



GOVT-2305-201CL-SP2023

Federal Government

Spring 2023

Tuesday 06:00PM - 08:50PM, Learning Resource, Bldg. #8, Room 255

FACULTY: Karina M. Lovas

E-MAIL: klovas@com.edu

STUDENT HOURS: Tuesdays 5:30pm-6:00pm and 9:00-9:30pm Building 8, rm 255

Virtual hours: Mondays 2:30pm-3:30pm

Can also meet by appointment

Communicating with Instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to federal law, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Required Textbook/Materials: Glen Lutz et al. *American Government* (3rd edition) (You can download and access for FREE from <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>) If you would like you can order a hard copy of the text from the publisher or Amazon, but it is not necessary.

Course Description: Origin and development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government including the legislative, executive, and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights.

Course Assignments:

Requirement	Points
Syllabus Quiz	5
Test #1	15
Test #2	15
Test #3	15
Participation Activities (10 x2 pts)	20
Paper Topic Assignment	10
Position Paper	20
Total	100

Syllabus Quiz (5 points)

Students will take a brief quiz on Blackboard to demonstrate they are familiar with the class policies and have read the syllabus.

The syllabus quiz cannot be taken late.

Syllabus Quiz will be due by Sunday January 22 at 11:59pm.

Tests (3 x15 points):

3 exams will be given throughout the semester. They will be 20 multiple-choice questions with 5 short answer questions. I usually add 2-4 extra credit short answer questions. I provide a study guide on the LMS to help prepare for the exam.

You will take the exam in class.

They will encompass only material presented since the last examination. The exams will not be cumulative. Cheating will be taken very seriously.

You are expected to be in class for the exam. If you cannot be in class, you need to e-mail me before or during the exam to schedule a make-up/or an alternative assignment. Coming to me after the fact will not result in a makeup exam.

Exam 1 will February 22 (assuming no schedule changes take place)

Exam 2 April 4 (assuming no schedule changes take place)

Exam 3 will May 9th.

Participation (10 x2 – 20 points)

Up to 20 points will be awarded for regular participation and attendance in class as best that you can. Participating means being present in class in both body and spirit and participating in discussion.

We will complete regular participation activities in class (these will be random and not announced ahead of time) that will be worth 2 points each towards 20 total participation points. **There will be no make ups for missed participation activities**, however, I will offer extra activities towards the end of the semester to make up for any lost points.

Topic Assignment and Position Paper (30 points total, 10 for topic assignment, 20 for position paper)

Students will write a position paper on one of the following public policy controversies in the United States:

- Should private businesses have the right to deny service based on their religious beliefs and practices?
- Should the electoral college be changed or done away with?
- Should the structure of Congress change?
- Should the federal government legalize recreational drugs?

- Should the federal government ban all animal testing?
- Should the federal government ensure Americans all earn a living wage?
- Should the federal government do more to combat climate change?
- Should the federal government ensure everyone has access to mental health care?

Topic Assignment (10 points) DUE: February 19, 2023 at 11:59pm on D2L

To ensure that students will be successful for the position paper, they will first complete a topic assignment. Students will fill out the topic assignment worksheet to submit their chosen topic and at least THREE sources (in proper MLA, APA, or Chicago style) with explanation on which topic they have chosen.

There is a worksheet on D2L that has every component you need for the topic assignment. It will be graded with comments, use these comments for the paper.

Position Paper (20 points) Due April 16, 2023 at 11:59pm on D2L

Write a paper taking a position (yes or no) on your chosen issue. Conduct research on the topic, citing at least FOUR sources from credible and reliable publications, web sites, journals, books, etc.

Formulate an argument based on evidence in defense of this position and respond to the objections to this position. Explain how this position impacts the issues of personal responsibility and social responsibility.

The paper should be 1000 words (approximately 5 pages), double-spaced, with 1-inch margins, and a 12-point Times New Roman Font, with a works cited page with correctly formatted MLA, APA, or Chicago style citations. There should be a works cited (not included in word count) and in-text citations throughout the paper.

Please use the template provided on D2L with the correct formatting and header.

Paper Guidelines:

- Format
 - Template on D2L, citation style can be MLA, APA, or Chicago (as long as it is consistent)
 - Times New Roman
 - 12 Point
 - Double-spaced
 - 1-inch margins
 - No footnotes
 - Microsoft Word or PDF files
- 1000 words (aim for 5 pages) not including works cited page
- Be sure to cite both paraphrased and quoted information. Do not use more than two direct quotes.
- You can use the following sources for topic assignment and paper:
 - Academic Journal articles
 - Newspaper articles (not from editorial section) preferably from print media (like The Wall Street Journal, The New York Times, The Houston Chronicle, Texas Tribune, The Economist, The Washington Post, etc. As

far as non-print journalism goes NPR, AP, Reuters, C-Span, CBS News, and ABC News generally have decent reporting)

- Government sites
- Research and polling institutes like Pew
- You may NOT use the following sources:
 - Wikipedia
 - Pro-Con.org
 - Editorials
 - Blogs (including posts on Medium, Thought Catalog, etc)
 - Random lawyers' websites
 - Avoid the lower tier news publications. This means NO Huffington Post, the Federalist, New York Post, CNN, BuzzFeed, The Daily Beast, Daily Mail, MSNBC, Fox News, OAN, The Blaze, Epoch Times, InfoWars, Occupy Democrats, Breitbart, Drudge Report, etc. etc.
 - Avoid interest group websites (e.g ACLU, Planned Parenthood, NRA, etc) as they have an agenda in providing information.
- You may not use papers you wrote in other classes.

Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:

Requirement	Points
Syllabus Quiz	5
Test #1	15
Test #2	15
Test #3	15
Participation Activities (10 x2 pts)	20
Paper Topic Assignment	10
Position Paper	20
Total	100

LETTER GRADE ASSIGNMENT:

I will add up all your points earned over the semester to find your final grade.

Letter Grade	Final Score
A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra-Credit Policy:

The syllabus quiz needs to be taken on time; it will not be reopened.

You need to inform me if you are going to miss a test. Not emailing me to inform me and coming to me in class the next week will not result in a make up exam.

Participation activities are only offered in class for those in attendance. They will not made up the next class. If you miss a participation activity there will be extra activities/activities that can earn double credit towards the end of the semester to make up any points lost. \

I will accept the written assignments (topic assignment, and position paper) with a 24 hours grace period with no points lost, no need to inform me. Anything later 24 hours late than that will incur a penalty. Please inform me if you are having trouble so I can try and assist. I will not accept written assignments more than 7 days late.

Extra Credit: There will several opportunities to earn extra credit over the course of the semester. Opportunities to earn extra credit will include sporadic written assignments, exam questions, and possible events outside of class. I will not offer extra credit on an individual basis, so coming to me at the end of the semester hoping to earn several extra points will not be possible.

Course outline:

This is the tentative schedule for the course. Please keep an eye on your COM email incase changes need to be made.

Date	Reference Chapters	Topics
January 17	1 and 2	Welcome Constitution January 22: Syllabus Quiz due on D2L
January 24	3	Federalism
January 31	4 and 5	Civil Liberties and Civil Rights
February 7	5	Civil Rights Movements
February 14		Civil Rights Movements Cont February 19: Topic Assignment Due on D2L
February 21		Civil Rights Documentary
February 28		Review Exam 1
March 7	6 & 8	Public Opinion and Media
March 14	SPRING BREAK	Enjoy! Be safe!
March 21	7 9	Campaigns and Elections Political Parties
March 28	10 11	Interest Groups Congress
April 4		Review Exam 2
April 11	12	Presidency Presidents Documentary April 16: Position Paper due on D2L
April 18	15 and 16	The Bureaucracy and Domestic Policy
April 25		April 24: LAST DAY TO DROP THE COURSE
	13 17	Courts Foreign Policy
May 2	17	Foreign Policy Cont Review
May 9		Exam 3

Attendance Policy:

COM students are required to attend classes and attendance will be taken in all class meetings. If an absence is unavoidable, do your best to get notes and any class updates from a classmate.

While I always want you to be in class we are (still) in the midst of an ongoing and ever-changing health crisis, **PLEASE** do not come to class if you are feeling like you might be sick/are actually sick/are exhibiting symptoms (like runny nose/congestion, sore throat, coughing, shortness of breath, upset stomach, unexplained rash, and skin irritation, etc.). We can make arrangements for missed material.

Communicating with your instructor: ALL electronic communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means.

Core objectives:

1. Critical Thinking Skills: Students will demonstrate creative thinking, innovation, and the ability to analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information.
2. Communication Skills: Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written, oral, and visual communication
3. Social Responsibility: Students will demonstrate intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities
4. Personal Responsibility: Evaluate choices and actions of others or one's own, and relate consequences to ethical decision-making.

Student Learner Outcome	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.	Critical thinking and communication skills	Exams and participation assignments
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system	Critical thinking and communication skills	Exams and participation assignments
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice	Critical thinking and communication skills	Exams and participation assignments
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government	Personal responsibility, critical thinking, and communication skills	Exams and participation assignments
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups,	Social and personal responsibility and communication skills	Topic assignment and position paper

and political parties in the political system.		
6. Analyze election process	Social and personal responsibility	Exam, position paper, participation assignments
7. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens	Social and personal responsibility	Exams, participation assignments, position paper
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S politics	Social and personal responsibility, critical thinking, communication skills	Exams, participation assignments, topic assignment, and position paper
9. Develop, interpret, and express ideas through written communication	Critical thinking and social and personal responsibility	Topic assignment and position paper
10. Evaluate Choices and actions of others or one's own and relate consequences to decision making	Social and personal responsibility	Position Paper

Academic Dishonesty: Any incident of academic policy will be dealt with in accordance with college policy and the Student Handbook. Academic dishonesty – such as cheating on exams is an extremely serious offense and will result in a grade of zero on that exam and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas and claiming them as your own. Plagiarism is a very serious offense. Plagiarism includes paraphrasing someone else's words without giving proper citation, copying directly from a website, and pasting it into your paper, using someone else's words without quotation marks. Any assignment containing any plagiarized material will receive a grade of zero and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action.

Student Concerns: If you have any questions or concerns about any aspect of this course, please contact me using the contact information previously provided. If, after discussing your concern with me, you continue to have questions, please contact Dr. Shinya Wakao at swakao@com.edu

Institutional Policies and Guidelines

Grade Appeal Process: Concerns about the accuracy of grades should first be discussed with the instructor. A request for a change of grade is a formal request and must be made within six months of the grade assignment. Directions for filing an appeal can be found in the student handbook [Student Handbook 2022-2023_v4.pdf \(com.edu\)](#). *An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome of a course. Disagreement with the instructor's professional judgment of the quality of the student's work and performance is also not an admissible basis for a grade appeal.*

Academic Success & Support Services: College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college careers. Support is offered through our Tutoring Services, Library, Counseling, and through Student Services. Please discuss any concerns with your faculty or an advisor.

ADA Statement: Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to contact Kimberly Lachney at 409-933-8919 or klachney@com.edu. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located in the Student Success Center.

Textbook Purchasing Statement: A student attending College of the Mainland is not under any obligation to purchase a textbook from the college-affiliated bookstore. The same textbook may also be available from an independent retailer, including an online retailer.

Withdrawal Policy: Students may withdraw from this course for any reason prior to the last eligible day for a “W” grade. Before withdrawing students should speak with the instructor and consult an advisor. Students are permitted to withdraw only six times during their college career by state law. The last date to withdraw from the 1st 8-week session is March 1. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is April 24. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is May 3.

FN Grading: The FN grade is issued in cases of *failure due to a lack of attendance*, as determined by the instructor. The FN grade may be issued for cases in which the student ceases or fails to attend class, submit assignments, or participate in required capacities, and for which the student has failed to withdraw. The issuing of the FN grade is at the discretion of the instructor. The last date of attendance should be documented for submission of an FN grade.

Early Alert Program: The Student Success Center at College of the Mainland has implemented an Early Alert Program because student success and retention are very important to us. I have been asked to refer students to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If you are referred to the Early Alert Program you will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center who will schedule a meeting with you to see what assistance they can offer in order for you to meet your academic goals.

Resources to Help with Stress:

If you are experiencing stress or anxiety about your daily living needs including food, housing or just feel you could benefit from free resources to help you through a difficult time, please click here <https://www.com.edu/community-resource-center/>. College of the Mainland has partnered with free community resources to help you stay on track with your schoolwork, by addressing life issues that get in the way of doing your best in school. All services are private and confidential. You may also contact the Dean of Students office at deanofstudents@com.edu or communityresources@com.edu.