



**GOVT 2305.012IN  
Federal Government  
Fall 2023  
Internet Course**

**Instructor Information:** William Parent, wparent@com.edu, 409-933-8212

**Student hours and location:** Online: T 7:00 – 8:00 a.m. (During this time, I will be immediately available via email, and course messages.)

**Required Textbook/Materials:**

The textbook for this course is found at  
<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

It is online and FREE. Click on the website and scroll down a bit. You will find a table of contents, a PDF version, and a link to view the text online. Click on that and you will be able to navigate through the text chapter by chapter and section by section.

**Course Description:** This course, examines the 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 requirements:**

**COURSE EXAMS**

During the semester, there are four scheduled class exams. All exams will be administered online, and each exam is worth 15% of your overall grade. It is imperative that students keep up with class assignments and readings if they wish to succeed in this course. The exam dates are listed in the course outline (see below). Each exam will cover only the material from the last exam, including both the readings and class discussion.

**RESEARCH PAPER**

Students will be expected to write a research paper for the class and submit it through Brightspace/D2L. The paper must be submitted by 11:59 p.m. Sunday, December 3, 2023. The paper is worth 20% of your overall grade for the class. Guidelines for the paper will be posted on Brightspace/D2L.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

Discussions represent the interactive component of this course. Each unit will have one current event question associated with it. These topics are related to the current controversies taking place in American politics today. These forums are a way of exchanging information with your fellow students. There will be 4 discussion questions that I will post throughout the semester online. Each discussion is worth 5 points towards your overall grade in the course. The discussion dates are listed in the course outline. **DO NOT WAIT** until the end of the unit to begin posting. Late posts will not be graded!! Pay close attention to due dates! Follow the discussion guidelines posted if you expect to receive full credit for the discussions.

## **Determination of Course Grade/Detailed Grading Formula:**

### **Grading Scale:**

Exam One = 15%

Exam Two = 15%

Exam Three = 15%

Exam Four = 15%

Discussions= 20% (There are 4 discussions, each discussion is worth 5%)

Research Paper = 20%

Total = 100%

Grades will be assigned according to the following scale at the end of the semester:

89.5-100=A

79.5-89.4=B

69.5-79.4=C

59.5-69.4=D

Below a 59.4=F

**Make-Up Policy:** All assignments are given a due date. If students are absent from class, it is their responsibility to obtain the assignments given in class. Assignments are to be turned in by the due date. If students miss a discussion, they will not be accepted and will be given the grade of 0 (zero). Students who miss exams one, two or three have an opportunity to make up the exam; however, there will be a 30-point deduction. There will be no opportunities to make up exam four if missed; a grade of zero will be given for exam four. Students who miss an exam must contact the instructor to schedule when they are to take the exam. **Please note** that if a student has a valid excuse, then I will allow them to make up missed work without any type of penalty being assessed. Documentation must be provided such as a doctor's note.

All students are expected to be present on test days designated by the instructor. Exams must be taken at their scheduled times and may not be made up later without prior approval of the instructor.

**Extra-Credit Policy:** I do not provide extra credit.

**Attendance Policy:** If you want to pass, come to class. In an online environment, this means you should sign in multiple times a week and should expect to spend several hours a week in the course reviewing lessons/completing Lesson Modules and completing other course material. The online material goes beyond the material presented in the text, and you will be held accountable for this material on the exams and course assignments. The discussion component of the course also requires you to engage your fellow students in “conversation,” which requires you to regularly read and respond to posts.

**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. (Faculty may add additional statement requiring monitoring and communication expectations via D2L or other LMS)

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 (CT)	Exam
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.		Exam
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.		Exam
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal		Exam
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in the political system.	Critical Thinking (CT) Personal Responsibility (PR) Communication Skills (CS1)	Exam/Written Assignment
6. Analyze the election process.	Critical Thinking (CT) Social Responsibility (SR)	Exam/ Written Assignment
7. Identify the rights and responsibilities of citizens.	Personal Responsibility (PR) Social Responsibility (SR)	Exam

8. Analyze issues and policies in the US.	Critical Thinking (CT) Social Responsibility (SR)	Exam/Written Assignment
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**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 appropriate discipline action.

**Plagiarism:**

The practice of taking someone else's work or ideas and passing them off as one's own. Students who engage in plagiarism will receive a zero for that assignment. **Link(s) to resource(s) about ways to avoid plagiarism:** <http://en.writecheck.com/ways-to-avoid-plagiarism/>

Artificial Intelligence (AI), defined as the intelligence of machines or software as opposed to human and/or animal intelligence, has been thrust to the forefront of matters related to academic integrity. Understand that student submissions of AI-generated work will constitute a violation of academic integrity. Any **unauthorized** use of ChatGPT, Grammarly, WordTune, or other AI-Generated content to complete written course requirements **WILL** be considered cheating. The ability to clearly articulate via written communication in a student's own words remains a vital part of the educational process at COM.

It is required for students who need assistance with spelling and basic grammar to utilize the spell-check and grammar-check features available in most word-processing software, most of which are capable. Additionally, COM also offers tutoring services.

**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 Shinya Wakao, Department Chair of Social and Behavioral Sciences at P: 409-933-8107, email: [swakao@com.edu](mailto:swakao@com.edu)

**Course outline:**

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**UNIT ONE**

Syllabus QUIZ: will open on Monday, August 28 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, September 3 at 11:59 p.m.

DISCUSSION ONE: will open on Monday, September 4 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, September 17 at 11:59 p.m.

EXAM ONE: will open on Monday, September 18 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, September 24 at 11:59 p.m. Exam One will cover the following chapters: 1, 2, 3 & 4.

Chapter 1 (American Government and Civic Engagement)

Chapter 2 (The Constitution and Its Origins)

Chapter 3 (American Federalism)

Chapter 4 (Civil Liberties)

## **UNIT TWO**

**DISCUSSION TWO:** will open on Monday, September 25 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, October 8 at 11:59 p.m.

**EXAM TWO:** will open on Monday, October 9 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, October 15 at 11:59 p.m. Exam Two will cover the following chapters: 5, 6, 7, & 8.

Chapter 5 (Civil Rights)

Chapter 6 (The Politics of Public Opinion)

Chapter 7 (Voting and Elections)

Chapter 8 (The Media)

## **UNIT THREE**

**DISCUSSION THREE:** will open on Monday, October 16 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, October 29 at 11:59 p.m.

**EXAM THREE:** will open on Monday, October 30 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, November 5 at 11:59 p.m. Exam Three will cover the following chapters: 9, 10, 11, & 12.

Chapter 9 (Political Parties)

Chapter 10 (Interest Groups)

Chapter 11 (Congress)

Chapter 12 (The Presidency)

## **UNIT FOUR**

**DISCUSSION FOUR:** will open on Monday, November 6 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, November 19 at 11:59 p.m.

**RESEARCH PAPER:** will open on Monday, August 28 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Sunday, December 3 at 11:59 p.m.

**EXAM FOUR:** will open on Monday, December 4 at 12:00 a.m. and is due no later than Monday, December 11 at 11:59 p.m. Exam Four will cover the following chapters: 13, 15, 16 & 17.

Chapter 13 (The Courts)

Chapter 15 (The Bureaucracy)

Chapter 16 (Domestic Policy)

Chapter 17 (Foreign Policy)

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## **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/docs/Student\\_Handbook\\_2023-2024\\_v2.pdf](https://www.com.edu/student-services/docs/Student_Handbook_2023-2024_v2.pdf). *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](mailto: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 1<sup>st</sup> 8-week session is October 11. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 28. The last date to withdraw for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-week session is December 7.

**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](mailto:deanofstudents@com.edu) or [communityresources@com.edu](mailto:communityresources@com.edu).

**Communication & Grade Time Policy:** The primary way to contact me is through email. I only reply to College of the Mainland email accounts. I check my email regularly and will respond to you within 24 hours. I will grade your exams, and discussion posts within 168 hours of the due date.

**Success Tips for Students:**

1. Read the syllabus. The syllabus is a critical resource for any course. It is the road map or ‘game plan’ for the entire course—get to know it well. Print a copy on the first day of class, read through it twice.
2. Plan weekly study times. Studying, participating in forums, and completing assignments in an online class can be challenging, even more so when juggling multiple responsibilities. Time management is vital for online students.
3. Log onto the course home a minimum of three times per week. Logging onto the course home page consistently each week is associated with higher grades for students according to several studies on online student behavior. Get into the habit of checking in consistently, even daily, to read discussion posts, check for instructor announcements and/or review course materials.