POLS 2305.W03 – U.S. Government and Politics  
(FULLY ONLINE: FALL SEMESTER 2nd 7-WEEK SESSION)  
Fall 2018 Syllabus, Version 1.0

Instructor: Dr. J. L. Epley Sanders  
Office Location: Bay Hall 341  
Office Telephone: (361) 825-2554

Office Hours:  
• By appointment for in-person meetings and office phone calls.  
• Drop-in hours: Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 2pm-4pm.

Email Policy:  
• Instructor’s email address: jennifer.epley@tamucc.edu  
• Please consider e-mail as official correspondence.  
• Please address emails to “Dr. Epley.”  
• Efforts will be made to address your e-mail within 48 hours, but between the regular business hours of 9am-5pm. If you do not receive an email within 48 hours, please send a follow-up email inquiry.  
• No email correspondence on weekends.  
• No email correspondence on the day before or day of an assessment deadline.  
• E-mail communications should be about class business. E-mail is not the place for summaries of course content material, however.  
• Please use the subject line in a way that indicates the content of the message. Please also use professional language and include your full name, section number, and a complete inquiry in the body of the message. Unprofessional emails will result in non-response. If you have questions about professionalism, feel free to ask Dr. Epley for advice and clarification.  
• Please keep copies of e-mails that are sent and received for records purposes.  
• Remember that Blackboard sends emails to students’ Islander accounts. Check that account regularly. Students are responsible for forwarding their Islander email to their preferred address if they do not use their Islander email. Course email announcements are archived in Blackboard for your reference as well.

Required Course Website:  
• Blackboard online (https://bb9.tamucc.edu)  → Free access for university students

Course Section Details for Registered Students:  
• POLS 2305.W03 – U.S. GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS (online only)  
• CRN 73864: This class does not meet physically face-to-face in a classroom. Individual and group work will instead occur online. In-person student meetings with other students or the instructor are optional.  
• Duration: Fall semester 2nd 7-week session from 10/15/2018 to 12/05/2018
Required Book:
The Secrets of Carter House (2013) [collegiate academic bundle version]. The Secrets of Carter House is a historical fiction novel that follows an ensemble of Galveston/Houston-area teachers and learners as the 2008 onset of Hurricane Ike begins to renegotiate the boundaries between their in-school and out-of-school lives. This Southern tale explores how government structures, public policies, and political culture shape the choices that people make when disaster strikes. The Secrets of Carter House was written by Dr. Kenyatha V. “Ellie Mae” Loftis.

The Secrets of Carter House is available electronically and may be purchased online at http://secretsofcarterhouse.com/. Alternatively, you can purchase a digital copy on a flashdrive from the campus bookstore.

*** Each item in the collegiate academic bundle version package can be downloaded only once. PDF versions can be printed and are ADA accessible. If accommodations are needed, please contact Dr. Epley and/or the publisher L.SMURPHE.F Productions via email at PRODUCTIONS@LSMURPHEF.COM before the start of classes.

Additional readings, websites, and multimedia will be required. The instructor will provide the free copies and website links to students in Blackboard and/or via email.

Course Description and Outcomes:
Political Science 2305 (online version) is an introductory course about political science in general and American politics in specific. Together in this course we will develop your ability to analyze various political processes and institutions. We will go beyond the basic facts of history and civics—what political institutions exist, how did they arise, who are the key political figures, etc.—to address basic questions of political science such as: What is the function of government and when does it fulfill or abdicate this function? How do political actors such as politicians and parties attain power? What is the role of institutional rules and procedures? What do citizens think about and do regarding politics? Such questions and the answers we will find are applicable to us as citizens, residents, and visitors in the United States. These issues are also relevant elsewhere in the world. Through a process of collaboration, cooperation, and discovery, we will develop our knowledge base and skills. Substantive knowledge, critical thinking and analysis, developing and defending arguments, and the clear and concise articulation of ideas and evidence will be important components of the discussions, writings, and evaluations in this course.

Topics covered include, but are not limited to: federalism, the U.S. Constitution, the three branches of government, the bureaucracy, the legal system, public opinion, political behavior, the mass media and politics, political parties, campaigns and elections, interest groups, and how the government and society deal with issues such as personal liberty, rights, the economy, and different domestic and foreign public policies.

Fall 2018 Semester Theme

“When Disaster Strikes” – We will cover the aforementioned topics through the lenses of disaster preparedness, emergency response, and recovery or change. We will analyze the social,
historical, and political contexts of disaster at the individual, community, state, and national levels. We will do so by taking a learner-centered approach that emphasizes:

a. Background Knowledge – Combine theory with empirical data (qualitative and quantitative)
b. Applied Learning – Problem-based and project-based individual and group assessments

**Student Learning Outcomes for POLS 2305 per the Department of Social Sciences:**
The four University Core Curriculum Program outcomes 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 outcomes…

- 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.

**Performance Evaluation and Grading (weighted formula, not a points system):** Your final course grade will consist of…

1% **Introductory Requirements (individual assessment)** – Syllabus contract and CITI Plagiarism Training Report (5/5 or 100% required score) before scheduled deadline.

40% **Online Content Assessments (individual assessment)** – There will be four online content assessments during the semester. See the attached schedule for assignment deadlines. Each online content assessment is worth 10% of the overall course grade.

32% **Online Chapter Quizzes (individual assessment)** – There will be four online quizzes related to the assigned book. See the attached schedule for assignment deadlines. Each online chapter quiz assessment is worth 8% of the overall course grade.

20% **Case Study/Application Responses (CSAR) (group assessment)** – There will be one CSAR group essay to be submitted online via Blackboard as wiki-documents by small assigned groups during the semester (see schedule for details). Students are expected to thoughtfully engage in active, professional collaborations on the CSAR wiki-documents.

The group assessments follow the university’s recommended “High Impact Practice” of “collaborative learning.”
“Collaborative Assignments and Projects: Collaborative learning combines two key goals: learning to work and solve problems in the company of others, and sharpening one’s own understanding by listening seriously to the insights of others, especially those with different backgrounds and life experiences. Approaches range from study groups within a course, to team-based assignments and writing, to cooperative projects and research.” (https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips)

7% Personal Responsibility and Written Communication Essay (individual assessment) – Individual students will produce a 2-pages single-spaced essay using a formal prompt and set of guidelines from the instructor. This assessment is officially part of the Core Curriculum assessment evaluation cycle from the Office of the Provost and the College of Liberal Arts.

Make-Up Policy and Late Policy:  
No make-up or late work is accepted.

Grading Scale:
A = 90 – 100  
B = 80 – 89  
C = 70 – 79  
D = 60 – 69  
F = 59 and below

Additional Notes:
No extra credit options are available for this course. No exceptions. Please do not request extra credit from the instructor at any point in time, especially at the end of the semester.

Grade Appeal Process:
All Assessments – Students have five days from the date that a score is posted in Blackboard for each individual component to make a typed grade appeal to the instructor.

Special Note: It is the student’s responsibility to trouble-shoot and resolve any technology problems in their online accounts before the syllabus deadlines and before the end of the semester session. This involves a student opening a ticket with the IT Helpdesk and keeping the reference numbers for the student account, taking and saving screenshots of problems, email correspondence copies, office hours meetings, and other related attempts.

Final Grade – Grade Appeals Process: As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, 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 Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, Student Grade Appeals. These documents are accessible online at:
http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf

For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on
the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html.

**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 your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.* 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. Please see the academic calendar from the Registrar’s Office for the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

**Academic Honor Code:**
Students are expected to uphold the Academic Honor Code published in the University Student Handbook. The Academic Honor Code is based on the premise that each student has the responsibility (1) to uphold the highest standards of academic integrity in the student’s own work, (2) to refuse to tolerate violations of academic integrity in the university community, and (3) to foster a high sense of integrity and social responsibility on the part of the university community. Violations of the Academic Honor Code will not be tolerated.

***Academic Dishonesty, Cheating, and Plagiarism***:
Academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism of any kind are unacceptable. There are no exceptions. Consequences for academic dishonesty, cheating, and plagiarism include, but are not limited to, a failing grade for an assignment, a failing grade for the course, noncredit for an assignment, additional work, and/or direct referral to university officials.

Please note that the university requires that faculty members formally report all instances of academic misconduct. Here is the form:
http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/Academic%20Misconduct%20Incident%20Form%208-17-11-1.pdf and here are the procedures:
http://studentaffairs.tamucc.edu/assets/procedure_academicmisconductcases.pdf

- **Academic dishonesty** includes, but is not limited to, the use of unauthorized information during a quiz or exam, plagiarism, submitting the same paper for multiple courses without permission, or depriving another student of the ability to perform his or her work. The term **cheating** includes, but is not limited to: (1) use of any unauthorized assistance in taking quizzes, tests, or examinations; (2) dependence upon the aid of sources beyond those authorized by the instructor in writing papers, preparing reports, solving problems, or carrying out other assignments, plagiarism; or (3) the acquisition, without permission, of tests or other academic material belonging to a member of the university faculty or staff. The term **plagiarism** includes, but is not limited to, the use by paraphrase or direct quotation, of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgment. Plagiarism also includes the unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or agency engaged in the selling or distribution of term papers or other academic materials. If you have questions about the university’s policy on academic
dishonesty, please see the Student Code of Conduct at
http://judicialaffairs.tamucc.edu/StudentCofC.html.

Online Classroom (and In-Person Activities) Policies:
- 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 online or in person may be instructed to leave the virtual classroom, office, meeting space, 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.
  - The instructor will assume that you have made an earnest effort to understand the material. This will allow you to be prepared to engage the material in more detail or address misunderstandings during any online sessions and in person.
  - To foster an intellectually supportive environment, students should adhere to the dialogue guidelines (see extra enclosed handout).

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.

Veterans:
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. Veterans can find more information online at http://vets.tamucc.edu/. Please also communicate with your instructor for assistance.

Student Caregivers:
If you have caregiving responsibilities (e.g., parent of a child or care for elderly parents) and you anticipate scheduling difficulties, please discuss this at the beginning of the semester with the instructor to work out an appropriate strategy and keep in regular touch during the semester.
Part-time or Full-time Employed Students:
If you anticipate scheduling conflicts or workload difficulties, please discuss your questions, concerns, and potential solutions with the instructor at the beginning of the semester and keep in regular touch during the semester.

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 courses 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.

S.A.I.L. System:
S.A.I.L. is a secure online student portal where you can access your student, academic, and financial aid records at Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi. Students can find information related to registration, class schedules, course catalogs, tuition and fees, grades, etc. at http://sail.tamucc.edu/.

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, 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 a secondary means of contacting each student.

Academic Calendar:
- [https://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/](https://www.tamucc.edu/academics/calendar/)
- For the latest information on dates and deadlines, please inquire at the appropriate university office (e.g., Academic Affairs Office, Office of the Registrar, Dean’s Office of your major, main department of your major, etc.), with your academic advisor, and your professors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 15</td>
<td>First day of classes for 2nd 7-Week Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 9</td>
<td>Last day to drop for the 2nd 7-Week Session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Last day to drop a class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Last day to apply for December graduation with late fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 21</td>
<td>Reading Day-No Class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 22-23</td>
<td>Thanksgiving Holidays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>Last day to withdraw from the University</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 5</td>
<td>Last day of classes and Final Exams 2nd 7-Week Session</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Schedule:
All dates, assignments, and evaluations are subject to change with advanced notice. Please pay attention to Blackboard (https://iol.tamucc.edu/) for updates. The times posted for deadlines refer to the time in Corpus Christi, Texas (i.e., Central Time Zone).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK</th>
<th>TOPICS</th>
<th>ASSESSMENT DEADLINES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Theme: Getting Started</td>
<td>Individual: Introductory Requirements (due Friday, October 19, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard as PDF documents only) – Syllabus Contract (last page only) and CITI Plagiarism Training Transcript (5/5 or 100% required score)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Course Introduction – Familiarize yourself with the syllabus and Blackboard course website.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic Advice – Review materials in the “How to Get an A” folder in Blackboard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purchase the required book if you have not already done so: “The Secrets of Carter House.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Start reading ahead for Week 2, especially if this is your first online class and/or you have a busy schedule.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Theme: Foundations</td>
<td>Individual: Online Content Assessment #1 – Understanding Institutions Test (due Sunday, October 28, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assigned online readings in Blackboard (free links): Democracy, Federalism, and Three Branches of Government – Click on “next” or arrows on each page to read the entire sections. If the topics are really new to you, locate additional online or library resources to further supplement your learning and understanding. Take metacognitive notes for personal use. Handouts are in the “How to Get an A” folder in Blackboard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual: Online Content Assessment #2 – U.S. Citizenship Test (due Sunday, October 28, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Theme: Legal System, Liberties, &amp; Rights</td>
<td>Individual: Online Content Assessment #3 – Civil Liberties Test (due Sunday, November 4, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Assigned online readings and multimedia in Blackboard (free links): Civil Liberties and Civil Rights – Click on “next” or arrows on each page to read the entire sections. If the topics are really new to you, locate additional online or library resources to further supplement your learning and understanding. Take metacognitive notes for personal use. Handouts are in the “How to Get an A” folder in Blackboard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual: Online Content Assessment #4 – Civil Rights Test (due Sunday, November 4, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*** BE CAREFUL ABOUT DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME FOR YOUR SCHEDULE</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Theme: The History Behind Current Events</td>
<td>Individual: Online Chapter Quizzes covering Chapters 1 through 6 of The Secrets of Carter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date Range</td>
<td>Theme: Political Actors &amp; Voices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5-9, 2018</td>
<td>Read Assigned Chapters 1-6: “The Secrets of Carter House.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Watch the assigned online video documentaries and start collaborating with group members for CSAR essay in Blackboard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12-16, 2018</td>
<td><strong>Theme: Political Actors &amp; Voices</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read Assigned Chapters 7-12: “The Secrets of Carter House.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue working with group members on the CSAR essay online in Blackboard.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 19-23, 2018</td>
<td><strong>Theme: Political Actors &amp; Voices</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Read Assigned Chapters 13-18: “The Secrets of Carter House.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue collaborating with group members on the CSAR essay online in Blackboard and then finalize everything prior to deadline.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 26-30, 2018 and</td>
<td><strong>Theme: Political Actors &amp; Institutions</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AND</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Theme: Real-World Applications</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Thinking, researching and writing: Applying course content to your own life and those in your immediate circles/networks.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 5-9, 2018</td>
<td><em>House</em> (due Friday, November 9, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 12-16, 2018</td>
<td>Group: Create one CSAR wiki-document in Blackboard per group. Copy and paste the guidelines and prompt. Start an essay outline and create shared to-do lists in that very same document. Include your schedules for better communication and planning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 19-23, 2018</td>
<td>Individual: <strong>Online Chapter Quizzes covering Chapters 7 through 12 of The Secrets of Carter House</strong> (due Friday, November 16, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November 26-30, 2018 and</td>
<td>Group: Add content and continue to edit the shared wiki-document. Consult with the Political Science Tutors and CASA Writing Tutors.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December 3-5, 2018</td>
<td>Group: <strong>Case Study/Application Response (CSAR) Essay</strong> (due Friday, November 30, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Individual: <strong>Online Chapter Quizzes covering Chapters 19 through 24 of The Secrets of Carter House</strong> (due Monday, December 3, 2018 by 11pm in Blackboard)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** No “traditional” final, cumulative exam in this online course. ***
GUIDELINES FOR DIALOGUE (face-to-face and online sections)

1. **Confidentiality.** We want to create an atmosphere for open, honest exchange.
2. **Our primary commitment is to learn from each other.** We will listen to each other and not talk at each other. We acknowledge differences amongst us in backgrounds, skills, interests, and values. We realize that it is these very differences that will increase our awareness and understanding through this process.
3. **We will not demean, devalue, or “put down” people** for their experiences, lack of experiences, or difference in interpretation of those experiences.
4. **We will trust that people are always doing the best they can.**
5. **Challenge the idea and not the person.** If we wish to challenge something that has been said, we will challenge the idea or the practice referred to, not the individual sharing this idea or practice.
6. **Speak your discomfort.** If something is bothering you, please share this with the group. Often our emotional reactions to this process offer the most valuable learning opportunities.
7. **Step Up, Step Back.** Be mindful of taking up much more space than others. On the same note, empower yourself to speak up when others are dominating the conversation.
8. **Maintain a safe atmosphere.**

Source: The Program on Intergroup Relations, University of Michigan, CRLT Handout (page 8), August 26, 2008.
CITI PLAGIARISM TRAINING AND QUIZ: INSTRUCTIONS

To access the CITI Plagiarism Training module and quiz, first register at the CITI website: https://about.citiprogram.org/en/homepage/

You will need to complete a Learner Registration Profile.

Later locate where you can “Add a Course.” At the next screen, go to Question #1 - Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR).

Click on “Students” (which is the Plagiarism module). Scroll to the bottom of the screen and click “Submit.”

Agree to the “Integrity Assurance Statement,” and then click “Submit.”

From there, you can get to the course required modules and complete them.

Contact CITI directly if you encounter technical difficulties or their online steps have changed. Do not contact Blackboard as it is a separate entity.

Once you review the materials and earn a 100% on the quiz, save a copy of the formal, official transcript, which is also known as the completion report. Our Blackboard course website has a visual example in case you want to see in advance what the document should look like or to compare what you have saved on your computer.

Submit the single-sheet CITI transcript as a PDF only in Blackboard via the assignment link.

*** If you already did this for a previous class and the report has not yet expired within the year (meaning it is valid during this semester), then you may submit that other document.

*** Do not submit screenshots of your quiz questions and answers.

*** Do not pay for anything. The plagiarism training is supposed to be free for students.

*** Do not take any other modules unless your professor requests you to do so.

Estimated Completion Time: Less than 30 minutes
**PDFs: What’s the big deal?**

PDFs are ADA-compliant, so please do not submit documents in a different format in Blackboard unless otherwise requested. “ADA” refers to the “Americans with Disabilities Act” (1990). As a state and federally-funded institution, our university must comply with Section 508, Section 504, and the ADA. Appropriate use of technology is part of this process. Individual faculty members and departments that are not in compliance can face negative consequences, including risking their accreditation standing. It is also the right thing to do if you value equal opportunity and fair accessibility. ADA compliance means that we make every effort to make education accessible to those with disabilities. Keep in mind, too, that your faculty, administrators, and staff themselves may also need this process to do their jobs (e.g., reading or assessing documents in Blackboard).

**Saving your Microsoft Word document as a PDF file:**

1. Open the Word document you wish to save as a PDF.
2. Choose “File,” then select “Export,” and click the “Create PDF/XPS” button.
3. In the “Publish as PDF or XPS” window, confirm that you are saving your document as a PDF by checking the section labeled “Save as type.” **PDF should be listed next to this area.** If you see something other than PDF, use the drop-down menu to find the PDF option.
4. Navigate to the folder where you want to save the file. Modify the file name if you want a different name.
5. Click **Publish** when you are finished.

*Some computers will instead have you save a document as a PDF by “printing” it. Check your print(er) settings for more details.*

**Attaching a file to an assignment submission in Blackboard:**

1. Find the Blackboard assignment in the usual area where your assignments are listed. Click the name of the assignment and you will be taken to an “Upload Assignment” page.
2. On the Upload Assignment page, you can review the instructions and download any files provided by your instructor.
3. To upload the assignment, click “Browse My Computer,” and select a file to attach from your computer. If you selected the wrong file, remove it by clicking “Do not attach.”
4. Click the green “Submit” button when you are finished.
There will be ONE Case Study/Application Response assignment. The acronym “CSAR” will be used to refer to these group homework tasks. Blackboard randomly assigned group members in the system. Go to the course website and click on “Groups” to locate your CSAR members.

Each assigned group must use ONE collaborative wiki-document per CSAR assignment in our Blackboard course website. A wiki-document is similar to Google Docs, but it is formatted and saved in Blackboard. There will only be ONE document in Blackboard created; do not create more than one because it will be confusing and prone to errors. Copy and paste the prompt into the group document. All questions must be answered collaboratively, i.e., answered together as a team. Blackboard tracks each and every contribution in the one wiki-document under the “history log” for each student account to facilitate the instructor’s grading process. Student groups can also check their history log to see who did what at different times. If a student does not work within the same document and too little or no contributions are recorded, the resulting score will be a “0” for that student. Do not work in a different system and then email all of the group’s answers to one person and that one person uploads the document. Rather, have all group members working on one “living” document in Blackboard saving different versions as you go along. Avoid having the document edited by multiple people at the same time, though, as Blackboard has a glitch that will not allow too many people editing and saving in the exact same time slot.

Help your fellow group members with content, grammar and spelling, punctuation, clarity, and accuracy. The answers should “flow,” i.e., avoid a choppy hodgepodge of separate individual contributions.

Apply material from the textbook and resource materials. In other words, connect what you are learning to the assignment. Give plenty of concrete examples. Cite sources as needed. You are welcome to use APA, MLA, Chicago, or some other citation style, but be consistent with whatever approach your group selects.

Blackboard information about using a wiki:
https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Interact/Wikis

REFER TO THE COURSE SYLLABUS FOR EACH DEADLINE.
NO LATE WORK IS ACCEPTED.

(The most revised version saved/submitted before the deadline will be the one that is graded. For example, if your group edited and saved the document ten times, but the tenth time was after the deadline, Version 9 will be the one that is reviewed and then scored.)
Case Study/Application Response (CSAR) Essay

Topic: Federalism – Pros and Cons

Review all materials in the CSAR folder in Blackboard first.

Watch two documentaries in full (i.e., all of the documentary chapters):
(2) “A Class Divided”: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/divided/etc/view.html

Then answer the CSAR prompt in one formal collaborative wiki-essay that is written together in Blackboard. Remember that if you do not show up in Blackboard’s history log, you will not get any credit.

- Type your responses using complete sentences along with proper spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

- A Works Cited should be placed at the end of the essay.

- Incorporate the videos, political science material from the textbook, previous online assigned readings from Blackboard, resource materials from Blackboard, and your group’s own research at the library and/or online.
  - The essay must use direct examples from both assigned documentaries and the textbook. You may also provide additional examples from Hurricane Harvey and other hurricanes from various historical time periods.
  - Remember that a formal political science essay is not just a hodgepodge of personal opinions. Instead, be clear and write like a “scientist” about the who, what, where, when, how, and why for your analysis and policy recommendations.

Critical Thinking Question/Prompt for Collaborative Group Wiki-Essay

The federal government may have the same or different preferences/interests than a state government or a local government. There are pros and cons when the multiple levels of government agree or disagree on what are considered “priorities” for disaster preparedness and response.

In the context of evacuation policies, procedures, and resources, what are the possible conflicts that can occur from a federalist system? And what does your group suggest as solutions?
**ASSESSMENT – INDIVIDUAL FINAL ESSAY (7% of overall course grade)**

**PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY AND WRITTEN COMMUNICATION ESSAY**

*Must submit online in Blackboard via the assignment link before the deadline as a PDF*

**Instructions:** Using a formal essay format (includes an introduction, body, and conclusion; uses a formal, professional tone), answer the assigned prompt below. Cite all sources. The list of references or Works Cited should be placed on the second page.

**Format:** 2 pages only for the essay, single-spaced only, Times New Roman font, font size 12, and 1-inch margins all around. The heading should include your name, student number, class and section, date, and “Final Essay” as the title. APA, MLA, Chicago, Turabian, or APSA citation methods are permitted, but pick one approach and be consistent. Only a PDF will be accepted in Blackboard via the assignment link. No other format versions will be reviewed. No exceptions. No emailed essays or hard copies at the office will be accepted.

**Deadline:** Refer to the syllabus schedule for the specific deadline. Per the syllabus, remember that no late submissions or make-up work are permitted.

**Recommended:** Visit, call, or email the CASA Writing Center and the Supplemental Instructor.

**PROMPT FOR INDIVIDUAL ESSAY**

**Definition:** Civic engagement is "working to make a difference in the civic life of our communities and developing the combination of knowledge, skills, values and motivation to make that difference. It means promoting the quality of life in a community, through both political and non-political processes." (Excerpted from Civic Responsibility and Higher Education, edited by Thomas Ehrlich, published by Oryx Press, 2000, Preface, page vi.) In addition, civic engagement encompasses actions wherein individuals participate in activities of personal and public concern that are both individually life enriching and socially beneficial to the community. (Source: https://www.aacu.org/civic-engagement-value-rubric)

Based on the reading materials, course themes, and lessons from your POLS 2305 class this semester and the abovementioned definition, what does “civic engagement” and “personal responsibility” specifically mean to you? Clearly explain the connections that you have made between the class and your own political perspectives and behaviors (now and/or in the future).

- Include concrete examples from any of the assigned class readings and assessments.
- Outside research is allowed.
- Writing in first-person (i.e., using “I” statements) is permitted.
- Picking one major theme for the essay is preferred rather than tackling lots of different ideas in too many separately themed paragraphs.
Please complete this page and submit a PDF copy only via Blackboard.  
Keep a copy for your own records, too.

Syllabus / Contract Agreement

I, _____________________________, have read all of the pages of Dr. Epley’s  
(Print your name.)

Fall 2018 syllabus for Political Science 2305.W03 – U.S. Government and Politics. I  
fully understand the expectations, rules, regulations, resources, and schedule explained in  
that syllabus. I agree to abide by its conditions as well.

___________________________________________________________________________  
(Signature)

___________________________________________________________________________  
(Student Number)

___________________________________________________________________________  
(Date)

___________________________________________________________________________  
(Course Number & Section)

Page 16 of 16