



Government 2305-312H3
Federal Government
Course Semester (FALL 2025)
Dickinson High School, Wednesday 7:00-8:20 AM

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

Office hours: DHS in the room. Wednesday 8:00 AM – 8:20AM.

Required Textbook: American Government, 4d. Ed. Openstax.org
<https://openstax.org/details/books/american-government-4e>

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 based on a one page paper on any topic in the chapters covered by the test. Each test will count 25 or 20% 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. Conduct research on the topic, citing 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 grade.

Grades

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

Extra Credit for each test --

One page paper on any topic in the chapters covered by that test.

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

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. (409) 933-8107

Course outline and schedule:

August 20th -- Chapter 1 – Introduction
August 27th -- Chapter 2 – Constitution
September 3rd -- Chapter 3 – Federalism
September 10th -- Test 1
September 17th -- Chapter 6 (11) Congress
October 1st -- Chapter 7 (12) Presidency
October 8th -- Chapter 8 (12) Bureaucracy
October 15th -- Test 2
October 22nd -- Chapter 9 (13) Judiciary
October 29th -- Chapter 10 (6) Public Opinion
November 5th -- Chapter 11 (10) Interest Groups
November 12th -- Test 3
November 19th -- Voting and Political Parties, Chapters 7 and 9
November 26th -- THANKSGIVING
December 2nd -- Chapter 14, Local Government and Final Paper due

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/student-handbook.html>

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.

AI Policy

You may use AI for brainstorming or research, but you cannot have AI write your papers.

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 8-week session is October 1. The last date to withdraw from the 16-week session is November 14. The last date to withdraw for the 2nd 8-week session is November 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. 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.