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

Student hours and location: M-T 8:00 – 9:00 AM

Required Textbook: Glen Lrutz 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 June 5th. Students must complete an assignment by June 5th or they will be dropped for non-attendance. Just logging into D2L does not constitute attendance**.**

Course Assignment: All assignments will be submitted via D2L

Position Paper 100 points
- 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, 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 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) (25 points)
 (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: (5 x 20 points = 100 Points)
Weekly discussions - initial posts are due on Friday, with two responses to others due by Sunday. All discussion board questions have been run through ChatGPT using Artificial Intelligence will result in a zero

Exams (100 points x 4 = 400 points) Respondus Lockdown Browser with Camera will be use
- You have four exams.
    - multiple choice questions (50 questions, 100 points)

Lockdown Browser /Respondus: Prior to taking exams, you will need to download the Lockdown Browser app to your computer, which must have a webcam and microphone. This app is required to ensure academic honesty, enabling you to take your exams from the comfort of your home rather than coming to campus or a testing center. On the D2L login page you will see a section titled Respondus Lockdown Browser. Please review the information and download the Lockdown Browser. You will take the syllabus quiz using Respondus to make sure you have it set up for exams. Your exam will prompt you to install or update the LockDown Browser before you begin.

Guidelines
When taking an online test, follow these guidelines:
● Ensure you're in a location where you won't be interrupted
● Turn off all other devices (e.g. tablets, phones, second computers) and place them outside of your reach
● Before starting the test, know how much time is available for it, and also that you've allotted sufficient time to complete it
● Clear your desk or workspace of all external materials not permitted - books, papers, other devices
● Make sure you are using the most current version of your web browser
● Remain at your computer for the duration of the test
● If the computer, Wi-Fi, or location is different than what was used previously with the "Webcam Check" and "System & Network Check" in LockDown Browser, run the checks again prior to the exam
●o When using Wi-Fi, it's best to avoid networks that might have heavy traffic, such as libraries, bookstores and cafe

[Intro To LockDown Browser](#)

[LockDown Browser device compatibility.](#)

Extra Credit
- 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
- You CANNOT 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, you have a window of several days and in some cases several weeks to complete assignments. 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**

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)

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.

Online Attendance Policy: Student attendance in online courses is defined as active participation in the course. Online courses will, at a minimum, have weekly mechanisms for student participation no more frequently than daily, which can be documented by any or all the following methods:

- Contributing to an online discussion or text chat session

- Submitting an assignment or working draft
- Working through exercises; taking a quiz or exam

These academic activities are tracked and documented through the college 's learning management system, email system, and publisher websites. Course tracking will be used to assess the amount of "attendance" in an online course. Any student who fails to attend the orientation session or complete a scheduled assignment during the first week of class will be reported as absent.

In order to be considered attending the online class you must complete the assignments Introduction Discussion by census day, which is 6/5. If you do not complete the assignment you

will be considered non-attending and dropped from the class.

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 give plenty of extra credit, 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
Syllabus Quiz	50
Position Paper	100
Position Paper Tutoring	50
Discussion (5)	100
Exams (4)	400
Total	**700**

Grade Scale					
630	to	700	A	90-100%
560	to	629	B	80-89.9%
490	to	559	C	70-79.9%
420	to	489	D	60-69.9%
Below 420			F	59-0%

Course Outline**: Subject to change**

Date	Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1	Syllabus Introduction to Political Science Individuals	**Syllabus Quiz Read Chapters 1, 2, 3,4,5 Discussion: Introduction Discussion Weekly Discussion 1: Initial post due by Friday, 2 responses by Sunday**
Week 2	Individuals Groups	**Weekly Discussion 2: Initial post due by Friday, 2 responses by Sunday Exam 1 Chapters 1-5**
Week 3	Institutions	**Weekly Discussion 3: Initial post due by Friday, 2 responses by Sunday Exam 2 Chapters 6 - 8**
Week 4	Institutions States and International Relations	**Exam 3 – Chapters 9-12 Weekly Discussion 4: Initial post due by Friday, 2 responses by Sunday Position Paper & Tutoring**

Week 5	States and International Relations	**Final Exam** **Chapters 13-17**

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_2024-2025_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, 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 5-week session is June 30. The last date to withdraw from the 10-week session is July 29. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 5-week session is August 1.

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.