Political Science 2305-005 U.S. Government and Politics

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MW 12.30-1.30

REQUIRED TEXT

Texas A&M - POLS 2305: Government Matters, Maltese, 1e

Where and How to Get It:
Student Options for Purchasing AND Registering Into the Course
CHOICES:
1. Bookstore: Your bookstore has this package which includes the print book and the Connect Code. (The Connect code you will need to access the online study modules is included in the package.) To register you follow the same steps as below but you enter your code.
OR:
2. Buy the package on the direct to student purchasing site:

3. Online: All DIGITAL. You can purchase Connect Plus (no print book, Ebook and access to all the Connect/Learnsmart content) directly from the course website.
   • Go to Blackboard, and click on the first assignment listed in “Learnsmart Assignments folder listed under Content (left hand menu).
• **Click the “Register Now” Button.**
• **Enter your email address.**
• **Enter your access code, select “Buy Online”, or you can “Start Free Trial” if you don’t have an access code.**
• **Complete the registration form, click “Submit”**

**EXAMPLE:**

![Image of a registration form](image)

**REQUIRED HARDWARE/SOFTWARE**

**I>Clicker Remote or I>Clicker Go Software**

In this course, you have the option of using an i>clicker, i>clicker+, or i>clicker2 remote, or using i>clicker GO, which enables you to vote via a web-enabled device like a laptop or smart phone.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

The political scientist, Harold Lasswell, defined politics in terms of a process relating to the fundamental questions of “Who gets what, when and how?” Politics refers to a struggle for power and the distribution of finite resources. In one sense, politics can be seen as a game where there are clear winners and losers. Over the course of the semester we will examine how the rules of the game are structured, how the game is played, and the outcome of the game i.e. who are the winners and losers in the American political system?

The objective of this course is to encourage students to become independent, sophisticated consumers of the political process, or informed “citizens”. The ultimate goal of Higher Education is to develop critical thinking skills. By the end of the semester, students should possess the skills to evaluate current political developments from an informed perspective.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On completion of this course students will be able to:

1. Recall basic facts related to the foundations of US national government.
2. Describe key political concepts related to US institutions such as Congress, the Presidency, and the Judiciary.
3. Demonstrate their understanding of key concepts relating to the US political behavior such as voting, elections, political parties, interest groups and the media.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to take four in-class tests during the course of the semester, in addition to one comprehensive final exam at the end of the semester. Students are also required to write an issue position paper. Students will also earn credit for attendance and in class clicker quizzes.

Tests

The tests will all be multiple choice. There will be 50 objective questions (combination of multiple choice and true-false questions). Each objective question will be worth 2 points each. There are no
make ups for missed classes (unless a student is away on University related activities, such as athletic events). The lowest test score is dropped.

**Test Schedule**

| Test 1- | Feb 10 |
| Test 2- | Mar 3 |
| Test 3- | Mar 31 |
| Test 4 | Apr 21 |

**Connect LearnSmart Assignments**

McGraw-Hill’s Connect is a web-based assignment and assessment solution required for this course. Connect is designed to assist you with your coursework based on your needs. As outlined in this syllabus, assignments will make up 10% of your overall course grade.

Students are responsible for submitting Learnsmart assignments on time through the Connect platform, which is accessed through Blackboard. The deadlines for submitting assignments are set out in Connect, and students are responsible for meeting these deadlines. No late submissions are accepted. The two lowest scores are dropped at end of semester.

**Access**

Connect access codes are packaged with a new textbook in the bookstore, at no additional cost. Connect can also be purchased online.

If you purchase Connect online, you will have the option of purchasing Connect or ConnectPlus, which includes an interactive eBook to supplement the required textbook for this course. NOTE: You can register in Connect and have access without a code for a limited time period (typically three weeks).

**Registration/Access/Technical Support Contact Details**

There is single sign on access to Connect in Blackboard.

**Support & Tips**

If you have any issues while registering or using Connect, please contact McGraw-Hill’s
CARE team through http://www.mhhe.com/support or call 1-800-331-5094. To avoid problems related to unexpected technical issues, you are advised not to wait until the last moment to complete assignments. Your instructor is unable to provide technical assistance on Learnsmart.

Final Exam

The comprehensive final exam will comprise of 100 objective multiple choice/true-false questions relating to material covered in class and in readings. The final exam is at 7.15pm on 16th December.

Issue Position Paper

Students are required to write one issue position paper on a topic related to the course. All topics must be submitted for approval of the instructor. The topic needs to fulfill the following criteria:

1. Relevance to US politics/public policy
2. Be the product of independent research covering primary and secondary sources
3. Contain appropriate referencing- please refer to issue position paper guide
4. 5-10 pages in length

Papers are due by class time on April 14. A 10% late penalty will apply for every day the paper is late. Students must submit a hard copy of their paper to the instructor AND submit an electronic copy of their copy to the class account on www.turnitin.com The paper is deemed late until both the hard copy and electronic submission have been received.

Turnitin.com

You must create an account at www.turnitin.com as soon as possible, and by no later than February 24th in any event. The process for creating an account and submitting your papers is set out as follows:

Step 1

To register and create a user profile, go to www.turnitin.com and select your language from the drop down menu.

Click on the "Create Account" link on the homepage and the Create a User Profile page will open. Click on the "Student" link. Fill in the required information in the new user profile form. In order to create a profile, you must have a class ID and an enrollment password. You can get this information from your instructor.
Once you have created your profile, click the "I Agree" button to log into Turnitin.

Step 2 - Student Homepage

Your class will show up on your Student Homepage. Click on the name of your class to open your class portfolio.

Step 3 - Class Portfolio

Your Class Portfolio shows the assignments your instructor has created and your submissions to the class.

Step 4 - Submitting a Paper

To submit a paper, click the "Submit" button next to the paper assignment.

The paper submission page will open. Enter a title for your paper. To select a paper for submission, click the browse button and locate the paper on your computer. We accept submissions in these formats:

- MS Word, WordPerfect, RTF, PDF, PostScript, HTML, plain text (.txt)

After entering a title for your paper and selecting a file, click "Upload" to upload your paper.

If your paper is in a format that we do not accept, you can submit it by cut and paste. To submit a paper this way, select cut & paste upload using the pulldown at the top of the form.

Copy the text of your paper from a word processing program and then paste it into the text box in the submission form. If you submit your paper using the cut and paste method, you can skip the next step.

Step 5 - Submitting a Paper Confirmation

The paper you chose to submit will be in the preview. Look over all the information and make sure that it is correct. To confirm the submission, click the "Submit" button.

After you confirm your submission, a digital receipt will be shown. A copy of the receipt will be e-mailed to you. To return to your portfolio and view your submission, click the "Go to Portfolio" button.

Clicker Quizzes/Attendance

Students will be assessed on the basis of their performance on regular in class clicker quizzes.
There will usually be 10 clicker questions each week with students receiving 1 or 2 points for every correct response. The quizzes will be based on the reading/lecture material for the previous and/or current week. Students will also receive credit for attendance (typically 5 points at the beginning of each class and 5 points at the end of class). Your lowest weekly clicker score will be dropped at the end of the semester. There is no make up for missed classes.

**Clicker Options**

In this course, you have the option of using an i>clicker, i>clicker+, or i>clicker2 remote, or using i>clicker GO, which enables you to vote via a web-enabled device like a laptop or smart phone. PLEASE NOTE that i>clicker GO cannot be used in a course where your instructor has not enabled i>clicker GO. Check with your other instructors to ensure that i>clicker GO is permitted in each course you take—otherwise, you may want to consider purchasing a remote so that you can use it in all your courses. Only purchase a i>clicker GO subscription if:

You will not be using i>clicker in another course that does not allow i>clicker GO as an alternative to purchasing a remote.
You do not plan to sell back a remote to the bookstore.
You have access to a wireless device (i.e. a laptop, iPhone, iPod Touch, or Android) running a browser that supports AJAX, JavaScript, and HTTPS requests such as Internet Explorer, Firefox, Chrome or Safari.
Be sure to check with your other instructors if you have questions about the possibility of using i>clicker GO in your course(s).

**Registration**

You are required to purchase an i>clicker remote or i>clicker GO subscription for in-class participation. i>clicker is a response system that allows you to respond to questions I pose during class, and you will be graded on that feedback and/or your in-class participation (i>clicker GO works the same way). In order to receive this credit, you will need to register your i>clicker remote or set up your i>clicker GO account by February 17. If you have decided to use i>clicker GO instead of a remote, please see below for registration instructions.

**i>clicker remote registration:**

You must have come to class at least once and voted on at least one question in order to complete this registration properly. Once you have responded to a question with your i>clicker remote, go to http://www.iclicker.com/registration. Complete the fields with your first name, last name,
student ID, and remote ID. Your student ID will be your Islander ID. The remote ID is the series of numbers and sometimes letters found on the bottom of the back of your i>clicker remote. i>clicker will be used every day in class, and you are responsible for bringing your remote daily.

i>clicker GO registration:

To create a i>clicker GO account, visit https://go.iclicker.com (USA) or https://iclickergo.ca (Canada) or download the app for iOS or Android. Creating an account automatically starts a free 14-day trial subscription. Please use this trial period to make sure i>clicker GO will work for all of your i>clicker classes before purchasing a subscription as there are no refunds afterwards.

Once you create your i>clicker GO account, you do not need to do anything else to register. Just be sure that your account has the following profile information:

Student ID: Islander ID

School ZIP/Postal Code: [school ZIP/postal code student should enter here]

School Name: [school name student should select here]

At the end of your trial, should you decide to purchase i>clicker GO, you can purchase access to i>clicker GO in a variety of subscription lengths using your credit card online or through in-app purchase with your smartphone; this subscription includes an unlimited number of courses.

If you have an activation code from purchasing an access card in the bookstore or from a package with a textbook, you will need to redeem the code from the i>clicker GO website. Once redeemed, the activation will take affect for iOS and Android apps. You cannot redeem access cards from within the iOS or Android apps. To redeem on the website, visit https://go.iclicker.com (USA) or https://iclickergo.ca (Canada) and log into your account. Enter your code from your account profile page if you do not see an entry field upon logging into i>clicker GO.

If you have more questions on i>clicker registration, please visit http://support.iclicker.com for FAQs and other resources.

Cheating

I consider bringing a fellow student’s i>clicker to class to be cheating and a violation of the
University Honor Code. If you are caught with a remote other than your own or have votes in a class that you did not attend, you will forfeit all clicker points and may face additional disciplinary action.

Other forms of cheating include calling out/whispering answers and looking at another student’s response to questions. Such behavior will also result in disciplinary action.

**Grading Scheme**

- Attendance/Quizzes (15%)
- Learnsmart Assignments (10%)
- Tests: (35%)
- Final Exam: (20%)
- Research Paper: (20%)

A = 90-100; B = 80-89; C = 70-79; D = 60-69; F = Less than 60

**Class Attendance**

Regular attendance is required for this course. It is in students’ interest to attend class, since there is a strong relationship between attendance and participation and semester grades. Approximately 50% of the Clicker Grade will be based on attendance. Paying close attention and taking notes is essential to your success in the class. Attendance data may be taken into consideration in determining students’ grades for border line cases (i.e. students with scores falling on borderline between two grades). Your lowest weekly clicker score will be dropped at the end of the semester.

**Readings**

*Government Matters* is the core text for this course, which provides students with an overview of U. S. government and politics. With the lectures as a foundation, you should use the reading to provide additional material to fill in the gaps. Don’t do the reading in a vacuum; first, scan the reading before the lectures to get a few main points and a general sense of the subject matter covered. Then go back and do the reading more carefully. After the lectures, go back over the reading, with an eye toward supplementing and building upon the issues and events we discussed in class. The assigned readings often include materials not specifically covered in class, so it is absolutely essential that you read the assignments in order to succeed in this course. It is important that you keep up with the readings on a weekly basis, which will be tested through the Learnsmart Platform. This will facilitate understanding of the lecture material, and also permit you to manage your time effectively in
preparing for your tests. You will also be tested on your knowledge of the text in weekly in class quizzes.

**COURSE POLICIES**

1. *Make-ups (Examinations)* – There are no make-ups for the course, but students do get to drop their lowest test score and their lowest weekly clicker score.

2. *Extra Credit* -- A limited amount of extra credit may be available to students over the course of the semester. Any extra credit assignment will be made available to all students on an ad hoc basis and announced in class. Students might, for example, be offered option of attending an on campus lecture, or event, and write a short paper on the event with a strict deadline for the assignment announced in class. There will also be a discussion board in Blackboard in which I will “throw out” controversial topics for discussion. Participation in these discussions is optional, but I will at random intervals award extra credit to students who participate in designated threads. Ignorance about an assignment (eg resulting from a failure to attend class) does not entitle students to submit the assignment after the deadline. There will be no “tailor made” extra credit (provided to students on an individual basis) and students should not count on extra credit as a means for remedying poor performance on tests and/or papers.

3. *Incompletes* – Will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

4. *Assistance* -- Please feel free to talk with me about your work or about politics and political science in general before or after class, or during the class “break”. If you wish to meet me at another time, please see me to arrange an appointment. You should also avail yourself of the opportunity to seek assistance from the Tutoring and Learning Center in the Bell Library. Political Science tutors may also available.

5. *Academic etiquette* -- Students are expected to attend and participate in class in professional manner.

This means:  
Arriving to class on time/ or if unavoidably detained, entering class in a quiet manner  
Turning off ringers on cell phones  
Not reading/texting/using internet while in class  
Remaining in class for duration  
Not talking except to address class
6. **Academic Integrity** -- Cheating or plagiarism on an assignment or test, or failure to complete any of the course requirements, will result in a zero grade for the assignment in question.

7. **Dropping a Class** -- April 11 is the last day to drop a course for the semester with an automatic grade of W.

8. **Notice to students with disabilities** -- Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act in making reasonable accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. If you suspect that you may have a disability (physical impairment, learning disability, psychiatric disability, etc.), please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office, located in Driftwood 101, at 825-5816. If you need disability accommodations in this class, please see me as soon as possible.

9. **Academic Advising** -- The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. The Academic Advisor will set up a degree plan, which must be signed by the student, a faculty mentor, and the department chair. The College's Academic Advising Center is located in Driftwood 203E, and can be reached at 825-3466.

10. **Electronics**-- Please turn off all electronic communication devices before you enter the classroom. It is an extreme distraction when beepers, pagers, and cell phones ring during class. *No electronic devices will be permitted during exams.*

11. As stated in University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Rule 13.02.99.C2, Student Grade Appeals, and University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures. These documents are accessible through the University Rules Web site at [http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/university_rules/index.html](http://www.tamucc.edu/provost/universityRules/index.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Office of Student Affairs.
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<tr>
<th>SCHEDULE</th>
<th>READINGS</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan 27</td>
<td>Chapter 1- Democracy and American Politics</td>
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<td>Feb 3</td>
<td>Chapter 2- The Founding and the Constitution</td>
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<td>Feb 10</td>
<td>Chapter 3- Federalism</td>
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<td><strong>Test 1:</strong></td>
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<td>Feb 17</td>
<td>Chapter 4- Civil Liberties</td>
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<td>Mar 17</td>
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<td>Chapter 15- The Judiciary</td>
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<td><strong>Test 3:</strong></td>
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<td>Apr 7</td>
<td>Chapter 6- Public Opinion and Political Socialization</td>
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<td>Apr 14</td>
<td>Chapter 10- Interest Groups and Chapter 7- Political Parties</td>
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<td><strong>PAPERS DUE</strong></td>
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<td>Apr 21</td>
<td>Chapter 8- Nominations &amp; Elections</td>
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<td>Date</td>
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<td>Apr 21</td>
<td>Test 4</td>
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<td>Apr 28</td>
<td>Chapter 9- Participation, Voting Behavior, and Campaigns</td>
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<td>May 5</td>
<td>Chapter 11- Media &amp; Politics</td>
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<td>May 12</td>
<td>Final Exam 7.15-9.45</td>
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**Issue Position Paper Format and Requirements**

**Structural Requirements**

1. Length: 5-10 pages (typed)
2. Format - MLA, See [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/) for assistance with MLA style
3. Title page: Identify topic, your name, course name and number
4. References: Minimum of 4 primary references, limit of 2 secondary sources

**Topics and Contents**

Your mission (if accepted) is to provide an issue position paper on an issue of current political controversy, which is of relevance to national politics. It may help you prepare for this assignment if you think of yourself as an advisor to the US President, or candidate during a political campaign.

**Topics**

1. Topic must be relevant to course
2. Approval of instructor is necessary
3. Textbooks are good starting point for your research beginning with table of contents

**Contents**

1. Must introduce issue and briefly set out your position in debate
2. Main text must review arguments on both sides of debate (including use of primary sources)
3. Conclusion- you must explain/persuade reader of the merits of your position in debate

Please do not hesitate to contact your instructor for further advice on your project