U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

A basic survey of American government, including fundamental political institutions, with special attention to the United States Constitution. Meets the University core requirement and the Texas state statutory requirement for U.S constitution.

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.

MAJOR COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be required to take three 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. There are also online computer assignments, which are accessible via Blackboard.

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.
**Test Schedule**

Test 1- Sept 22  
Test 2- Oct 13  
Test 3- Nov 10  

**Learnsmart assignments**

Students are required to submit regular online assignments through the Connect Platform, which is accessible through Blackboard. There is one assignment due for each chapter of the textbook. The list of assignments, together with relevant deadlines is available within Connect. You are responsible for meeting the relevant deadlines without any further reminders from the instructor. No late work is accepted under any circumstance. However, the lowest two scores are dropped from the calculation of your average assignment score.

The assignments are “open book.” However, you are expected to work alone, and any collusion/working in groups/sharing of answers represents academic dishonesty (see below for policy on academic dishonesty).

**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 8th 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  
3. Contain appropriate referencing- please refer to issue position paper guide  
4. 5-10 pages text in length
Papers are due by class time on Nov 17. 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. Late papers should be instructed electronically via e-mail attachment and to Turnitin.com

**Turnitin.com**

You must create an account at www.turnitin.com as soon as possible, and by no later than 13\textsuperscript{th} October 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.

Class ID: 8251812
Enrollment Password: 2305-007

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). There are no makeups for missed class quizzes. However, the lowest class quiz score is dropped.

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 September 19. 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
REQUIRED TEXT

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:
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 POLICIES

1. Attendance/tardiness- 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. Students should arrive to class on time, since tardiness is disruptive to class proceedings.

2. Make-ups (Examinations) – Students are required to take examinations at the scheduled class time. In a limited set of circumstances e.g. illness with a supporting doctor’s note, participation in University athletic events- students will be eligible to take a make-up examination. In most circumstances, this should be arranged with the instructor BEFORE the examination, or at the very latest within 24 hours of the time of the test. Failure to comply with this requirement means that the students forfeits the opportunity to sit a make-up. There are NO makeups for missed quizzes, but the lowest class quiz score is dropped. There are no make-ups for missed Learnsmart assignments, but the lowest two scores are dropped.

3. 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 the instructor MAY award extra credit to students who participate in radomly 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. There is no general entitlement to extra credit.

4. Incompletes – Will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

5. 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.

6. 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 to fellow students except to address class

7 Academic Integrity -- University students are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with
the highest standards of academic honesty. Academic misconduct for which a student is subject to
penalty includes all forms of cheating, such as illicit possession of examinations or examination
materials, falsification, forgery, complicity or plagiarism. (Plagiarism is the presentation of the work
of another as one’s own work.) In this class, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of
academic misconduct on an assignment or test will result in the score of a 0 for the assignment.

8. Dropping a Class – I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class.
However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. Please
consult with me before you decide to drop to be sure it is the best thing to do. Should dropping the
course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the
Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and
participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped from the class. November 7th
is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

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.

PREFERRED METHOD OF SCHOLARLY CITATION

Students should use MLA style for their issue position papers.

CLASSROOM/PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR
Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi, as an academic community, requires that each individual respect the needs of others to study and learn in a peaceful atmosphere. Under Article III of the Student Code of Conduct, classroom behavior that interferes with either (a) the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or (b) the ability of other students to profit from the instructional program may be considered a breach of the peace and is subject to disciplinary sanction outlined in article VII of the Student Code of Conduct. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior may be instructed to leave the classroom. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including classrooms, electronic classrooms, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

STATEMENT OF CIVILITY

Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi has a diverse student population that represents the population of the state. Our goal is to provide you with a high quality educational experience that is free from repression. You are responsible for following the rules of the University, city, state and federal government. We expect that you will behave in a manner that is dignified, respectful and courteous to all people, regardless of sex, ethnic/racial origin, religious background, sexual orientation or disability. Behaviors that infringe on the rights of another individual will not be tolerated.

GRADE APPEALS

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.01, Student Grade Appeal Procedures, 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 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. For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught or the Office of the Provost.

Disabilities Accommodations*
The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane and classes could not be held on the campus of Texas A&M University–Corpus Christi; this course would continue through the use of Blackboard and/or email. In addition, the syllabus and class activities may be modified to allow continuation of the course. Ideally, University facilities (i.e., emails, web sites, and Blackboard) will be operational within two days of the closing of the physical campus. However, students need to make certain that the course instructor has a primary and a secondary means of contacting each student.

SCHEDULE       READINGS

Sept 8        Chapter 1- Democracy and American Politics
Sept 15       Chapter 2- The Founding and the Constitution
Sept 22       Chapter 3- Federalism

Test 1:         September 22

Sept 29       Chapter 4- Civil Liberties
Oct 6         Chapter 5- Civil Rights

Oct 13        Chapter 12- Congress
Test 2: October 13

Oct 20  Chapter 13- The Presidency
Oct 27  Chapter 14- The Bureaucracy
Nov 3   Chapter 14- The Judiciary
Nov 10  Chapter 6- Public Opinion and Political Socialization

Test 3: Nov 10

Nov 17  Chapter 10- Interest Groups and Chapter 7- Political Parties

PAPERS DUE Nov 17

Nov 24  Chapter 8- Nominations & Elections Chapter 9- Participation, Voting Behavior, and Campaigns
Dec 1   Chapter 11- Media & Politics

Dec 8   Final Exam 7.15-9.45
Issue Position Paper Format and Requirements

Structural Requirements

1. Length: 5-10 pages (double spaced, typed, no more than 12pt font)
2. Format- MLA, See http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/ for assistance with MLA style
3. Sources: 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