# Course Syllabus

## Course Description

Designed to give students a more in-depth understanding of how the federal government works, the course will cover the U.S. Constitution, the structure and power of the federal government including the legislative, executive and judicial branches, as well as federalism and the relationship between the state and federal governments, political participation and modern day challenges of governing.

Course participants will be required to complete assigned readings and homework assignments, participate actively in class discussions, and keep track of current events.

## Lecturer

Pete P. Gallego
Office Hours: By Appointment
Phone: (432) 701-0529
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## Class Plan

Our class will meet daily on Monday through Friday at 8:00am in Lawrence Hall, Room 201. Class participants will be expected to arrive on time.

As our textbook, we will be using American Government by Timothy O. Lenz & Mirya Holman. It is available online at http://ufdc.ufl.edu/AA00016298/00001.

Prior to class, you will be expected to have completed your reading and any homework assignments and to be aware of current events involving the federal government. readings. This is crucial to success in the class.

Homework assignments must be turned in on a timely basis. Your homework grade will be lowered by a full letter grade for each day that your homework assignment is late.

Finally, in addition to a final exam, I will also occasionally administer exams on our readings and classroom discussions. These exams will be administered

(probably every other week) to be sure that you are understanding the readings and deriving something from the class discussions.

## Basis of Grading

You will be graded on attendance and participation in the class discussions, the homework assignments you have submitted, and your performance on the exams. Our final exam will be cumulative. If you are interested in supplementing your grade with additional work, please see me.

Your homework assignment will cumulatively account for 20% of your grade. Class participation will account for 20% of your grade. Your performance on exams will cumulatively account for 30% of your grade while your performance on the final exam will account for the remaining 30% of your grade.

The exams will be a combination of true/false questions, fill in the blank questions and short-answer essay exams. The short answer essay questions will will account for 50% of your score.

### Class Discussions & Readings

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| Week 1 (July 9th) | Organizational meeting; Preliminary discussions on federal government and politics, the U.S. Constitution. |
| Week 2 (July 13th) | The U.S. Constitution; the Congress |
| Week 3 (July 20th) | The Presidency; the Supreme Court & the Judicial Branch, |
| Week 4 (July 27th) | Federalism; the Role of the Media |
| Week 5 (Aug 3rd) | Public Opinion; Political Ideologies; Political Parties |
| Week 6 (Aug 10th) | Political Participation; Interest Groups |
| Aug 13th | Final Exam |