock Chrome Extension**. You will be prompted to download the extension when taking the syllabus quiz. You will **NOT** need to download the extension for subsequent exams.

When you are prepared to take the exam, clicking on the exam will open a separate window beginning the Honorlink process. Clicking "Launch Proctoring" will begin the Honorlock authentication process. **This process will include taking a picture of yourself, showing your government-issued ID, and completing a scan of your room. Therefore, you MUST have a webcam to successfully complete this course.** Honorlock will be recording your exam session by webcam, as well as recording your screen. **You CANNOT take your exams on a cell phone, tablet computer, or any other mobile device.** Further, you will **NEED** a reliable internet connection. You are responsible for the internet connection you are using. If you decide to take an exam at Starbucks and the internet connection fails, **the exam will not be reset for you.**

Things to keep in mind when taking an exam:

The exam will be open for at least a 72-hour period. However, the exam cannot be paused. You must complete the exam in one session. If you leave the viewing area of your webcam during the exam without a legitimate excuse, you will receive a zero (0) for the exam. The use of external resources, i.e. notes, textbooks, internal searches, etc. are strictly prohibited. **Failure to follow these rules, and common sense in general, will result in receiving a zero (0) for the exam.**

HOMEWORK ASSIGNMENTS

There are six (6) homework assignments for this course. These are to be completed without the assistance of your classmates. **Failure to complete these assignments on your own may result in an 'F' for the course. NO EXCEPTIONS!** These assignments must be typed into the forms available on eCampus. **These assignments will be submitted on eCampus by midnight on the dates listed below. You are responsible for a reliable internet connection and proper time-management.**

QUIZZES

There is a quiz for every chapter in this course. **Your highest ten (10) assignments will count toward your final grade.** Obviously, these are to be completed at home without the assistance of your classmates. **Failure to complete these assignments on your own will result in an 'F' for the course and possible expulsion from Blinn College. NO EXCEPTIONS!** These assignments will be submitted on eCampus by midnight on the dates listed below. **You are responsible for a reliable internet connection and proper time-management.**

ESSAYS

Each student will write three (3) essays concerning topics related this course. **These papers must be at least 750 words in length covering questions posted by the instructor on eCampus.** More information concerning these papers will be available on eCampus. **These assignments will be submitted on eCampus by midnight on the dates listed below. You are responsible for a reliable internet connection and proper time-management.**

PARTICIPATION

For every unexcused absence or tardy, **five (5) points will be taken away from your participation grade.** Excused absences will not count against your participation grade. There will also be "polls" during the Zoom lecture that will be used for attendance. **Failure to answer these "poll" questions in a timely manner may result in being counted as absent for the day.**

✓ Evaluation

The two regular exams will account for 30% (15% each) of your final grade. The cumulative final will account for 30% of your final grade. Quizzes will count for 10% of your grade. Essays will count for 15% of your grade. Homework assignments will count for 10% of your grade. Participation and attendance will count for 5% of your grade.

Grades will be assessed as follows:

A = 89.5 - 100

B = 79.5 - 89.4

C = 69.5 - 79.4

D = 59.5 - 69.4

F = > 59.5

Please note that the grading scale already rounds up. An 89.5 becomes an 'A' and so forth. I will not curve final grades any more than this.

Criteria

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| Two regular exams | 30% (15% percent each) |
|-------------------|------------------------|

| | |
|------------------------------|-----|
| Final exam | 30% |
| Ten (10) quizzes | 10% |
| Three (3) essays | 15% |
| Six (6) homework assignments | 10% |
| Participation/Attendance | 5% |

Blinn College Policies

All policies, guidelines, and procedures in the [Blinn College Catalog \(http://catalog.blinn.edu/\)](http://catalog.blinn.edu/), [Blinn College Board Policies \(http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1204\)](http://pol.tasb.org/Home/Index/1204), and the [Blinn College Administrative Regulations \(https://www.blinn.edu/administrative-regulations/\)](https://www.blinn.edu/administrative-regulations/) are applicable to this course.

[Specific information on civility, attendance, add/drop, scholastic integrity, students with disabilities, final grade appeal, alternative retailers, campus carry and proctoring arrangements and cost. \(http://www.blinn.edu/syllabus-policies/\)](http://www.blinn.edu/syllabus-policies/)

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 Blinn Buc 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 Blinn Buc e-mail accounts, whichever first occurs.

Information about the changes Blinn has made to the Fall semester: [Back with Blinn \(https://www.blinn.edu/back-with-blinn/index.html\)](https://www.blinn.edu/back-with-blinn/index.html).

* Course Policies

Absences

Each class counts. If you are not here, you will be counted as absent. If you accumulate two (2) weeks of unexcused absences [six (6) for MWF classes or four (4) for TR classes], you will be administratively dropped from the course. **Excused absences do not count against your accumulated absences.**

Additional Electronic Devices Prohibited

In addition to cell phones and pagers, iPods and other mp3 players are prohibited as are headphones in the classroom. **Laptop computers are allowed in the classroom, but the use of the internet is prohibited during lectures.** You may be removed from class for failure to comply.

Drop Date

The last day to drop this class with a "Q" is November 30th.

Schedule

Adjustments (if any) will be announced in eCampus and in class.

Note: Remember, this is an "8-week" compressed hybrid class!!!! Most of the work is online! Remember that days after Thanksgiving are ONLINE only! (These are marked with a '*' below.)

| Calendar Period "Week" (Mon-Sun) | Tuesday Class (Lecture topic) | Thursday Class (Lecture topic) | Credit Hours (per week) |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Oct 19 - 25: | Introduction/Course Expectations | Constitution | 6 |
| Oct 26 - Nov 1: | Constitution | Federalism | 6 |
| Nov 2 - 8: | Civil Liberties | Civil Liberties | 6 |
| Nov 9 - 15: | Elections | Political Parties | 6 |
| Nov 16 - 22: | Campaigns | Congress | 6 |
| Nov 23 - 29:: | Congress | Thanksgiving Holiday | 6 |
| Nov 30 - Dec 6: | Presidency | Presidency | 6 |
| Dec 7 - 10: | Budget | Budget | 6 |

Total Contact Hours: 48

ATTENTION!!!! Please note the following due dates (Also available on eCampus)

| Assignment | When Due |
|----------------|----------------|
| Exam #1 | Nov 8 (Sun) |
| Exam #2 | Nov 18 (Wed) |
| Final Exam | Dec 10 (Thurs) |
| Homework #1 | Oct 26 (Mon) |
| Homework #2 | Oct 30 (Fri) |
| Homework #3 | Nov 6 (Fri) |
| Homework #4 | Nov 13 (Fri) |
| Homework #5 | Nov 20 (Fri) |
| Homework #6 | Dec 2 (Mon) |
| Chapter 1 Quiz | Oct 27 (Tue) |
| Chapter 2 Quiz | Oct 29 (Thur) |
| Chapter 3 Quiz | Nov 3 (Tue) |
| Chapter 4 Quiz | Nov 5 (Thur) |
| Chapter 5 Quiz | Nov 6 (Fri) |
| Chapter 6 Quiz | Nov 10 (Tue) |
| Chapter 7 Quiz | Nov 12 (Thur) |
| Chapter 8 Quiz | Nov 13 (Fri) |
| Chapter 9 Quiz | Nov 15 (Sun) |

| | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Chapter 10 Quiz | Nov 16 (Mon) |
| Chapter 11 Quiz | Nov 17 (Tue) |
| Chapter 12 Quiz | Nov 20 (Fri) |
| Chapter 13 Quiz | Nov 23 (Mon) |
| Chapter 14 Quiz | Nov 24 (Tue) |
| Chapter 15 Quiz | Nov 30 (Mon) |
| Chapter 16 Quiz | Dec 1 (Tue) |
| Chapter 17 Quiz | Dec 2 (Wed) |
| Chapter 18 Quiz | Dec 4 (Fri) |
| Essay #1 | Nov 6 (Fri) |
| Essay #2 | Nov 17 (Tues) |
| Essay #3 | Dec 4 (Fri) |