



GOVT 2305-381C3
Federal Government
LaMarque High School
1:12 PM – 2:50 PM
Room A213
Fall 2025

Instructor Information: Debra Ramsey
Dramsey1@com.edu
409-933-8307

Student hours and location: M/W 6:30 – 7:00 AM LCY Room 210
M/W 11:00 AM – 12:30 PM COM LRC, Suite A, 225
T/Th 6:30 – 7:00 AM COM LRC, Suite A, 225
T/Th 9:30 – 10:30 AM COM LRC, Suite A, 225

Required Textbook: Glen L Rutz et al. *American Government* (3rd edition) (You can download from <https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>)

Course Description: This course is intended to provide students with a fundamental understanding of government and politics in the United States. Ultimately, my goal for you in this class is to become an informed and critical thinker as well as a participant in American politics. You will also learn about current political debates as well as the 2022 elections in order to understand the impact of U.S. politics on your life.

Census day: Census day is 9/3. You must be in attendance by 9/3 or you will be dropped for non-attendance.

Attendance: Class begins at 1:12 PM. You are expected to be on time. If you are 10 minutes late you will be counted tardy for the day. I know sometimes things happen. Just please let me know.

Course Assignment: All assignments will be submitted via D2L Please do not email assignments to your instructors.

Prepare for class: Make sure you have read the appropriate material BEFORE your class. It is important, as this helps to lead to better class discussions.

Position Paper

- Write a Position Paper on a current public policy controversy in the United States (e.g.,

Should Private Businesses Have the Right to Deny Service Based on Their Religious Beliefs and Practices? Should Marijuana Be Legalized?; etc.).

- Write a paper taking a position (yes or no) on a current public policy controversy. Conduct research on the topic, citing at least three sources from credible and reliable publications, websites, 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 5 full pages – not including your works cited or title page. Points will be taken in Content, Critical Thinking and Length if your paper is not a minimum of 5 pages.

Tutoring (For position paper))

- (1) Make a reservation at the Tutoring Center or Tutor.com - Links to both can be found in D2L under Student Resources
- (2) Attend a session (f2f, online, or e-tutoring)
- (3) Revise your paper after the session
- (4) Submit a report (See examples in D2L)

Discussions: Weekly discussions will be in class discussions

Exams : You have four exams consisting of multiple-choice questions (50 questions, 100 points)

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Quizzes: quizzes will be in the form of open-ended questions. Please make sure you read your material prior to class, as the quizzes can come from material discussed or material in the textbook. Quizzes are pop quizzes; they are not listed on the schedule.

All extra credit is loaded in D2L; please do not ask for more extra credit.

Paper Assignment Guidelines

- Format: MLA
- Times New Roman
 - 12 point
 - Double-spaced
 - 1-inch margins
 - NO footnotes
 - Microsoft WORD file format (.doc or .docx)
- 5 pages not counting the title or works cited page
- Include a title page and a works cited page
- When you cite, use in-text citations
- Do not use subtitles
- You can use the following sources as citations:
 - Academic journal articles
 - Newspaper articles
 - Data and articles from government websites or research institutes such as Pew Research Center
- DO NOT use the following sources as citations:
 - Wikipedia

- Procon.org
- Any other blogs, non-academic websites
- Editorial page in newspaper
- You CANNOT use or cite papers you wrote before

Make-Up Policy: There will be **NO** makeup tests or quizzes given. You are given dates for exams in advance. Please make every effort to be in class on that day as I will not give make-up exams or quizzes. If you miss an exam you need to provide **DOCUMENTED PROOF** of why you missed the exam. The only situations in which a make-up exam will be allowed are **GENUINE AND DOCUMENTED EMERGENCIES**. If the exams are taken on D2L, I expect this to be an **EXTREMELY** rare occurrence. There is no make-up for assignments. Simply not being prepared for an exam is not a valid excuse for not taking an exam on the scheduled date and time. There is no Make-up work.. I do not go back and open assignments up.

Late work will not be accepted. Please do not ask for alternate assignments.

If you have issues with an assignment, you need to see me **BEFORE** the assignment is due. I cannot help you if you contact me after the assignment is due. **Please do not email me missed assignments, all assignments must be uploaded to D2L.** I will substitute your lowest exam grade for one missed exam (this **DOES NOT** mean I drop a grade). I will also substitute the lowest Writing Portion grade for one missed Writing Portion. If you turn in the wrong paper, I will not substitute for that paper. If you miss more than one exam those grades will be zero. I do not give extensions on papers as they are available for several weeks. The only situations in which a make-up exam will be allowed are **GENUINE AND DOCUMENTED EMERGENCIES**.

Taking a vacation does not get you an extension on assignments.

If you have issues with an assignment, you need to see me BEFORE the assignment is due. I cannot help you if you contact me after the assignment is due.

If you have issues with the grade on an assignment, DO NOT wait until the end of the semester to say something. I will not go all the way back to look at those assignments

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. The instructor will reply to emails within 24 hours, weekend emails will be answered on Monday. Please include your course name and number in the subject line, (Govt 2305-381)

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 actions. Plagiarism is the practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. It is a serious offense of academic dishonesty and legally, could be construed as infringement of intellectual property. Plagiarism of an assignment will result in a **grade of zero** on the assignment and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action. Please do

not turn in papers you have previously turned in for another class. You will receive a zero.

Turnitin: All papers will be submitted to Turnitin. Please check your similarity report; this flags plagiarism. Also, Turnitin now checks to see if your paper was written by artificial intelligence; you will not see this percentage, but your instructor will. **Any percentage of artificial intelligence usage will result in a zero for your paper. Do not use Grammarly or any other online helpers to help you write your paper; it will show up as artificial intelligence.** Do not allow Word, Grammarly, or Google Docs to change the grammar of your paper; this is considered AI. There will be no rewriting of papers once the due date has passed. If you need help with papers, use the COM Tutoring Center or Tutor.com.

No “Recycled Assignments for Course Credit: You may not re-submit an essay or discussion post (or portions thereof) that you did in another course for credit in this course, including material from one of my classes in an earlier semester. Therefore, even if you have done an assignment before in another class, you must do it from scratch this semester.

Artificial Intelligence: Usage of AI will result in a zero for your paper or discussions. Do not use Grammarly or any other online helpers to help you write your paper; it will show up as artificial intelligence. There will be no rewriting of papers once the due date has passed. If you need help with papers, use the COM Tutoring Center.

Technology statement: The instructor is not required to consider lost/missing/unacceptable work stemming from technical non-compliance and/or end-user technical issues. Failure to maintain Internet or computer access shall not constitute a valid excuse for missed work. Any student who cannot keep up with the coursework owing to a lack of computer or Internet access or functionality should refer to the Library Computer Lab hours of operation (<https://www.com.edu/computer-labs/library-computer-lab>) and plan to complete all coursework during posted hours.

If you fail to complete an assignment or exam because your computer crashes or loses internet access, forget to attach a file, attach a wrong/blank/empty file to an assignment, did not verify submission of the correct file/information/link/etc., or did not use the appropriate browser or operating system to access and complete coursework, then you are not entitled to make up or resubmit the coursework. If the assignment, discussion, project, or exam was not completed or submitted in a timely manner due to your error or due to end-user technological issues of any kind, it cannot be made up.

Grades: Please make sure you are checking your grades weekly. If you see any issues, you need to let me know ASAP. Do not wait until the end of the semester. Please do not email me at the end of the semester asking me for a grade bump. I do not bump grades. I will not round up grades. Please remember this class does not go by percentages but by points

Grades:

Assignments	Points
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Attendance	100
Quizzes	150
Discussions (In class)	150
Exams	400
Position Paper	150
Tutoring	50
Total points	1000

Grade Scale				
900	to	1000	A	90-100%
800	to	899.9	B	80-89.9%
700	to	799.9	C	70-79.9%
600	to	699.9	D	60-69.9%
Below 600			F	59-0%

Course Outline: **Subject to change**

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1 August 18–August 24	Syllabus Chapter 1: American Government and Civic Engagement	Syllabus Quiz Read Chapter 1 before Wednesday's class. Political Entities Discussion Pathways to Engagement Discussion
Week 2 August 25–August 30	American Government and Civic Engagement Chapter 2 The Constitution and Its Origins	Read Chapter 2 before Monday's class Voting Rights Discussion
Week 3 September 1–September 7	Chapter 3 American Federalism	NO Class Monday, September 1, st due to Labor Day Read Chapter 3 before Wednesday's class Federalism Discussion
Week 4 September 8–September 14	Chapter 4: Civil Liberties Chapter 5 – Civil Rights	Read Chapter 4 before Monday's class Read Chapter 5 before Wednesday's class Workplace privacy discussion
Week 5 September 15–September 21	Chapter 6: The Politics of Public Opinion	Exam 1 Chapters 1-5 on 9/15 Read Chapter 6 before Monday's class we will begin discussion if there is time on Monday, if not we will start Wednesday Read Chapter 7 before Wednesday's class Electoral College Discussion
Week 6 September 22–September 28	Chapter 7: Voting and Election Chapter 8: The Media	Read Chapter 8 before Monday's class Media Bias discussion
Week 7 September 29 – October 5	Chapter 9 Political Parties	Read Chapter 9 before Monday's class. Political Parties Discussion Exam 2 Chapters 6-8 on 10/1

Week 8 October 6 – October 12	Chapter 10 Interest Groups and Lobbying	Read Chapter 10 before Monday's class Super PAC's Discussion
Week 9 October 13–October 19	Chapter 11 Congress	Read Chapter 11 before Monday's class Congressional Earmarks discussion
Week 10 October 20 – October 26	Chapter 12 The Presidency	COM IS OPEN – Lamarque has a week off, but you still have online assignments due Complete the Assignment “The Presidency”. Be prepared to discuss when we return.
Week 11 October 27–November 2	Chapter 12 The Presidency	Read Chapter 12 before Monday's class Exam 3 Chapters 9-12 10/29 in class
Week 12 November 3–November 9	Chapter 13 The Courts Chapter 14 State and Local Government	Read Chapter 14 before Monday's class Supreme Court Term limits discussion
Week 13 November 10–November 16	Chapter 15 The Bureaucracy	Read Chapter 15 before Monday's class Public Health Care Option
Week 14 November 17–November 23	Chapter 16 Domestic Policy Chapter 17 Foreign Policy	Read Chapter 16 before Monday's class Tariffs Discussion Read Chapter 17 before Wednesday's class U.S. Isolationism Discussion
Week 15 November 24–November 30		COM IS OPEN – Mon, Tues, Wed Lamarque is off for a week; you will have online assignments. Position Paper & Tutoring due 11/25
Week 16 December 1 - 3		Final Exam Chapters 13-17 12/1 in class Last class Monday 12/1

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 <https://www.com.edu/student-services/student-handbook.html>

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, Student Accessibility Services Coordinator

Phone: 409-933-8919

Email: AccessibilityServices@com.edu

Location: COM Doyle Family Administration Building, 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 October 1. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 14. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is November 25.

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.

Nondiscrimination Statement:

The College District prohibits discrimination, including harassment, against any individual on the basis of race, color, religion, national origin, age, veteran status, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender (including gender identity and gender expression), or any other basis prohibited by law. Retaliation against anyone involved in the complaint process is a violation of College District policy.

