

American Government

GOVT-2305

Fall 2020 Sections 98A CRN-20450, 98B CRN-20451 3 Credits 08/24/2020 to 12/10/2020 Modified 08/19/2020

Meeting Times

TR: 7:30-8:45 AM

Section 98A: Tuesday: On campus

Thursday: REMOTE

Section 98B: Tuesday: REMOTE

Thursday: On campus

Room: SBMN 110 (Schulenburg)

Office Hours: Please visit with me after class for any questions. Otherwise, feel free to email at the address listed below.

Contact Information

Office: LA 136

Telephone: 979-743-5224 

Email: brian.cravens@blinn.edu (please do not email at this address unless you cannot access D2L/Ecampus. Please email via D2L/Ecampus - see below.)

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 The primary factors considered relate to the three branches of government - judicial, executive, legislative -- major historical documents, the events that shaped the nation, and current events.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

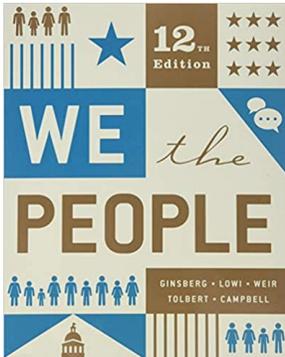
Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.

Analyze the election process.

Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.

Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.

Materials



ISBN: 978-0393679588

For Zoom meetings and Honorlock proctoring:

- Webcam
- Microphone
- Laptop/Desktop
- Reliable Internet connection

Course Requirements

The following is an outline of the material covered in this course:

1. Foundations
2. Politics
3. Institutions
4. Policy

Evaluation of a student's accomplishments in Government 2305 will consist of one academic essay, twelve quizzes, three major exams and a comprehensive final. Class lecture, discussions, handouts, articles in Course Announcements, and reading assignments and videos are all fair game for the exams.

Assessments and Assignments

Academic Essays: This semester students will *formally* write one academic essay examining relevant political issue that augment the knowledge gained from the textbook. Students will choose one of the "For Critical Analysis" topics scattered throughout the textbook, answer the question and expand on it using depth and data. There are specific discussion guidelines:

- 750 words minimum word count. Failure to meet the minimum word count requirement results in no credit for that submission. Do not pad your word count with large quotes, a lengthy works cited, or headings.
- The essay **MUST** include two sources: one from a relevant academic or journalistic website and one from the Blinn database. Both sources must be incorporated into your essay. I am going to be very strict about this - avoid overtly political sources that only sling mud and inaccuracy. Dictionaries, encyclopedias, blogs, and Wikipedia are not allowed. This includes database dictionaries and encyclopedias. It also includes juvenile sources used on the K-12 level. If two relevant sources aren't used or properly cited, a zero will be issued for that assignment - this is the second minimum requirement. Feel free to use MLA format when citing. Sources, including links must appear at the end of the essay submission. Not listing sources and/or incorporating them into your essay is the same as not using sources and will result in a zero for that submission. In the end, I determine what is and is not relevant.
- Check spelling and grammar before submitting. One point will be deducted for every error made.
- Format: Times New Roman, 12 font, using multiple paragraphs. No monolithic block paragraphs.
- What do I look for when grading? Apart from grammar and spelling, I look for logical consistency, how well the student incorporated supportive timely and relevant examples, supporting data, and how well the topic was critically analyzed (depth). The only way to earn an "A" for the essays is for the student to offer a well-structured and insightful analysis free from writing flaws. This should be the goal of every written assignment.
- Be polite Follow Blinn College Civility guidelines. Often in the online world, many think that they are anonymous and protected by a computer screen that allows them to use rude language and ridicule the other side. This is not good political dialogue. In the end, I determine what is and is not polite.
- Essays are due no later than Monday, October 26 at 6 AM.
- No late submissions are allowed. Deadlines are precise. Even one second late nulls your answer. Get your work in early and therefore on time!
- The essay is worth up to 100 points.
- Unless otherwise noted in the course News Feed, essays will be graded within five days after the deadline.
- Upload your file as a .doc or .docx file only in the Ecampus Drop Box.

Quizzes: During the course of the semester the student will take twelve online multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank or short answer quizzes. These quizzes are the "participation" part of the class. Only ten quizzes are considered "official" quizzes that qualify under the grading scale. If you do not submit within the allotted time, a zero will be issued as a grade for that particular exam. You may not begin an exam and then return to it later. And just like the quizzes, these exams are to be completed by you and no one else. Any indication of collaboration and you will receive a failing grade *for the class*. This is a zero sum issue. NO makeups or late submissions will be allowed. Questions will be taken from lectures, the text (very likely) or any other supplemental reading including articles posted in Course Announcements.

- Quizzes are due by Friday 5 PM, each week one is assigned.
- Each quiz will have a time limit of fifteen minutes.
- Answers will be released post-deadline.

Exams: Students will have three proctored exams of 50 multiple-choice and True/False questions. There is a two-hour comprehensive proctored final exam that will have 100 multiple-choice questions. Textbook, notes, or any supplemental material is not allowed. If you do not submit within the allotted time, a zero will be issued as a grade for that particular exam. You may not begin an exam and then return to it later. And just like the quizzes, these exams are to be completed by you and no one else. Any indication of collaboration and you will receive a failing grade *for the class*. This is a zero sum issue. NO late submissions will be allowed.

- Exams are due by Friday 5 PM, the week it's assigned.
- The first three exams allow for up to 75 minutes. The final exam allows up to 120 minutes.
- Answers will be released post-deadline.

Important: All exams (and the Syllabus Quiz) are proctored via Honorlock. Please see "Proctoring Requirement" below for more information.

✓ Evaluation

Grading Criteria

Ten quizzes (10 points each): 100 points

One academic essays (100 points): 100 points

Three major exams (100 points each): 300 points

Comprehensive Final: 200 points

TOTAL: 700 points

Grading Scale

630-700: A

560-629: B

490-559: C

420-489: D

419 or less: F

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

[Please Read: Fall 2020 General Course Policies \(http://www.blinn.edu/back-with-blinn/course-policies.html\)](http://www.blinn.edu/back-with-blinn/course-policies.html)

Makeup Policy

NO make-ups will be given for any of the quizzes, regular exams, or the final exam. NOTE: A student who is absent from the class while representing Blinn College, an ISD, or for a religious holy day will be allowed to make up any exam within one week of the absence. However, at least a two-day notice prior to the allowed absence must be presented to the instructor.

Extra Credit

The only official extra credit offered is the Syllabus Quiz. There are no curves offered in this class. Do not ask for additional points and/or extra credit at the end of the semester. Every point counts. Make certain that you earn yours!

D2L/Ecampus Online Classroom

This semester's lecture class will be supplemented by an online environment known as D2L/Ecampus that showcases a student gradebook, course announcements, calendar, discussion section, and other tools that will assist the student. Students can access D2L/Ecampus at <https://ecampusd2l.blinn.edu/>.

Zoom etiquette for remote learning students

The physical Blinn College classroom extends to all remote learning students during class. This means that the Blinn College Civility Statement extends there, too. Please dress appropriately, no cell phone use or anything else that may distract you, and mute your microphone unless asking or answering a question to minimize distractions placed upon classroom students.

Computer Access for D2L/Ecampus

This class does incorporate an online environment known as D2L/Ecampus. As a result, you must have reliable access to both a computer and to the Internet. This is your responsibility.

Be aware that online courses do not work well, if at all, with tablets and smartphones. To make things easier, do your work on either a laptop or a desktop computer. Also be aware of the challenges of different browsers; always have a backup browser.

Please take potential technical issues into account and submit your assignments in advance of the deadline rather than the last few hours before the deadline. Deadlines are strict.

Given the great deal of time that is given to complete the various assignments, using the excuse of computer problems is not valid and will not be accepted. If you are having technical problems logging on, saving answers, etc., please contact the Distance Learning Office (979-209-7298 or <http://www.blinn.edu/disted> and click on 'technical assistance' or 'student assistance') as soon as the problem occurs.

Proctoring Requirement

In order to maintain high academic standards, the following assessments are required to be proctored:

Assessment to be proctored	Type of Proctoring
Syllabus Quiz	Honorlock
All Exams	Honorlock

Information about proctoring options:

- Honorlock is a service included in your Internet service fee. Students must have a high-speed reliable internet connection, webcam, and a microphone (if the webcam does not have one.) See your course orientation in eCampus on how to use Honorlock.
- A step-by-step guide on navigating Honorlock proctoring can be found in our online class under "Proctoring Requirement."
- Failure to proctor the required assignments results in a zero for that assignment, regardless of grade earned.
- Engaging in cheating of any kind results in an automatic zero for the class.

- No external devices are allowed: cell phones, headphones, smart watches, friends whispering answers, etc. This list is not exclusive and may be expanded upon the discretion of the professor.

E-mail through D2L/Ecampus

Please check your email regularly through the in-class D2L/Ecampus email system. Any questions or concerns need to be sent to me through our course D2L/Ecampus email system. Please do not email me at my regular Blinn address. By emailing me within our course, I'll be able to respond more quickly! When emailing me:

- Use proper grammar and spelling. Do not write like you are texting a friend.
- Use a proper salutation.
- In the subject line, include the class and section.
- When beginning an email, please introduce yourself. I have lots of students, so remind me of who you are.
- Always close the loop when I reply to your email: let me know you've received it.

Print Management System

Each student is automatically given a print system account at the start of the semester along with 15 credits (i.e. \$15.00). The credits can be utilized in the library and lab settings for any print jobs (online articles). Credits are not refundable nor does the balance roll over to the next semester.

Electronic Devices for this class

All the functions of all personal electronic devices for communication and/or entertainment (cell phones, pagers, beepers, iPods, and similar devices) must be turned off and kept out of sight in all College District classrooms and associated laboratories. Any noncompliance with this policy shall be addressed in accordance with the College District Civility Policy (Administrative Policy). This information is contained in Blinn College Board Policy FLB (Local).

Furthermore, should a student violate this policy, the resulting penalty will be a *blue book exam for the entire class for the next exam*.

If an emergency exists where the student must be accessible by phone, the student must inform his/her instructor prior to class and the phone must be set to "vibrate."

Students may use a laptop for note taking. However, any student caught using the laptop for purposes other than this class (email, Internet surfing, other class projects) will cause the entire class to lose this privilege all semester and also results in a *blue book exam for the entire class for the next exam*.

Scholastic Dishonesty for this class - read carefully!

Any student caught engaging in scholastic dishonesty (*which includes cheating on exams and quizzes, providing peers with exam and quiz questions, printing out copies of the quizzes and exams, plagiarism, recycled papers, or collusion*) will receive an automatic 'F' in the course regardless of where you stand academically. This black mark will stay with you for your entire academic career. Do not let this happen to you!

What is considered uncivil behavior for this course?

Sleeping, dozing, texting, playing with a cell phone, talking in class, working on another class's assignment, or the instructor's discretion.

Also note that two tardies equal one absence.

The drop date is November 30.

I reserve the right to adjust the syllabus if needed. Adjustments will either be announced in class or through our Ecampus class.

Schedule

<u>Class schedule</u>	Weekly Contact hours
Week 1 (August 25): Introduction to class (August 27): American Political Culture (pages 2-39)	3
Week 2 (September 1): American Political Culture (September 3): The Founding and the Constitution (pages 40-75) Quiz 1: American Political Culture due Friday, 5 PM	3
Week 3 (September 8): The Founding and the Constitution (September 10): Federalism (pages 75-113) Quiz 2: US Constitution due Friday, 5 PM	3
Week 4 (September 15): Federalism (September 17): Civil Liberties and Civil Rights (pages 114-203) Quiz 3: Federalism due Friday, 5 PM	3
Week 5 (September 22 & 24): Civil Liberties and Civil Rights Quiz 4: Civil Liberties due Friday, 5 PM Exam I due Friday, 5 PM	3
Week 6 (September 29 & October 1): Public Opinion and the Media (pages 204-293) Quiz 5: Public Opinion and the Media due Friday, 5 PM	3
Week 7 (October 6 & 8): Political Participation and Voting (pages 294-333) Quiz 6: Political Participation and Voting due Friday, 5 PM	3

<p>Week 8 (October 13 & 15): Campaigns and Elections (pages 378-427)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quiz 7: Campaigns and Elections due Friday 5 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Exam II due Friday, 5 PM</p>	3
<p>Week 9 (October 20 & 22): Congress (pages 466-511)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quiz 8: Congress due Friday 5 PM</p>	3
<p>Week 10 (October 27 & 29): The Presidency (pages 512-549)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quiz 9: The Presidency due Friday 5 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Essay due October 26 by 6 AM in Dropbox</p>	3
<p>Week 11 (November 3 & 5): The Federal Courts (pages 590-629)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quiz 10: The Federal Courts due Friday, 5 PM</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Exam III due Friday, 5 PM</p>	3
<p>Week 12 (November 10 & 12): Social Policy (pages 674-713)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quiz 11: Social Policy due Friday 5 PM</p>	3
<p>Week 13 (November 17 & 19): Government and the Economy (pages 630-673)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Quiz 12: Government and the Economy due Friday, 5 PM</p>	3
<p>Week 14 (November 24): Foreign Policy (pages 714-751)</p>	3
<p>Week 15 (December 1 & 2): Foreign Policy</p> <p style="text-align: center;">LAST DAY TO DROP WITH A Q: November 30</p>	3
<p>Week 16 (December 5-8): COMPREHENSIVE FINAL EXAM: due December 8 by 9 AM</p>	3

Total Contact Hours	48
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