PS 2305: Federal Government
# Summer I 2022-Online

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Course description

Welcome to what could be one of the most important courses you will take in college—Federal Government! This course is an introduction to American government, its philosophical and historical foundations, institutions, and political processes. We will examine how our political system was designed, how it has changed over time and how public opinion, the media and the "information age" have affected our government institutions and public policy. We will discuss the role and scope of government as the Founders conceived it and as it is viewed today.
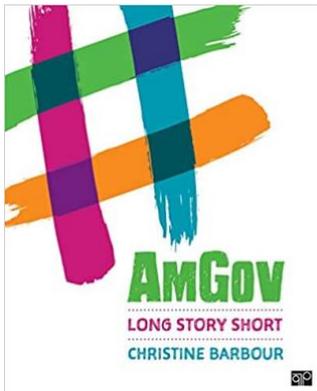
Required Text:
Christine Barbour, *AMGOV: Long Story Short* (CQ Press, 1st edition, 2019).
ISBN-13: 978-1544325927 or ISBN-10: 1544325924

The *AMGOV* student companion website:
http://edge.sagepub.com/amgov

Printable Founding Documents:
https://www.printableconstitution.com

Course learning outcomes:

On successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

▪ Describe some of the most well-known political philosophers and their teachings
▪ Summarize what is included in the Constitution
▪ List and articulate your views on the big questions and great issues of government
▪ Explain and critically assess the formal and informal political institutions and their respective roles in American politics
▪ Summarize and explain several key Supreme Court rulings in our nation's history

- Assess the causes and consequences of different forms of political participation, and outline the ways in which individuals and groups can affect political outcomes in the United States
- Critically analyze information to discern its meaning and validity
- Explain how government impacts your daily life;

Program Learning Outcomes (Political Science): The graduating student will:	Marketable skills for Political Science:
• Demonstrate knowledge of significant theoretical approaches of political science through written work and oral communication. • Demonstrate the ability to analyze domestic and international political processes in written work and oral communication. • Demonstrate the ability to develop arguments about global equity and equality issues in politics through written work and oral communication.	• Students can effectively communicate ideas and information verbally, visually, and in writing • Students can distinguish between credible/relevant information and information lacking credibility/relevance • Students can identify critical and common institutions of political decision-making and policy-making across different nation-state settings • Students can engage with social and political problems and use critical thinking to develop logical solutions

Texas Domain III Competency 003 (Geography & Culture):
The teacher understands and applies knowledge of geographic relationships involving people, place, and environments in Texas, the United States, and the world: the teacher also understands and applies knowledge of cultural development, adaptation, diversity, and interactions among science, technology, and society.

Texas Domain III Competency 004 (Economics):
The teacher understands and applies knowledge of economic systems and how people organize economic systems to produce, distribute, and consume goods and services.

Texas Domain III Competency 005 (Government & Citizenship):
The teacher understands and applies knowledge of concepts of government, democracy, and citizenship, including ways that individuals and groups achieve their goals through political systems.

COURSE GRADING

Your grade for this course will be based on the number of **points you earn**. The point scale below will be used to calculate your final grade.

A	895-1000 points
B	795-894 POINTS
C	695-794 POINTS
D	595-694 POINTS
F	BELOW 595 POINTS

POINT BREAKDOWN

Introduction Post	20 points
Syllabus Quiz	30 points
Initial Assessment	50 points
Weekly Applied Assignments (5 x 100)	500 points
Discussion Board (4 x 50)	200 points
Final Exam	200 points
Total	**1000 points**
BONUS POINTS	**TBA**

INTRODUCTION POST: By Saturday at 11:59 p.m. of the first week of class, you need to post an introduction to the discussion board. More information is on Blackboard. The introduction post is worth 20 points. To receive full points, you must follow the instructions.

SYLLABUS QUIZ: By Saturday at 11:59 p.m. of the first week, you need to complete the syllabus quiz on Blackboard in the Week 1 folder. You will have ONE attempt. The quiz is worth 30 points.

INITIAL ASSESSMENT: By Saturday at 11:59 p.m. of the first week, please take the pre-test on Blackboard. This will serve as a pre-test for the course and give me an idea of where everyone stands starting out. YOU GET THE FULL 50 points if you complete the pre-test by Saturday at 11:59 p.m. There is no penalty for incorrect answers. Please do NOT use your books or any other resources for the pre-test.

WEEKLY APPLIED ASSIGNMENTS: After you have completed reading and reviewing the materials on the folder for each chapter we are covering each week, you will complete a weekly applied assignment. The instructions for each weekly assignment are in Blackboard in each week's folder. The weekly assignments are due by Saturday at 11:59 p.m. and are worth 100 points. NOTE: The final week is a short week, and the due day and time are adjusted for this. See the course calendar below.

WEEKLY DISCUSSION BOARD: Even though we are on online class, I would like to have some sort of class interaction. Each week, starting with Week 2 (but not including the final week of class), **post the following related to the readings and materials for the chapters we are covering by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m**.:
- THREE (3) items you learned (three complete sentences)
- TWO (2) items you want to learn more about or don't understand (two complete sentences)
- ONE (1) discussion question for your classmates (see guidance below on discussion questions)

All of these should be in ONE post. Please use the following format:

Subject line for your post: 3-2-1 Your name
3 things I learned:
1. Complete sentence
2. Complete sentence
3. Complete sentence
2 things I want to learn more about/need clarification on:
1. Complete sentence
2. Complete sentence
Question for the class
DQ: Post your question

After you have made this post, you will need to respond to the discussion question of one other student by Saturday at 11:59 p.m. Each discussion board is worth 50 points. Please see the information at the end of the syllabus for more information about discussion board questions, responses, and expected behavior. **NOTE: All discussion boards are "post-first" boards, meaning you will not see the posts of your classmates until you post.**

CLASS MEETINGS/LECTURE: I will be having an optional, virtual class meeting on the first day of classes, **June 1, at 1 p.m.,** to answer any questions you have about the course. In addition, I will be scheduling a weekly lecture time (days and times TBA). You may join the live lectures or watch the posted recordings.

EXAM: There will be one exam, a final exam in this class. It will be available on Blackboard on the days and times specified below. PLEASE PUT THIS IN YOUR CALENDAR NOW. You will have two hours from the time you start to finish the exam. It is worth 200 points.

W	Dates	Topics	Chapters	Due or To Do:
1	June 1-4	Political Philosophers The Constitution	Blackboard video	**Week 1 discussion board introduction post, syllabus quiz and initial assessment due by Saturday at 11: 59 p.m.**
2	June 5-11	Politics & Citizenship The Founding	1 & 2	**3-2-1 posts due by Wed at 11: 59 p.m.; Response posts and applied assignments due by Saturday at 11:59 p.m.**
3	June 12-18	Civil Liberties & Rights Legislative Branch	3 & 4	**3-2-1 posts due by Wed at 11: 59 p.m.; Response posts and applied assignments due by Saturday at 11:59 p.m.**
4	June 19-June 25	Executive Branch Judicial Branch	5 & 6	**3-2-1 posts due by Wed at 11: 59 p.m.; Response posts and applied assignments due by Saturday at 11:59 p.m.**
5	June 26-July 2	Parties & Interest Groups Public Opinion & Elections	7 & 8	**3-2-1 posts due by Wed at 11: 59 p.m.; Response posts and applied assignments due by Saturday at 11:59 p.m.**
6	July 3-5	Media **AND** Final Exam	9	**Applied assignments due by July 5 at 5 p.m.** **Available 8 a.m. ,July 3rd- 5 p.m., July 5th. Due by July 5, at 5 p.m.**

- I will provide weekly communication with the class through announcements (email and posted on Blackboard), email notifications, virtual office hours, and recorded lectures.
- I will provide email responses within 24 hours of receipt during the hours of 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Monday-Saturday.
- I will provide grades and feedback for assignments within one week of the submission due date.
- I will provide clear and concise instructions on how to complete the online course requirements.
- I will provide a range of opportunities to engage in the course content in a meaningful way.
- I will stay abreast of the current research in the field to help you get the best possible experience in the course.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:

- You will familiarize yourself with the course syllabus, policies, assessments, evaluation, grading criteria, and course design.
- You will acquire the tools necessary to be successful in this class. This includes the book, reliable Internet access, and a device other than your phone for completing assignments.
- You will complete all assigned readings and coursework by assigned due dates.
- You will take the time to review feedback I provide to avoid repeating mistakes.
- You will engage in the course, with your peers, and with me, using open and appropriate communication
- You will be diligent about using communication in a way that shows respect to me and your classmates.
- You will submit college-level work that has been checked carefully for errors in spelling, grammar, and punctuation (using a free extension like Grammarly is recommended).
- You will respond to communication from me and your classmates in a timely manner (within 24 hours).
- You will not plagiarize the work of others or yourself, and you will also not collaborate with others on class assignments, quizzes, or exams.
- You will reach out to me immediately if you are having trouble in the class or with access to course materials. For general access issues or technical help, please call the Help Desk-- 888.837.6055.

GUIDELINES FOR DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

--A good discussion question meets the following criteria:
- Is clear and easy to understand
- Has appropriate grammar, spelling, and punctuation
- Allows your classmates the opportunity to apply or critically think about a concept from the readings or to discuss an issue that is **relevant to the topics for the week**
- Is open-ended, allowing for a 2-3 sentence response. Adding a "why or why not" follow up question is appropriate
- Encourages deeper exploration of course topics
- Helps bring in new knowledge to the learning environment

--A good discussion question DOES NOT
- Ask for specific answers that can be easily found in the book or online (you're not testing your classmates)

- Promote a certain opinion (e.g., Do you agree that meeting yearly is a bad idea?)
- Duplicate questions from other sources or assignments—create questions in your words
- Reword a quiz question
- Present inaccuracies (e.g., Why do we limit the number of terms the governor can serve?)

Responding to Discussion Questions

When you respond to discussion questions, you need to respond to questions that meet the criteria above. Your responses should be at least 2-3 complete sentences. No more than FOUR students should respond to the same question to avoid exhausting a topic. **Also, use the "Reply with Quote" option when responding to a question from your classmate.** Students must also adhere to the basic ground rules below.

GROUND RULES FOR DISCUSSION BOARDS

SOURCE: Center for Teaching and Learning. (2020). Sample discussion board ground rules. Retrieved from https://ctl.wiley.com/sample-discussion-board-ground-rules/

- **Ask questions.**
  If you find something confusing or want to know more, do not hesitate to ask questions. Make sure to post your questions in the appropriate thread.
- **Participate.**
  Do not hide in the background; it is not fair to lurk and let others do all the work. Contribute to discussions to get as much as possible from the course and to maintain your participation grade.
- **Do not dominate a discussion.**
  Share your knowledge, but not to the point of excluding others. If you have something to offer, please share it, but allow everyone to contribute equally to a discussion.
- **Be intellectually rigorous.**
  Do not excuse sloppy or illogical thinking. Challenge yourself and one another.
- **Be tactful.**
  Be critical of ideas but remember there are other people involved. Be tactful and kind. You can hurt the feelings of a person reading your post.
- **Forgive other students' mistakes.**
  Do not correct others, even if you follow the rules of netiquette and use good manners. Just because you do not agree with a student's post does not mean that he or she is wrong. Instead, offer a different perspective to encourage further discussion.
- **Read the whole thread before posting.**
  Read all the posts in a thread before responding so you don't repeat what others have already said. Try to contribute clarifying information or a new idea to a discussion.
- **Be concise.**
  Do not waste people's time by posting basic, repetitive information. Make your point clearly and quickly.
- **Reread and check your posts.**
  Practice professionalism. Be mindful of how you look online; others will likely judge the tone and quality of your writing. Reread your posts and edit for clarity and mechanics.
- **Cite your sources.**
  If you use a source, cite it properly. Give credit where credit is due. Include links where appropriate.
- **Maintain confidentiality.**
  Respect your classmates' privacy. Do not repeat the personal information that others share.

- **Report technical problems.** If the platform is not working properly, please let me know as soon as possible.

OTHER COURSE POLICIES & RESOURCES

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY: Intellectual development requires hard work. Academic dishonesty severely interferes with this development and reduces the value of college degrees. Presenting the ideas or work of others as your own, submitting the same paper for multiple classes, doing someone else's work, and/or failing to cite your sources when you utilize the ideas of others, are all examples of dishonest academic conduct. As an SRSU student, it is your responsibility to read and understand the university's expectations about academic integrity. All violations will be taken seriously and handled through the appropriate university process. The policy can be found at:
https://www.sulross.edu/about/administration/university-policies/

In addition, please note that plagiarism detection software will be used in this class for written assignments.

If you have any questions about this, please ask!

LATE WORK: In a summer course, there is no time to get behind. The whole course (except for the final exam) is open and available for you to work on as soon as the course opens. Make sure you commit the time and energy necessary to complete the work in this condensed class. Please reach out to me immediately if you have an extenuating circumstance preventing you from completing the work so we can discuss whether you should drop the class. For summer classes, it is best to hit the ground running and to stay ahead. NOTE: The end of this summer session is right around the July 4th holiday. PLAN AHEAD. There will be no extensions given for holiday travel or events.

COURSE BLACKBOARD RESOURCES: There are several resources on the course Blackboard page. You are expected to review and familiarize yourself with the items in Blackboard in the first week of class. NOTE: Please post general, course-related questions to the discussion board forum I have set up for this. Typically, if one student in the class has the question, others do as well. Please allow 24 hours for a response, and then feel free to email me or call me directly with your question.

SRSU LIBRARY SERVICES:
The Bryan Wildenthal Memorial Library in Alpine offers FREE resources and services to the entire SRSU community. Access and borrow books, articles, and more by visiting the library's website, library.sulross.edu. Off-campus access requires logging in with your LobolD and password. Librarians are a tremendous resource for your coursework and can be reached in person, by email (srsulibrary@sulross.edu), or phone (432-837-8123).

The Southwest Texas Junior College (SWTJC) Libraries at Uvalde, Del Rio, and Eagle Pass offer additional access to library spaces and resources. Del Rio, Eagle Pass, and Uvalde students may also use online resources available through SWTJC website, library.swtjc.edu.The SWTJC Libraries serve as pick-up locations for InterLibrary Loan (ILL) and Document Delivery from the Alpine campus.

SRSU DISABILITY SERVICES: Sul Ross State University (SRSU) is committed to equal access in compliance with Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is SRSU policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request each semester for each class. Students seeking accessibility/accommodations services must contact Mary Schwartze Grisham, SRSU's Accessibility Services Coordinator at 432-837-8203 (please

leave a message and we'll get back to you as soon as we can during working hours). The office is located on the first floor of Ferguson Hall (Suite 112), and their mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832. **Please note that instructors are not permitted to provide classroom accommodations to a student until the appropriate verification has been received.**

DISTANCE EDUCATION STATEMENT: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university's academic support services, such as library resources, online databases, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should correspond using Sul Ross email accounts and submit online assignments through Blackboard, which requires secure login. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website. Directions for filing a student complaint are located in the student handbook.

BLACKBOARD TECHNICAL SUPPORT: SRSU 24/7 Blackboard Technical Support Online Support Desk Contact Info: Toll Free: 888.837.6055. Email: blackboardsupport@sulross.edu

COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

I will strive to create a learning environment that supports a diversity of thoughts, perspectives, and experiences, and also one that honors your identities (including race, gender, class, sexuality, religion, ability, socioeconomic class, age, nationality, etc.). It is my expectation that we will be partners in this commitment so that, together, we can create a classroom community that feels welcoming to all.

UNDECIDED or UNSURE about YOUR MAJOR?

Political Science may be for you! Hopefully this class and the assignments will help open you up to the various career possibilities in political science, and I would be happy to discuss this with any interested students.