Please read this syllabus in full. You are responsible for its contents throughout the length of this course. Portions of this course will be conducted online. Please be careful to note which days the class meets on campus and which days instruction will take place online.

Course Description
This course serves to introduce political science and American politics through an exploration of the nation’s constitution, institutions, and political processes.

Required Text
(Physical copies are available at both the campus and off-campus bookstores. If you prefer an ebook, you can purchase Connect access directly through the publisher’s website. More details will be given in class.)


*Please note: Access to McGraw-Hill Connect is required for the course.*

Class Websites
As a significant portion of this course is conducted online, the following websites are crucial to your success:
Blackboard – [https://bb9.tamucc.edu/](https://bb9.tamucc.edu/)
McGraw-Hill Connect –

*Note: To ensure that your assignment grades properly transfer to Blackboard, you should always access the course and your assignments from Blackboard, rather than from Connect. Follow the assignment links from Blackboard; this will allow your two accounts to connect.*

Student Learning Objectives
Upon completion of the course, students should be able to complete the following:
- Recall basic facts related to the foundations of U.S. national government.
- Describe key political concepts related to U.S. institutions such as Congress, the Presidency, and the Judiciary.
- Demonstrate their understanding of key concepts relating to U.S. political behavior such as voting, elections and political parties, interest groups, and the media.

Core Student Learning Objectives
The four core objectives related to this course are Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. By the end of the semester, the course will have met these objectives:

- By having the students engage in critical thinking activities related to the Constitution, the political and philosophical foundations of the nation, governmental institutions, and political behavior.
- By having students engage in written, verbal, or visual activities related to the Constitution, the political and philosophical foundations of the nation, governmental institutions, and political behavior.
- By having students engage in course-related activities that connect personal responsibility and political ideology to encourage ethical decision making.
- By having students engage in course related activities that connect social responsibility to civil rights, civil liberties, and to voting and voting behavior.

**Major Course Requirements**

Your grade in this course is calculated based on the total number of points earned throughout the semester. Points are earned from in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Component</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Possible Points</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| Online Assignments | Throughout the semester, you will complete two types of online assignments: quizzes and discussion boards. Throughout the semester, we will have a total of 450 points of online assignments. The maximum number of points a student can earn for online assignments, though, is 400 points. The additional 50 points are included to accommodate an occasional missed deadline. As such, extensions are not granted for online assignments, and late assignments are not accepted. 1) Quizzes  
  - 14 multiple-choice chapter quizzes will be conducted through the publisher’s online learning system, McGraw-Hill Connect.  
  - Each quiz is worth 15 points, for a total of 210 possible points (14 x 15 points = 210 points).  
  - Quizzes cover material from assigned chapter readings only; they do not draw from lecture material.  
  - For each quiz, you will have 30 minutes to answer 10 questions. You have two attempts for each quiz. Your highest score for the quiz will be recorded.  
  - One hour after the due date for the quiz, you will be able to log back in and review the questions. | 400 points (out of 450 online points) |
2) Discussion Boards
- Students will participate in 4 discussion boards throughout the semester.
- Discussion boards will be conducted via Blackboard.
- Each discussion board is worth a total of 6 points: 50 points for your original post and 10 points for a substantive peer response to one of your classmates. This results in a total of 240 points from discussion board assignments (4 x 60 points = 240 points).
- Discussion board assignments are graded based on both content and writing.
- Assignments must be posted to the correct discussion board on Blackboard according to posted instructions. Assignments will not be accepted via email or other means.
- Late assignments will not be graded.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exams</th>
<th>500 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• There are <strong>four exams</strong> for the course.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exams are given in-class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Each exam is worth <strong>125 points</strong>, for a total of <strong>500 points</strong> (4 x 125 points = 500 points).</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Each exam is <strong>50 questions</strong> in length, with one additional bonus questions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Exams are multiple-choice, and they are non-cumulative.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Scantrons will be provided, but students will need to bring pencils and erasers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam. Do not be late on exam dates!</td>
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<tr>
<td>• NO individual make-ups are given for missed exams. In place of individual make-ups, students who miss an exam will have the opportunity to make up a single missed test during the final exam period by taking a cumulative make-up exam. The cumulative make-up is <strong>not</strong> an opportunity to replace a low exam score. Students may only make up one exam.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance</th>
<th>100 points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Attendance and active participation is a vital component of success in a college course. To</td>
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</table>
encourage student attendance, 100 points of your course grade will be based on your attendance.

- Students are allowed three absences before their attendance grade is affected. Beginning with the fourth absence, your attendance grade will be negatively impacted by course absences.
- As all students receive three “free” course absences, no distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences.
- Attendance will be taken via a sign-in sheet that is circulated at the beginning of each class. As our class is only 50 minutes long, it is vital that you arrive in class on time. If you are not present to sign the roll sheet, you will be counted absent for the day.
- Signing another student’s name to the attendance sheet constitutes an act of academic misconduct and will be treated as such.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total Possible Points</th>
<th>1,000 points</th>
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</table>

Grading Scale

A = 900 – 1,000 points       B = 800 – 899 points       C = 700 – 799 points
D = 600 – 699 points        F = 599 points and below

Course Policies

Attendance/Tardiness
Because a significant portion of this course will be conducted online, attendance in those classes that are conducted in-person is vital. Attendance will be taken daily via a sign-in sheet. (The act of forgery of a classmate’s signature will be addressed using the Academic Integrity policy discussed within this syllabus.) If you are not present to sign the attendance sheet when it circulates, you will be counted absent for the day. Three absences are forgiven for the semester; additional absences will negatively impact your course attendance grade. Course attendance is recorded in Starfish. Students will receive automated notifications if they have accumulated multiple absences.

Late Work and Makeup Exams
Late work is not accepted in this course. Deadlines are stated in the syllabus and are posted on Blackboard/Connect. Students are responsible for tracking their own assignments and due dates.

If you miss one exam, you will be eligible to take a cumulative makeup exam at the end of the semester during the course’s final exam period. No individual makeup exams are permitted during the semester.
Student athletes should notify the professor at the beginning of the semester of their participation in campus athletics. Athletes are responsible for notifying the professor of any travel dates and for completing assignments before scheduled travel.

Extra Credit
I do not offer any individual extra credit opportunities in this course. There are no exceptions to this policy. Please do not request individual extra credit at any point during the semester.

Email Policy
Email is a form of professional communication and should be treated as such. I will use email and Blackboard to communicate with you throughout the semester, and you are expected to regularly check your Islander email account.

Please respect the following policies regarding email communication:
- Email should include your first and last name, your class number, and your section number (e.g., Jane Doe – POLS 2306.003). I teach multiple classes and sections during the semester. Providing this information allows me to locate your information and respond in a timely manner.
- All email to the professor must be sent from your official TAMUCC email address. This is to ensure your privacy and to avoid spam filters. I often do not receive emails originating from Gmail, Yahoo, or other domains. There is a good chance that I will not respond to emails sent from other domains.
- I respond to emails during traditional business hours (i.e., between the hours of 9:00 AM and 5:00 PM Monday through Friday).

Cell Phone/Electronic Device Usage
Please silence your cell phone during class. If you need to use your phone (or other electronic device) during class time for any reason, please leave the room. However, if you are leaving on a regular basis to use your phone, you will be counted absent. (If there are special circumstances, please let me know.)

Laptop computers and tablets are permitted in the class for note-taking purposes. If your computer usage is distracting to fellow students or the professor, you will be asked to discontinue.

Classroom Decorum
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.
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. According to the TAMUCC Student Code of Conduct, plagiarism is “[i]ntentionally, knowingly, or carelessly presenting the work of another as one’s own without proper acknowledgment of the source” (Code of Conduct, http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/Article%20III.pdf). In this course, academic misconduct or complicity in an act of academic misconduct on an assignment will be handled with the utmost gravity; not only will offenses receive lowered grades in the course, but they will also be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs, in accordance with TAMUCC guidelines.

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. You will need to check online for the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

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. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All course and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information, please call (361) 825-3466.

Disability Services
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, Room #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 at (361) 825-5816.
Grade Appeals Process
Students who feel they have 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. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website (http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean.

Statement of Academic Continuity
In the event of an unforeseen adverse event, such as a major hurricane, where 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., email, websites, 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 secondary means of contact.

Academic Calendar Reminders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>W 8/24</td>
<td>Classes begin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 8/31</td>
<td>Last day to register or add a class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M 9/5</td>
<td>Labor Day – No Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 11/11</td>
<td>Last day to drop a class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T 11/22</td>
<td>Reading Days – No Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 11/23</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>R 11/24</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holidays – No Classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F 11/25</td>
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<tr>
<td>M 12/5</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from the University</td>
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<tr>
<td>T 12/6</td>
<td>Last day of classes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W 12/7</td>
<td>Reading Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R 12/8 – F 12/9; M 12/12 – W 12/14</td>
<td>Final Exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>R 12/15 – F 12/16</td>
<td>Grading Days</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sa 12/17</td>
<td>Fall Commencement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Schedule

Please note: Readings should be completed before class on the date they are listed. (For example, you should come to class on Friday, August 26 having read Ch. 1, “Political Thinking and Political Culture: Becoming a Responsible Citizen.”) On online course days, please locate your assignments in the “Online Course Meetings” folders under “Content” on Blackboard.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>R 8/25</td>
<td>Course Introduction; Syllabus</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| T 8/30       | Lecture: American Political Culture; Democracy & Other Systems of Government  
(Ch. 1, “Political Thinking and Political Culture: Becoming a Responsible Citizen”) |
| R 9/1        | **Online Course Meeting**  
Due:  Syllabus agreement (due by 1:00 PM)  
Plagiarism quiz (due by 1:00 PM)  
Connect Quiz – Chapter 1 (due by 1:00 PM) |
| T 9/6        | Lecture: The Constitution  
| T 9/8        | **Online Course Meeting**  
Due:  Discussion Board #1 – Original Post (due by 1:00 PM)  
Discussion Board #1 – Peer Response (due by 1:00 PM)  
Connect Quiz – Chapter 2 (due by 1:00 PM) |
| T 9/13       | Lecture: Federalism  
(Ch. 3, “Federalism: Forging a Nation”) |
| R 9/15       | Lecture: Federalism  
(Ch. 3, cont.) |
| T 9/20       | **Online Course Meeting**  
Study guide for Exam 1 available on Blackboard.  
Due:  Discussion Board #2 – Original Post (due by 1:00 PM)  
Discussion Board #2 – Peer Response (due by 11:59 PM)  
Connect Quiz – Chapter 2 (due by 1:00 PM)  
Connect Quiz – Chapter 3 (due by 1:00 PM) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
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</table>
| R 9/22       | **EXAM 1** conducted in class from 9:30 AM to 10:20 AM.  
  • Bring: pencil(s), eraser(s), TAMUCC student ID.  
  • Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam. |
| T 9/27       | Lecture: Psychological Barriers to Political Discussions and Decisionmaking  
  (Readings to be announced) |
| R 9/29       | Lecture: Political Socialization; Public Opinion  
  (Ch. 6, “Public Opinion and Political Socialization: Shaping the People’s Voice”) |
| T 10/4       | Lecture: The American Party System  
  (Ch. 8, “Political Parties, Candidates, and Campaigns: Defining the Voter’s Choice”) |
| R 10/6       | **Online Course Meeting**  
  Study guide for Exam 2 available on Blackboard.  
  **Due:**  
  Discussion Board #3 – Original Post (due by 1:00 PM)  
  Discussion Board #3 – Peer Response (due by 11:59 PM)  
  Connect Quiz – Chapter 6 (due by 1:00 PM)  
  Connect Quiz – Chapter 8 (due by 1:00 PM)  
  Connect Quiz – Chapter 10 (due by 1:00 PM) |
| T 10/11      | Lecture: The Media  
  (Ch. 10, “The News Media: Communicating Political Images”)  
  **Note:** T 10/11 is the last day to register to vote in order to be eligible to vote in the November 2016 general election.  
| R 10/13      | **EXAM 2** conducted in class from 9:30 AM-10:20 AM.  
  • Bring: pencil(s), eraser(s), TAMUCC student ID.  
  • Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam. |
| T 10/18      | Lecture: Congress; Interest Groups  
  (Ch. 11, “Congress: Balancing National Goals and Local Interests”; Ch. 9, “Interest Groups: Organizing for Influence”) |
| R 10/20      | Lecture: *Citizens United v. FEC,* The Judicial Branch  
  (Ch. 14, “The Federal Judicial System: Applying the Law”) |
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
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</table>
| T 10/25      | Lecture: The Executive Branch  
|              | (Ch. 12, “The Presidency: Leading the Nation”; Ch. 13, “The Federal Bureaucracy: Administering the Government)  
|              | *Note: Early voting in Texas runs M 10/24 through F 11/4.* |
| R 10/27      | **Online Course Meeting**  
|              | Due: Connect Quiz – Chapter 11 (due by 1:00 PM)  
|              | Connect Quiz – Chapter 9 (due by 1:00 PM)  
|              | Connect Quiz – Chapter 14 (due by 1:00 PM) |
| T 11/1       | Lecture: Voting & Political Participation  
|              | (Ch. 7, “Political Participation: Activating the Popular Will”) |
| R 11/3       | **Online Course Meeting**  
|              | Due: Discussion Board #4 – Original Post (due by 1:00 PM)  
|              | Discussion Board #4 – Peer Response (due by 11:59 PM)  
|              | Connect Quiz – Chapter 12 (due by 1:00 PM)  
|              | Connect Quiz – Chapter 13 (due by 1:00 PM)  
|              | Connect Quiz – Chapter 7 (due by 1:00 PM) |
| T 11/8       | **Online Course Meeting**  
|              | Study guide for Exam 3 available on Blackboard.  
|              | **Due:** Extra credit assignment (due by 1:00 PM)  
|              | *Note: Election Day is T 11/8.* |
| R 11/10      | **Exam 3** conducted in class from 9:30 AM-10:20 AM.  
|              | • Bring: pencil(s), eraser(s), TAMUCC student ID.  
|              | • Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam.  
|              | *Note: F 11/11 is the last day to drop a class for Fall 2016.* |
| T 11/15      | Lecture: Civil Liberties  
<p>|              | (Ch. 4, “Civil Liberties: Protecting Individual Rights”) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting Date</th>
<th>Topic and Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| R 11/17      | **Online Course Meeting**  
Study guide for Exam 4 available on Blackboard.  
**Due:** Connect Quiz – Chapter 4 (due by 1:00 PM)  
Connect Quiz – Chapter 5 (due by 1:00 PM) |
| T 11/22      | READING DAY – NO CLASSES |
| R 11/24      | THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY – TAMUCC CLOSED |
| T 11/29      | Lecture: Civil Rights  
(Ch. 5, “Equal Rights: Struggling toward Fairness”)  
In-Class Viewing: Confirmation |
| R 12/1       | In-Class Viewing: Confirmation |
| T 12/6       | **EXAM 4** conducted in class from 9:30 AM-10:20 AM.  
• Bring: pencil(s), eraser(s), TAMUCC student ID.  
• Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam.  
*Note: M 12/5 is the last day to withdraw from the university for Fall 2016. T 12/6 is the last day of classes for Fall 2016.* |
| W 12/7       | READING DAY – NO CLASSES |
| T 12/13      | **Final Exam scheduled from 8:00 AM to 10:30 AM.**  
**CUMULATIVE MAKE-UP** conducted in class from 8:00 AM-8:50 AM.  
• Bring: pencil(s), eraser(s), TAMUCC student ID.  
• Once the first student has submitted his or her exam and left the classroom, no additional students will be able to begin the exam.  
*Note: The cumulative make-up exam is only for students who have missed one of the four in class exams. Students may not take the cumulative make-up to replace a low score.* |

*This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.  
Students are responsible for using the most current version.*