



**Government 2305-304CL**

**Federal Government**

**Course Semester (FALL 2021)**

**TEXAS CITY HIGH SCHOOL, Monday Wednesday 12:40 – 2:00 PM**

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

**Office hours:** LRC Suite A 223B. Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday 9:30 A.M. to 12:00 Noon, and other times by arrangement on phone or online

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

### **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 political science of 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 public policy.

### **Course requirements:**

**Tests:** There are 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% of the final grade.

**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.). 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 be 1000 words (approximately 5 pages), double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and a 12-point font. Use standard style for references, citations, and sources (MLA, Chicago, or APA). The paper counts 20% of the final grade.

## 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)  
White (1994/Krzysztof Kieslowski)  
by Up (1966/Michelangelo Antonioni)  
Godfather (1972/Francis Coppola)  
Godfather 2 (1974/Francis Coppola)  
Conversation (1975/Francis Coppola)

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)  
Sunset Boulevard (1950/Billy Wilder) Blow  
Red River (1948/Howard Hawks) The  
The Third Man (1949/Carol Reed) The  
A Serious Man (2009/Coen Brothers) The  
Double Indemnity (1944/Billy Wilder)

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)

The Maltese Falcon (1941/John Huston) The  
 Untouchables (1987/Brian de Palma) Giant  
 Carlito's Way (1993/Brian de Palma)  
 Mr. Smith Goes to Washington (1939/FrankCapra)  
 Out of the Past (1947/ Jacques Tourneur)  
 Man Who Shot Liberty Valence (1962/JohnFord)  
 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).

**Course outline and schedule:**

August 23      -- Chapter 1 - Introduction  
August 30      -- Chapter 2 – Constitution  
September 7    -- Chapters 3 – Federalism  
September 13   -- Test 1  
September 20   -- Chapter 6 (11) – Congress  
September 27   -- Chapter 7 (12) – Presidency  
October 4       -- Chapter 8 (15) -- Bureaucracy  
October 11      -- Test 2  
October 18      -- Chapter 9 (13) – Judiciary  
October 25      -- Chapter 10 (6) – Public Opinion  
November 1     -- Chapter 11 (10) – Interest Groups  
November 8     -- Test 3  
November 15    -- Chapter 12 (8) -- Media  
November 22    -- Chapter 13 (9) – Political Parties  
November 29    -- Chapter 14 (7) – Elections, final 5 page paper due  
December 6     -- Test 4 and Final Paper

**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://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf). An appeal will not be considered because of general dissatisfaction with a grade, penalty, or outcome. Disagreement with an instructor’s professional judgment of the quality of the work and performance is also not an admissible basis for an appeal. [https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student\\_Handbook\\_2019-2020v5.pdf](https://build.com.edu/uploads/sitecontent/files/student-services/Student_Handbook_2019-2020v5.pdf).

**Academic Success & Support Services:** College of the Mainland is committed to providing students the necessary support and tools for success in their college career. 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 Holly Bankston at 409-933-8520 or [hbankston@com.edu](mailto:hbankston@com.edu). The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is in the Student Success Center.

**Counseling Statement:** Any student that is needing counseling services is requested to please contact Holly Bankston in the Student Success Center at 409-933-8520 or [hbankston@com.edu](mailto:hbankston@com.edu). Counseling services are available in the student center for free. Appointments are strongly encouraged. However, some concerns may be addressed on a walk-in basis.

**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 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. Student are only permitted to withdraw six times during their college career by State law. The last date to withdraw for the 1<sup>st</sup> 8-week session is October 6<sup>th</sup>. The last date to withdraw for the 16-week session is November 19<sup>th</sup>. The last date to withdraw for the 2<sup>nd</sup> 8-week session is December 2.

**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 for 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 is 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.

**COVID-19 Statement:** All students, faculty and staff are expected to familiarize themselves with materials and information contained on the College of the Mainland's Coronavirus Information site at [www.com.edu/coronavirus](http://www.com.edu/coronavirus) . In compliance with Governor Abbott's May 18<sup>th</sup> Executive Order, face covering/masks will no longer be required on COM campus. We will no longer enforce COM protocols that require face coverings. We continue to encourage all members of the COM community to distance when possible, use hygiene measures, and get vaccinated to protect against COVID-19. Please visit [www.com.edu/coronavirus](http://www.com.edu/coronavirus) for future updates.