

Introduction to American Government

POLS 2305.060

Spring 2024

Online

Lecturer:

Melissa Salgado, M.A.

Office: CAS 114A

Office Hours: Office hours will be held MW 9:30-11 AM, or by appointment. Students can come in person or request a zoom appointment.

Form of Contact:

Email: msalgado@uttyler.edu

- Please send an email from your patriots' email only as I will not respond to emails from any other accounts. **Email is the best way to contact me.**
- During weekdays students can expect an email back within 24 hours, on weekends students can expect at least 48 hours before a response back. (Weekends begin Friday at 5PM!)
- Please make sure you are paying attention to announcements on Canvas, since this is a fully online class my main form of communication with you all will be through announcements on Canvas.

Textbook: Textbook for the course is *Game of Politics: Conflict, Power, and Representation*, this textbook is available online and can be found [here](#) or under the Modules tab.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course is meant to examine the creation of the United States political system, including its foundations and the Constitution. The course will look at the three branches of government, their importance as well as the changing political climate and the process in which policy is created. By the end of the course students should be able to:

- Identify and define terminology used to study political science and American Government
- Have basic knowledge of the historical evolution of American government and the political process

- Describe the constitutional, institutional, political, and legal processes and structures of the United States

Requirements, Dates, and Grades:

Grades will be determined by the following:

This table outlines the graded requirements for this course.

Small Assignments	30%
Quizzes	15%
Voting Assignment	5%
Exam 1	15%
Exam 2	15%
Final Exam	20%

*Dates are subject to change

Question of the Week (Small Assignments):

Questions of the week are meant to help students learn from the lecture videos and book and apply the information in a well-articulated response to a question. Students should be aware some questions will be asked during the lecture videos, some may require a little outside research, and at times will have two parts to them. Each question of the week will be related to the video's students should focus on for that week (or 2 weeks) and should use lecture materials as well as the book to support their answers. Although most of the questions are opinion based, you must use factual evidence to support your responses. You can use the lecture videos, the book, or outside sources (must be cited if used). Questions of the week are due at the end of the week; they are meant to be completed, students can submit up to one week after the assignment is due with penalty, but after a week the assignment *will no longer be available and will not reopen*. There is not a question of the week every single week so please make sure you know when these are due. Full grades are awarded to those responses that are well thought out, use examples and materials from class and the book, in ***your own words***, and written with proper grammar. Please make sure you are aware of all due dates for these small assignments, quizzes, and exams. Student should not use AI to write their responses. Although AI can be useful in research, answers should be cited with reliable sources, and written by each student themselves. The use of AI is considered cheating and will result in a zero as well as being reported.

Quizzes:

There will be a total of 12 quizzes or assignments to be completed. The due dates for these will be on canvas. The two lowest quiz grades will be dropped at the end of the semester. The quizzes will cover material covered that week and will also be helpful when exam time comes around. Please note, **late quiz grades will not be accepted**. Students may still take the quizzes late for study material, but *late quizzes will receive a zero*.

Voting assignment:

Students are required to submit one essay for this class. The requirements for the assignment are explained further on canvas, students are expected to use the knowledge from this class as well as cited resources. This essay prompt may also be similar to other essay prompts in your classes but students are not allowed to submit the same essay. Please keep this in mind when writing your essays. This assignment is due April 5th.

Exams:

The exams will cover material discussed in the lectures, readings from your textbook, and anything else that may be uploaded to canvas. If a student needs a make-up exam, this should be communicated beforehand. Please note, make up exams may be in essay format rather than multiple choice. Extra credit may be available throughout the semester at the lecturer's discretion and will be given to the class not on an individual basis.

Exams will be online on canvas; students will have an hour and thirty minutes to take their exams and will have **one** chance to the exam. Exams will not be reopened, or due dates extended. During each "exam week" students will have Thursday-Friday at midnight to submit their exam. Please note the exam will close at midnight so the latest it can be started is 10:30 pm for the full time.

Course grades will be assigned as follows:

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

Semester Breakdown

This table outlines the schedule students should follow for this course.

Unit 1: Basics, the Constitution, Civil Liberties & Rights, Public Opinion

<i>Week #</i>	<i>Class Topic</i>	<i>Readings</i>	<i>Assignments Due</i>
Week 1	Introduction/ Basics	Syllabus, Ch.1	QOW #1,
Week 2	Constitution/Federalism	Ch.1	
Week 3	Civil Liberties/Civil Rights	Ch.2	QOW #2 QOW #3
Week 4/5	Public Opinion /Finish Unit 1	Ch. 1, Ch.2	Quizzes 1-3,

First Exam Due: 2/16

Unit 2: Congress, The Presidency, the Executive Branch, The Judiciary

Week 6	Congress	Ch. 3	
Week 7	Presidency/ Executive Branch	Ch.4&5	QOW #4
Week 8	The Judicial Branch	Ch. 6	QOW #5
~SPRING BREAK (3.11-3.15)~			
Week 9	Finish Unit 2	Ch. 3-6	Quizzes 4-6, Exam 2 Due: 3/22
Unit 3: Political Parties, Interest Groups, Campaigns and Elections			
Week 10	Political Parties	Chapter 7	QOW #6
Week 11	Interest Groups	Chapter 10	QOW #7
Week 12	Campaigns & Elections	Chapter 11	Quizzes 8-10
Unit 4: Media, Domestic Policy, and Foreign Policy			
Week 13	Media/Domestic Policy	Chapter 8	QOW #8
Week 14	Domestic Policy/Foreign Policy	Chapter 9	QOW #9
			Quizzes 10-12 due
Week 15	Finals Week	Finish Readings for Unit 4	Final Exam due 5/1