



**Government 2305-103CL**  
**Federal Government**  
**Course Semester (FALL 2023)**  
**LRC 258, Monday-Wednesday 11:00 AM– 12:20 PM**

**Instructor Information:** Nathan Goldman, [ngoldman@com.edu](mailto:ngoldman@com.edu), phone number (409) 933-8257

**Office hours:** LRC Suite A 223B. Monday and Wednesday 9:00-11:00 AM, Tuesday 11:00-12:30, 1:30-2:30PM, and Thursday 11:00 -12:30, and other times by arrangement

**Required Textbook:** American Government, 3d. Ed. Openstax.org  
<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-3e>

**Course Description:**

Government 2305 is an introduction to politics and government of the United States. The purpose of this introduction is to acquire knowledge of basic principles and practices of federal government. This semester we will study the origins and development of the federal government, the Declaration of Independence, the Federalist Papers; the origins and development of the Constitution; the idea of separation of powers and checks and balances; the idea of federalism; the institutions of Congress, the Presidency, the public administration, and the Judiciary; civil rights and civil liberties; public opinion, political parties, and elections; and issues of political science and public policy.

**Course requirements:**

**Tests:** There are three or four tests covering the required readings and lectures from each unit. A bonus of up to 10 points for each test is described below. Each test counts 20% or 25% of the final grade, depending on the number of tests.

**Paper:** Write one three to five page essay on any topic in politics, government or policy. 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.). Take a position (yes or no). Conduct research on the topic,

citing at least three sources from credible and reliable publications, web sites, journals, books, etc. Formulate an argument and respond to the objections to this position. The paper should include a social and professional responsibility perspective. The paper should be 1000 words (approximately 5 pages), double-spaced, one-inch margins, and a 12-point font. Standard style for references, citations, and sources (MLA, Chicago, or APA). The paper counts 20% or 25% of the final grade, depending on how many tests will be taken during the semester.

## Grades

A	100 – 90
B	89 – 80
C	79 – 70
D	69 – 60
F	59 – 0

## Extra Credit --

You can earn extra credit by writing an analysis of a movie or tv show for each test. Your analysis can earn up to an additional ten points on each test score. Since there are four tests, you can write up to four different analyses each due on the day of that test.

## Extra Credit Movie List and Instructions

Watch one movie or TV show. You can do a different movie or show if it has a political orientation. Write one page analysis of the film detailing how it relates to political ideas. You can earn up to ten additional points.

This is an opinion piece, but you must present arguments that defend your point of view. Do not write a plot summary. Instead, analyze, critique and interpret the politics of the movie. How does this movie present political events, issues or themes? What is the movie saying, whether implicitly or explicitly, about politics? How does the movie address political issues and problems? How do these movies reflect, critique, interpret and or subvert American history, culture or politics?

Keep in mind that movies reflect the history and culture from which they derive, but remember that stories and the way they are told (verbally and nonverbally) can shed light on society's principles and practices in ways that reflection may ignore.

Chinatown (1974/Roman Polanski)  
Taxi Driver (1975/Martin Scorsese)  
Strangelove (1964/Stanley Kubrick)  
2001: A Space Odyssey (1968/Stanley Kubrick)  
Vertigo (1958/Alfred Hitchcock)  
Blue (1993/Krzysztof Kieslowski)

On the Waterfront (1954/Elia Kazan)  
Face in the Crowd (1957/Elia Kazan) Dr.  
The Chase (1966/Arthur Penn)  
The Seventh Seal (1957/Ingmar Bergman)  
My Darling Clementine (1946/John Ford)  
The Searchers (1956/John Ford)

White (1994/Krzysztof Kieslowski)  
 by Up (1966/Michelangelo Antonioni)  
 Godfather (1972/Francis Coppola)  
 Godfather 2 (1974/Francis Coppola)  
 Conversation (1975/Francis Coppola)  
 Five Easy Pieces (1970/Bob Rafelson)  
 Wild Bunch (1969/Sam Peckinpah)  
 (1956/George Stevens)  
 The Candidate (1972/Michael Ritchie)  
 Crimes and Misdemeanors (1989/Woody Allen)  
 Citizen Kane (1941/Orson Welles)  
 Invasion of the Body Snatchers (1956/Don Siegal)  
 Player (1992 / Robert Altman)

Sunset Boulevard (1950/Billy Wilder) Blow  
 Red River (1948/Howard Hawks) The  
 Third Man (1949/Carol Reed) The  
 A Serious Man (2009/Coen Brothers) The  
 Double Indemnity (1944/Billy Wilder)  
 The Maltese Falcon (1941/John Huston) The  
 The Untouchables (1987/Brian de Palma) Giant  
 Carlito's Way (1993/Brian de Palma)  
 Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939/Frank Capra)  
 Out of the Past (1947/ Jacques Tourneur)  
 Man Who Shot Liberty Valence (1962/John Ford)  
 The Lady from Shanghai (1947/Orson Welles) The  
 Primary Colors (1997/Joel Klein)

**Make-Up Policy:** Make up exams are at the Professor's discretion. Late work will be accepted but the grade will be reduced five points for every day late.

**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.

Student Learner Outcome	Connects to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.	Critical Thinking	Exam
2. Demonstrate knowledge of the federal system.	Critical Thinking	Exam
3. Describe separation of powers and checks and balances in both theory and practice.	Critical Thinking	Exam
4. Demonstrate knowledge of the legislative, executive, and judicial branches of the federal government.	Critical Thinking	Exam
5. Evaluate role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties in political system.	Critical Thinking	Exam
6. Analyze election process.	Social Responsibility	Exam
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.	Personal Responsibility	Exam
8. Analyze issues and policies in	Critical Thinking	Exam
9. Complete required essay and class presentation combination assignment on a selected writing pertaining to issues in American government and politics.	Communication	Essay/In-Class Presentation

**Academic Dishonesty:** Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Cheating will result in a zero on a test. **Plagiarism**, the practice of taking someone else's work

or ideas and passing them off as one's own, is a form of cheating. Admittedly, sometimes plagiarism is not cut and dry. Here is a **link to resources about ways to avoid plagiarism**: <http://en.writecheck.com/ways-to-avoid-plagiarism/>

**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 the chair of the Department, Shinya Wakao, [swakao@com.edu](mailto:swakao@com.edu). (409) 933-8107

### Course outline and schedule:

The week of

August 28 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 1 - Introduction
September 5 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 2 – Constitution
September 11 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapters 3 – Federalism
September 18 <sup>th</sup>	-- Test 1
September 25 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 6 (11) – Congress
October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	-- Chapter 7 (12) – Presidency
October 9 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 8 (15) -- Bureaucracy
October 16 <sup>th</sup>	-- Test 2
October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	-- Chapter 9 (13) – Judiciary
October 30 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 10 (6) – Public Opinion
November 6 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 11 (10) – Interest Groups
November 13 <sup>th</sup>	-- Test 3
November 20 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 12 (8) -- Media
November 27 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 13 (9) – Political Parties
December 4 <sup>th</sup>	-- Chapter 14 (7) – Elections, final 5 page paper
December 11 <sup>th</sup>	-- Test 4 and paper due on Monday

**Emergency Assignment:** If for any reason the college closes, continue to work on the assignments spelled out in your syllabus. Refer to Brightspace D2L for any Emergency Closing Assignments and any further instructions.

## 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).