



**Government 2305-332IN
Federal Government
Spring 2022
INTERNET COURSE
1/18/2022-5/11/2022**

Instructor Information

Name: Mr. John Presnall

Email: jpresnall@com.edu

Phone: 409.933.8212 (Leave Message)

Student/Office Hours: MW 10:15-11:00 AM; TTH 8:00-11:00 AM

Office Location: COM Blackboard Login Page Address— <https://de.com.edu>

Required Textbook: Glen Krutz, *American Government 3e* (Houston: Openstax, 2019.) <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 the basic principles and practices of the federal government.

This semester we will study the origins and development of the federal government; the political science of the Declaration of Independence and the Federalist Papers; the origin and development of the U.S. Constitution; the idea of constitutionalism, 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 in public policy.

This introductory course will also attempt to understand some of the basic questions and problems encountered by political science and political philosophy. These are philosophical questions that emerge from the study of the specific practices of American politics, and of the laws, policies, and institutions of the federal government. For an introduction to these questions, we will read an essay “In Defense of Politics” by Steven B. Smith and explore the basic concepts of political science.

This is an online course consisting of four (4) Units in which each Unit will be open for approximately four (4) weeks. Each Unit is self-paced, but students should log into Blackboard at least five times a week. They can complete the

assigned work at their own most convenient time, but they must remain mindful of the course outline and due dates. Please keep abreast of posted announcements.

Course Requirements

Course Discussion Boards: Discussion Boards represent the interactive component of this course. There are 4 discussion assignments with specific opening dates and closing dates for each. Please be mindful of the closing due dates. The discussions are a way of exchanging information and insight with your fellow students. Your grade will be based on your full and thoughtful participation, and not on the content of your ideas and opinions.

Content from the discussion topics will be on each exam.

For each topic you are required to **post 1 initial response** to the topic (at a minimum of 300 words). You must also make **at least 2 comments** to other students' initial responses (at a minimum of 150 words). Points will be deducted for insufficient initial responses, as well as for comments (e.g., "You're right!" "I agree." Are not sufficient comments.) Please write in clear prose, and refrain from using text speech, net speech, and online slang.

DO NOT WAIT until the due date to begin posting. Post throughout the window between the opening dates and closing due dates.

Follow the discussion guidelines posted in the Getting Started section of the course.

Papers: There are **4 short papers** (2 pages at a minimum) over a selected topic. Additional information on grading rubric, submission, format, citations, etc. will be provided in the assignment file. Content from the paper topics will be on each exam.

Course Exams: There are **4 Unit Exams**. Each exam will cover the required textbook chapter readings, lecture notes, additional readings, and videos/podcasts for that unit. The exams will consist of multiple-choice questions.

Research Paper: Write a **Position Paper** on a current public policy controversy in the United States (e.g., Should private businesses in the US have the right to deny service based on their religious beliefs and practices?; Should marijuana be legalized in the US?; Should the United States place strict limitations on immigration, whether legal or illegal?; What should US policy be in regard China and Taiwan?; Or Russia and Ukraine?; Should Medicare be expanded to all US citizens?; Should the US adopt the "Green New Deal?"; Should Congress pass the "John Lewis Voting Rights Act?"; etc.).

Make sure that your paper is on a topic that is national in scope, and not an issue that is specific to one state.

Write a paper taking a position (yes or no) on a current public policy controversy. What is the issue? Explain in detail. What is the policy proposal (e.g., which law? which action? which program? which institution? etc.) you are in favor of or against? Explain in detail.

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 the position you are taking. Also, respond to the most common objections to this position. Explain how this position impacts the issues of personal responsibility and social responsibility.

The paper should be 1000 words (approximately 5 pages), double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and a 12-point font. Use a standard style for references, citations, and the list of sources (e.g., MLA, Chicago, or APA).

Determination of Grade

Unit Exams— 40% (10% each) toward final grade.
Discussions— 20% (5% each) toward final grade.
Papers— 20% (5% each) toward final grade.
Research Paper— 20% toward final grade.

Grading Timeframe: I will grade exams and papers on the Monday after each due date, and grades will appear in Gradebook during that week. Discussion grades will not appear until after the final closing due date for each discussion. Your grade will be based on the totality of your initial response posts and your two comments.

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

Late Work, Make-Up, and Extra Credit Policy: Late and make-up work will be accepted on a case-by-case basis. Students need to notify the instructor via email of any problems in this regard. Extra Credit assignments will be offered toward the end of the semester. Keep abreast of posted announcements.

Attendance Policy: Frequent attendance is required. In a sixteen-week online course, this means you should log into Blackboard at a minimum of five times a week. Please keep abreast of posted announcements.

You should expect to spend at least three hours a week in Blackboard reviewing notes and videos, completing unit discussions and exams, and completing other course materials.

Much of the reading and studying can be done outside of Blackboard. Each Unit is self-paced. Students can complete the assigned work at their own most convenient time, but they must remain mindful of the course outline and due dates.

Communicating with your instructor: All communication with the instructor must be through your COM email. **Please use the Blackboard email tool to contact the instructor.** Due to FERPA restrictions, faculty cannot share any information about performance in the class through other electronic means. Log onto class regularly to keep abreast of posted announcements.

Student Learner Outcome (SLO)	Maps to Core Objective	Assessed via this Assignment
1. Explain the origin and development of constitutional democracy in the United States.		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 government.		Exam
5. Evaluate the role of public opinion, interest groups, and political parties.	Communication	Paper
6. Analyze the election process.		Exam
7. Describe the rights and responsibilities of citizens.		Exam
8. Analyze issues and policies in U.S. politics.	Communication	Paper
9. Complete a required paper on a selected	Communication	Paper

writing pertaining to issues in American government and politics.		
10. Evaluate choices and actions of others or one's own and relate consequences to decision-making.	Communication	Paper

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 action.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is using someone else's words or ideas without giving proper citation. It includes paraphrasing someone else's words, copying directly from a website and pasting it into a written assignment, and using someone else's words without quotation marks. Any written assignment containing any plagiarized material will receive a grade of zero and the student will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct for the appropriate discipline action.

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 Department Chair, Shinya Wakao at 409-933-8212 or swakao@com.edu.

Federal Government Course Outline

Tuesday, January 18—Wednesday, May 11, 2022

Introduction—Tuesday, January 18

Required Reading

Read Me First and Syllabus

Required Assignments

Complete Initial Tasks—Email and Discussion Board Introduction Post

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, January 23

Unit 1—Political Science and the Declaration of Independence—Tuesday, January 18—Sunday, February 13

Required Reading (Found in Content)

Textbook Chapter 1—Political Science
Steven B. Smith, “In Defense of Politics”
The Declaration of Independence
Suggested video links to topics

Required Assignments

Discussion 1—Topic: In Defense of Politics (Found in Discussion Board)
Post Initial Discussion and 2 Responses (3 posts in total)
DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, February 13

Paper 1—Topic: The Declaration of Independence (Found in Assignments)—Opens Tuesday January 18
DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, February 13

Unit 1 Exam (Found in Assessments)—Opens Tuesday, January 18
DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, February 13

Research Paper—Position Paper (Found in Assignments)—Opens Tuesday, January 18
DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Unit 2—The U.S. Constitution and *The Federalist Papers*—Monday, February 14—Sunday, Sunday, March 13

Required Reading (Found in Content)

Textbook Chapter 2 and Notes—U.S. Constitution
Text of the Constitution of the United States (with amendments)
The Federalist Papers, nos. 10 & 51
Notes on *The Federalist Papers*
Suggested video links to topics

Required Assignments

Discussion 2—Topic: *The Federalist Papers* (Found in Discussion Board)
Post Initial Discussion and 2 Responses
DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, March 13

Paper 2—Topic: U.S. Constitution (Found in Assignments)—Opens Monday, February 14
DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, March 13

Unit 2 Exam (Found in Assessments)—Opens Monday, February 14
DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, March 13

SPRING BREAK—Monday, March 14—Sunday, March 20 (Blackboard will be open for Unit 3, but students are not required to login or work during the break)

Unit 3—Political Participation in the United States—Monday, March 14—Sunday, April 17

Required Reading (Found in Content)

Textbook Chapter 7 and Notes—Voting and Elections in the United States

Textbook Chapter 9 and Notes—Political Parties in the United States

Textbook Chapter 10 and Notes—Organized Interests

Textbook Chapters 6 & 8 and Notes—Public Opinion and Media

Required video links to topics

Required Assignments

Discussion 3—Topic: Public Opinion (Found in Discussion Board)

Post Initial Discussion and 2 Responses

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, April 17

Paper 3—Topic: Political Parties (Found in Assignments)

Opens Monday, March 14

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, April 17

Unit 3 Exam (Found in Assessments)—Opens Monday, March 14

DUE: 11:59 PM, Sunday, April 17

Unit 4—Political Institutions—Monday, April 18—Wednesday, May 11

Required Reading (Found in Content)

Chapter 11 and Notes—Congress

Chapters 12 and Notes—Presidency

Chapters 13 and Notes—United States Judiciary

Chapter 15 and Notes—United States Bureaucracy

Chapter 4 & 5 and Notes—Civil Liberties and Civil Rights

Suggested video links to topics

Required Assignments

Discussion 4—Topic: Constitutional Interpretation (Found in Discussion Board)

Post Initial Discussion and 2 Response

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Paper 4—Congress & the Presidency (Found in Assignments)—

Opens Monday, April 18

DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Unit 4 Exam—Opens Monday, April 18
DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

Research Paper—Position Paper (Found in Assignments)
Opens Tuesday, January 18
DUE: 11:59 PM, Wednesday, May 11

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. *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.* 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. The Office of Services for Students with Disabilities is located 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. Counseling services are available on campus in the student center for free and students can also email counseling@com.edu to setup their appointment. 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 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 only permitted to withdraw six times during their college career according to state law. The last day to withdraw is April 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.

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 for us. Students will be referred to the program throughout the semester if they are having difficulty completing assignments or have poor attendance. If a student is referred to the Early Alert Program he or she will be contacted by someone in the Student Success Center. Someone from the Counseling Department will schedule a meeting with the student to see what assistance can be offered in order to meet 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. In compliance with Governor Abbott's May 18 Executive Order, face coverings/masks will no longer be required on COM campus. Protocols and college signage are being updated. We will no longer enforce any COM protocol that requires 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 com.edu/coronavirus for future updates.