

American Government

GOVT-2305

Fall 2020 Sections 90A CRN-18961, 90B CRN-18962 3 Credits 08/24/2020 to 12/10/2020 Modified 08/20/2020

Meeting Times

8/24/2020-12/10/2020

OLD MAIN - ROOM 311

MW 10:35AM-11:50

Office Hours Fall 2020 for Brenham campus

Per Blinn policy due to Covid 19, All in person office hours are discouraged and virtual office hours through ZOOM or email/chat are encouraged. Please discuss with me after class and we can set up a time to meet.

I am willing to briefly meet with students before class or directly after class as well. Students may also email me at keith.carlson@blinn.edu for assistance with class.

Contact Information

Mr. Keith Carlson

Government Instructor, Blinn College

RM 408, Old Main - Brenham Campus

keith.carlson@blinn.edu (I constantly check email, so this is probably the most effective method in which to contact me, especially for an online course)

PH# 979-830-4381

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 The primary factors considered relate to the three branches of government - judicial, executive, legislative -- major historical documents, the events that shaped the nation, and current events.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

WE THE PEOPLE 2019

REQUIRED | *By GINSBERG*

EDITION: 12E

PUBLISHER: NORTON

ISBN: 9780393644326

Please note the word "Required" in bold above. Do not ask me if the textbook is required, you know the answer to the question already.

☰ Course Requirements

The student is responsible for keeping up with assigned readings and assignments. The student will have all assignments accessed and completed through eCampus. Please note my dividing of the course does not necessarily match that of the book. I will discuss this further in the syllabus as well as in class.

I will divide up the course into the following sections:

Section I: Foundations; American Political Culture and the Constitution

Section II: Politics; Interest Groups, Media, Public Opinion, Parties and elections, Participation and Voting

Section III: Institutions; Legislative, Executive/Bureaucracy and Judicial

Section IV: Policy; Economic, Social, Foreign

Section V: Civil Rights and Civil Liberties

✓ Evaluation

Grades will be determined based on the following formula/breakdown:

Class Participation/discussion grades - 6 total = 25 points each or 150 points of total grade (Major Grade)

Chapter Quizzes - 10 total = 25 points each or 250 points of total grade

Section exams - 5 total = 50 points each or 250 points of total grade (Major Grade)

Final exam = 200 points of total grade (Comprehensive) (Major Grade)

Evaluation of a student's accomplishments in Government 2305 will consist of 10 chapter quizzes, 5 section exams, and a comprehensive final exam. Participation and discussion by the student will also factor into the final grade.

All assignments will be administered online giving the student several days in which to decide when to take each quiz. All quizzes and exams are timed and will utilize the honor lock or responds lockdown system for scholastic integrity. Failure to complete the quizzes within the allotted time will count as a zero. Since all assignments are online and given the current public health climate, students are aware of this and know they are to complete work online, therefore **no makeups** for missed quizzes or exams.

There will be 6 participation/discussion grades which will influence the student's overall grade. The participation/discussion grades will count towards over 15% of the total grade. These grades cover the reading materials or current events in the news. No make-ups will be given for missed Discussion/participation grades.

Attendance during class, whether or not in person or remotely, is mandatory. Not completing assignments will negatively affect a student's grade given that makeups are not allowed. Please review the absence policy below for further explanation of "excused" absences. These are the only excused absences I will accept in regards to offering a makeup exam. Attendance and grades go hand in hand; missing class for any reason puts you, the student, at a distinct disadvantage.

All quizzes and exams will consist of multiple choice, true or false and short answer questions. Readings, quiz and test dates are explained below in the Course Calendar/Schedule.

Breakdown

Based on the assignments, the grades will breakdown as follows:

(Based on points)

A = 850-765

B = 764-680

C = 679-595

D = 594-510

F = 509-below

The grading scale is as follows:

(Based on percentages)

A = 100%-90%

B = 89-80

C = 79-70

D = 69-60

F = 59-50

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

Addendum to the civility and absences policy: (both remote and face to face)

Since this is a college level course, I expect mature behavior while in class. This means no cell phones are to be out and visible nor should students be wearing headphones, ear buds or any other electronic device that takes away from pay attention. Any student caught with a cell phone will be dismissed from the class and counted as absent. Note taking in class both remotely and F2F is required. The student must have something to write with as well as a notebook to write in. Students are not permitted to sit in class without taking notes and they will be asked to leave and counted as absent. If assistance is required for note taking, the student should see Disability Services for further assistance. Remember, 4 absences will result in being administratively dropped from the class.

Also, if you are not in your seat once I shut the door to the classroom you are considered absent for that class. I will be calling roll. No exceptions.

Classroom behavior I find disruptive will result in the individual being dismissed from class and being counted as absent. You will not be able to reenter the classroom until you formally request a conference with me to discuss the offending behavior. Things I consider to be offending and disruptive include but are not limited to: sleeping in class, headphones on during the class or even wearing them into the classroom, not paying attention, no note taking, etc. Basically, come to class pay attention for either the 50 or 75 minutes, participate in the class discussion and all will be good.

I do not make these rules to be difficult or mean-spirited. I make them because students need to understand that they are ultimately responsible for their own success in the class and in life. I am more than willing to assist and strive to make this course enjoyable but student's behavior is critical to the success of this course. Those who choose to play by the rules will be successful, those who do not will not be successful.

If you have any questions about my classroom policies, please feel free to schedule a conference with me to discuss your concerns.

It is the student's responsibility to officially drop a class he or she is no longer chooses to attend. To officially drop a class the student must obtain the class withdrawal form from Enrollment Services, complete the class withdrawal form, secure the required signatures, and return the completed form to Enrollment Services. **The last day to drop this course with a Q is Monday, November 30, 2020.**

Assignment are divided into sections and you are responsible for the following assignments during each section. I only open assignments on the days listed on eCampus. (All starting and ending dates are listed on eCampus in the Content section of the course. Please review the Graded Assignments module for more information):

1. Read chapters and take notes, and review additional chapter study material (see end of each chapter for study guides and additional materials)
2. Complete assigned quizzes (see calendar for due dates)
3. Answer the eight discussions and respond to at least two students per discussion with one response being to a student with whom you disagree.
4. Complete the Final exam at the end of course term.

ALL assignments are completed online, including the exams, and can be accessed through the CONTENT tab on Ecampus. There are time periods for all assignments and once the time is up, you cannot complete the assignment and will receive a zero. All assignments are due by 10pm on the due date.

WRITTEN WORK INFORMATION:

Discussion – 6 graded discussions will be posted. You are to write a detailed original essay on each topic. Once the due date has passed, any posted responses will not be graded. The discussion board is set up as POST FIRST so you must post your response to the discussion questions before you can see other student's responses. If you mistakenly post a message that does not include your response to the questions, your response will not be graded because you then have access to other student's answers. Your response must be substantive in nature. That is, you must respond with more than, "I agree...I like your post, etc. Failure to respond to the minimum number of students will result in a grade of zero. Also, just doing the minimum does not mean you will receive full credit. No partial credit is given.

Each discussion is worth up to 25 points. The potential grading for each discussion breakout is:

Original post: Up to 15 points.

Each response: Up to 5 points each.

Remember if you only do the original post, you will receive ZERO points. If you only do the original post and one response, you will receive ZERO points.

This will be discussed in more detail in class.

Final thoughts for written work:

- Your responses should be YOURS...not just reciting information you found on a website, the book, or from another student. If you are using material from other sources like the book or a website to support your argument, you need to provide proper citations within the text of your response.
- Each original posting must be at least 500 words in length – while quality of content is the primary factor considered in grading, I am also VERY picky on the length. If your posting does not meet the minimum of 500 words, it will not be graded and you will receive a zero for that assignment. Also, if you fail to respond to the minimum number of students (2), you will receive a zero. Each response should be no less than 150 words each. One of the responses to other students must be to someone with whom you disagree. You don't have to be mean about it. The point of these exercises are to create dialogue and discussion. Remember just because you do the minimum does not mean you will receive full credit. No partial credit is given.
- Please check grammar and spelling before posting. I reserve the right to refuse to grade your written work if it is not grammatically correct so please review your written work before posting. Lack of punctuation or capitalization is important considering this is a college essay so I would suggest writing like you are in college!
- Finally, personal attacks of any kind or profanity will not be tolerated and will result in you receiving a zero for the discussion question and response. You can disagree with each other but please be respectful and realize that you will encounter different opinions and you need to respect everyone's opinion even if you disagree. I encourage debate but please be respectful.

TIME LIMITS:

Chapter Quizzes: 25 minutes (you may use the text and the notes you take during readings)

Section Quizzes: 50 minutes

Discussion: open to answer during the unit which assigned and due dates in calendar and semester schedule in syllabus

Final Exam: approximately 120 minutes to complete

Schedule

Week One	Meeting Details	Lecture Minutes	Weekly Hours
	Ch1-American Political Culture	75	3
Week Two		LEC	Weekly
	Ch1-American Political Culture/ Ch2-Constitution	75	3
	Ch2-Constitution (Quiz 2)	75	
Week Three		LEC	Weekly
	Ch3-Federalism	75	3
	Ch3-Federalism (Section Exam 1)	75	
Week Four		LEC	Weekly
	Chapters 6&7-Public Opinion & Media	75	3
	Chapters 6&7-Public Opinion & Media (Quiz 2)	75	
Week Five		LEC	Weekly
	Chapters 8&9-Political Participation & Voting Behavior	75	3

	Chapters 8&9-Political Participation & Voting Behavior (Quiz 3)	75	
Week Six		LEC	Weekly
	Chapters 10&11- Campaigns/Elections and Interest Groups	75	3
	Chapters 10&11- Campaigns/Elections and Interest Groups (Quiz 4/Section Exam 2)	75	
Week Seven		LEC	Weekly
	Ch12 - Congress	75	3
	Ch12 - Congress (Quiz 5)	75	
Week Eight	Ch13 & 14 - Presidency and Bureaucracy Ch13 & 14 - Presidency and Bureaucracy (Quiz 6)	75	3
Week Nine		LEC	Weekly
	Ch15 - The Judiciary	75	3
	Ch15 - The Judiciary (Quiz 7/Section Exam 3)	75	
Week Ten		LEC	Weekly
	Ch 16 Economy and Government	75	3
	Ch 16 Economy and Government	75	
Week Eleven		LEC	Weekly
	Video and assignment	75	3

	Video and assignment	75	
Week Twelve		LEC	Weekly
	Ch 17 Social Policy	75	3
	Ch 17 Social Policy (Quiz 8)	75	
Week Thirteen		LEC	Weekly
	Ch 18 Foreign Policy	75	3
	Ch 18 Foreign Policy (Exam 4)	75	
Week Fourteen		LEC	Weekly
	Ch 5 Civil Rights	75	3
	Ch 5 Civil Rights	75	
Week Fifteen		LEC	Weekly
	Ch 5 Civil Rights		
	Ch 5 Civil Rights (Quiz 9)	75	3
Monday, Nov., 30	Last day to drop class with Q. After that it is an F.		
Week Sixteen		LEC	Weekly
	Ch 4 Civil Liberties	75	3
	Ch 4 Civil Liberties (Quiz 10/Section Exam 5)	75	
		LEC	Weekly

Finals Week; MON-THUR, December 7-10	Final Exam is Monday, @10:15am		3
	Total Contact Hours		48.0

Course Calendar

* Note; the instructor reserves the right to make changes to the following schedule as necessary. This calendar is only an approximation since events can dictate class discussion topics. Any changes will be announced in class/eCampus in a timely manner. The due dates for all assignments will be announced in eCampus in a timely manner. **The last day to drop this course and receive a "Q" is Monday, November 30.** It is your responsibility to pay attention to due dates and times. Also you are responsible for dropping the course prior to this date if you so choose. Dropping after this date will result in a grade of F.

All online assignments are to be submitted by the 5pm on the due date of each assignment posted. I will give students plenty of time in which to complete all assignments