Instructor: Mrs. Katie C. McClain
Email: kmcclain@sfasu.edu
Phone: 936.468.2061
Department: Government
Office: LAN 110

Student Hours
F2F & ZOOM*
MON & WED: 12:00-2:30 PM
or by appointment

* Zoom office links are available in the “Getting Started” module on Brightspace.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

“Course includes development of the U.S. Constitution, structure and powers of the national government, including the legislative, executive and judicial branches, federalism, political participation, the national election process, public policy, civil liberties and civil rights.” General Bulletin, 2022-2023

There are no prerequisites for this course.

This three-credit hour online course requires approximately 2.5 hours (150 minutes) of online instruction during which you’ll read, watch, and/or listen to content provided within content modules as well as at least six hours of out-of-class reading and studying each week in preparation for completion of assignments.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, you should be able to:

❖ Analyze the theoretical foundations of the U.S. political system.
❖ Critically evaluate political science theories and approaches to institutional arrangements of the U.S. political system and to U.S. public policy.
❖ Examine the relationship between political behavior and political institutions, especially the interdependence of behavior and institutions.
❖ Examine the roles and functions of voters, political parties, interest groups, and media in a democratic political system.
❖ Understand citizenship in the American political system more completely.
❖ Communicate your understanding and interpretation of institutional arrangements of the U.S. political system and key domestic and foreign policy issues.
ABOUT THIS COURSE

COURSE READINGS

Most assigned readings will come from American Government (3rd edition) on OpenStax, which is available for free in web view and PDF format. This book can also be purchased, but purchasing it is not required. Additional readings, which may include news articles, journal articles, government documents, and/or primary source documents, will be provided for you through Brightspace.

COMMUNICATION

I will communicate with you via News Announcements on Brightspace and emails to your student (@jacks.sfasu.edu) email address. The best way to reach me is through email (kmclain@sfasu.edu). I will do my best to respond within 24 hours, except for on weekends or during university holidays. You can also visit with me during student hours.

ATTENDANCE

As this is an online course, physical attendance in a classroom is not required. The entirety of this course will be completed online. However, there are firm deadlines for the course outlined on the calendar.

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENT

As you have elected to enroll in an online course, it is your responsibility to acquire a consistent, stable, dependable computer and internet connection with which to complete the assignments for the course by the deadlines indicated on the calendar. It is not the responsibility of the instructor to provide additional time for assignments or exams or an alternative means of completing the course due to technical issues on your part. Just as it is your responsibility to acquire and maintain adequate transportation to attend a face-to-face course, it is your responsibility to secure the technological means to participate in and complete this course.

GRADING & EVALUATION

Students have the opportunity to earn 1000 points in this course. Final grades for this course will be determined using the following scale: A = 90-100% (900-1000 points); B = 80-89.9% (800-899.9 points); C = 70-79.9% (700-799.9 points); D = 60-69.9% (600-699.9 points); F = 59% and below (0-599.9 points)

Grades are determined from the following assignments:

❖ Module Activities: 6 @ 75 points (450 points total)
❖ Quizzes: 12 @ 25 points (300 points total)
❖ Discussions: 5 @ 50 points (250 points total)

It is your responsibility to keep up with your grades and calculate your current average in this course.
MODULE ACTIVITIES (450 POINTS TOTAL / 45% OF GRADE)

There are seven module activities in which you will be asked to research, critically evaluate, expand upon, or apply the content we are learning in class. The format of these module activities will vary and may include image, video, or text-based deliverables. At the end of the semester, the lowest module activity grade will drop; the remaining six module activity grades will be counted toward your final grade.

QUIZZES (300 POINTS TOTAL / 30% OF GRADE)

Each module contains a quiz administered through Brightspace that reviews content from assigned readings and material covered in the module. Each quiz consists of fifteen questions, which may include multiple-choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank, and/or written responses questions. Quizzes are timed; once you have exceeded the allotted time, the quiz will lock, and you will not be able to enter/modify responses. If a technology-related error occurs that prevents you from completing the quiz in the allotted time, email me immediately and provide documentation of the issue. At the end of the semester, the two lowest quiz grades will drop; the remaining twelve quiz grades will be counted toward your final grade.

DISCUSSIONS (250 POINTS TOTAL / 25% OF GRADE)

You will be asked to participate in several video discussions through Flipgrid. “Participation” involves creating an original post responding to the prompt and providing substantive, meaningful responses to your classmates’ posts. Discussions will be evaluated based on content, communication, and timeliness (in most cases, your initial post should be submitted by Friday at 11:59 PM to allow sufficient time for classmates to review your post and respond to you over the weekend). At the end of the semester, the two lowest discussion grades will drop; the remaining five discussion grades will be counted toward your final grade.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS

Late work will be accepted up to one week past the due date, subject to a 25% late penalty.

EXTRA CREDIT OPPORTUNITIES

Extra credit opportunities will be available at the instructor’s discretion. Any extra credit opportunities will be announced on Brightspace.

SAFE SPACE & INCLUSION

Please know that my office and our virtual classroom are safe spaces. It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students’ learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. I intend to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender identity, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, nationality, religion, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.
CHALLENGING CONVERSATIONS

In our structured and unstructured discussions and dialogues, we also will have many opportunities to explore some challenging issues and increase our understandings of different perspectives. Our conversations may not always be easy; we sometimes will make mistakes in our speaking and our listening; sometimes we will need patience or courage or imagination or any number of qualities in combination to engage our texts, our classmates, and our ideas and experiences. Always, we will need respect for others. Thus, an additional aim of our course necessarily will be for us to increase our facility with the sometimes difficult conversations that arise as we deepen our understandings of multiple perspectives—whatever our backgrounds, experiences, or positions.

HOW TO SUCCEED IN THIS COURSE

**Review the assigned readings before working through the content modules.** This will help you understand the material we will cover in our content modules. Furthermore, not everything in the assigned readings will be covered in the content modules, so if you skip over the readings, you will miss out on material that may relate to an assignment or exam. To fully understand the concepts covered in this course, you will likely need to review the assigned material more than once.

**Take notes over the assigned readings and content modules.** Taking organized notes as you review the topics discussed in this course will help you better understand and recall the material and will make studying for quizzes easier.

**Break up studying into manageable chunks.** Cramming – whether it’s compressing an entire week’s worth of content and assignments into one day or concentrating your studying for an exam into the period right before you take it – is not a great idea:

In terms of what’s going on in the brain, the neural connections being formed during the cramming process are temporary. All of the information being stored is in the short-term memory. So while cramming can help you rock that test tomorrow morning, when it comes to long-term remembering, it’s utterly useless. That’s because in school, learning is incremental. Students need to remember—and understand—the material they study, because lessons tend to build upon what was taught previously. ([The Pros and Cons of Cramming](https://www.oxfordlearning.com/edu/the-pros-and-cons-of-cramming/), Oxford Learning, 2010)

In addition to helping you better learn the information covered, breaking up your study efforts for this course into manageable chunks will help you keep up with course requirements throughout the semester. As such, I strongly encourage you to log into the course at least every other day.

**Review feedback on graded assignments.** Feedback offers you information regarding what you understood, what you need to review, and areas where you can continue to improve.

**Stay informed of current political events.** Relating current events to the class material will help you understand the information and concepts covered in this course. Keep in mind that not all news outlets are equal when it comes to reputability.
# Tentative Course Calendar

Subject to change at instructor’s discretion. Be sure to check the course calendar on Brightspace frequently.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK(S)</th>
<th>TOPIC &amp; READINGS</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENTS</th>
<th>CORE OBJ.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/28 – 9/3</td>
<td><strong>M1: U.S. Government, Politics, &amp; Civic Engagement</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 1</td>
<td>Quiz #1  Discussion #1</td>
<td>CT; PR; SR; OC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/4 – 9/10</td>
<td><strong>M2: U.S. Constitution</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 2 &lt;br&gt; <em>Declaration of Independence</em> &lt;br&gt; Federalist no. 51</td>
<td>Quiz #2  Module Activity #1</td>
<td>CT; WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/11 – 9/17</td>
<td><strong>M3: Federalism</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 3 &lt;br&gt; <em>Let Texas be Texas: Unity through Federalism</em></td>
<td>Quiz #3  Discussion #2</td>
<td>CT; OC; SR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/18 – 9/24</td>
<td><strong>M4: Congress</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 11</td>
<td>Quiz #4  Module Activity #2</td>
<td>CT; VC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9/25 – 10/1</td>
<td><strong>M5: Presidency</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 12</td>
<td>Quiz #5  Discussion #3</td>
<td>CT; OC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/2 – 10/8</td>
<td><strong>M6: Courts</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 13 &lt;br&gt; Marbury v. Madison – Essay &lt;br&gt; Documents to Examine: A-K</td>
<td>Quiz #6  Module Activity #3</td>
<td>CT; WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/9 – 10/15</td>
<td><strong>M7: Bureaucracy</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 15</td>
<td>Quiz #7  Discussion #4</td>
<td>CT; OC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/16 – 10/22</td>
<td><strong>M8: Civil Rights</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 5</td>
<td>Quiz #8  Module Activity #4</td>
<td>SR; WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/23 – 10/29</td>
<td><strong>M9: Civil Liberties</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 4 &lt;br&gt; Free speech guaranteed by Constitution &lt;br&gt; <em>Regulating Hate Speech on College Campuses</em></td>
<td>Quiz #9  Discussion #5</td>
<td>OC; PR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/30 – 11/5</td>
<td><strong>M10: Political Learning &amp; Public Opinion</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 6 &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em> (Lumen): Political Culture; Democracy and Public Opinion; Public Opinion in the Information Age</td>
<td>Quiz #10  Module Activity #5</td>
<td>CT; WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/6 – 11/12</td>
<td><strong>M11: Political Parties &amp; Interest Groups</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 9 &amp; 10</td>
<td>Quiz #11  Discussion #6</td>
<td>CT; OC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/13 – 11/19</td>
<td><strong>M12: Media</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 8</td>
<td>Quiz #12  Module Activity #6</td>
<td>CT; WC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/27 – 12/3</td>
<td><strong>M13: Campaigns, Elections, &amp; Voting</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 7</td>
<td>Quiz #13  Discussion #7</td>
<td>CT; PR; OC</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/4 – 12/10</td>
<td><strong>M14: U.S. Public Policy</strong> &lt;br&gt; <em>American Government</em>, Ch. 16 &amp; 17</td>
<td>Quiz #14  Module Activity #7</td>
<td>CT; VC</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Legend**

- CT = critical thinking
- SR = social responsibility
- OC = oral communication
- VC = visual communication
- PR = personal responsibility
- WC = written communication
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outlines the prohibited conduct by any student enrolled in a course at SFA. It is the responsibility of all members of all faculty, staff, and students to adhere to and uphold this policy.

Articles IV, VI, and VII of the new Code of Student Conduct and Academic Integrity outline the violations and procedures concerning academic conduct, including cheating, plagiarism, collusion, and misrepresentation.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to: (1) Copying from the test paper (or other assignment) of another student, (2) Possession and/or use during a test of materials that are not authorized by the person giving the test, (3) Using, obtaining, or attempting to obtain by any means the whole or any part of a non-administered test, test key, homework solution, or computer program, or using a test that has been administered in prior classes or semesters without permission of the Faculty member, (4) Substituting for another person, or permitting another person to substitute for one’s self, to take a test, (5) Falsifying research data, laboratory reports, and/or other records or academic work offered for credit, (6) Using any sort of unauthorized resources or technology in completion of educational activities.

Plagiarism is the appropriation of material that is attributable in whole or in part to another source or the use of one’s own previous work in another context without citing that it was used previously, without any indication of the original source, including words, ideas, illustrations, structure, computer code, and other expression or media, and presenting that material as one’s own academic work being offered for credit or in conjunction with a program course or degree requirements.

Collusion is the unauthorized collaboration with another person in preparing academic assignments offered for credit or collaboration with another person to commit a violation of any provision of the rules on academic dishonesty, including disclosing and/or distributing the contents of an exam.

Misrepresentation is providing false grades or résumés; providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment for the purpose of obtaining an academic or financial benefit for oneself or another individual or to injure another student academically or financially.

ACCESSIBILITY

To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats, and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building, and Room 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services promptly may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

WITHHELD GRADES

Ordinarily, at the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the coursework because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course to compute the grade point average. For additional information, go to https://www.sfasu.edu/policies/course-grades-5.5.pdf.
UNIVERSITY RESOURCES

ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE RESOURCE CENTER (AARC) TUTORING SERVICES

The Academic Assistance Resource Center (AARC) is an award-winning program that provides free peer tutoring for many entry-level courses, including online resources, walk-in tables, 1:1 appointments, and SI groups.

CENTER FOR CAREER AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The Center for Career and Professional Development exists to empower students and alumni to achieve life-long career success through individualized assistance, diverse career development programs, and collaboration with internal and external partners.

FINANCIAL LITERACY

Student financial advisors are available to help you with your finances through one-on-one appointments, presentations, and workshops. Topics covered include budgeting, credit card and debt management, identity theft, and fraud prevention.

INVOLVEMENT CENTER

The Involvement Center is a one-stop shopping site for involvement on campus. The program is the center for student involvement on campus, distribution and receiving site for applications for numerous opportunities on campus, and a place for involved students to meet, hang out and collaborate with other students.

RALPH W. STEEN LIBRARY

The Ralph W. Steen Library provides various tools and services to support your research and learning, including databases and archives, inter-library loan services, study rooms, computer labs, and SUPER helpful librarians.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

BRIGHTSPACE (D2L) TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For Brightspace technical support, contact student support in the Center for Teaching & Learning (CTL) at 936-468-1919 or d2l@sfasu.edu. If you call after regular business hours or on a weekend, please leave a voicemail.

GENERAL TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For general computer support (not related to Brightspace), contact the SFA Technical Support Center (TSC) at 936-468-HELP (4357) or at helpdesk@sfasu.edu.

VETERAN’S RESOURCE CENTER

The Veterans Resource Center provides a space for veterans, dependents of veterans, and ROTC members to gather, socialize, and form relationships with others that can provide networks of support and access to veterans' resources provided by the university and outside agencies.
WELLNESS & WELL-BEING

SFA values students’ overall well-being, mental health and the role it plays in academic and overall student success. Students may experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and their personal well-being. These may include academic pressure and challenges associated with relationships, emotional well-being, alcohol and other drugs, identities, finances, etc.

If you are experiencing concerns, seeking help, SFA provides a variety of resources to support students’ mental health and wellness. Many of these resources are free, and all of them are confidential.

ON-CAMPUS RESOURCES

Dean of Students Office
www.sfasu.edu/deanofstudents
Rusk Building, 3rd floor lobby
936.468.7249
dos@sfasu.edu

Human Services Counseling Clinic
https://www.sfasu.edu/humanservices/clinics-labs/counseling-clinic
Human Services, Room 202
936.468.1041

Health and Wellness Hub (“The Hub”)
www.sfasu.edu/thehub
Corner of E. College and Raguet St.
936.468.4008
thehub@sfasu.edu

To support the health and well-being of every Lumberjack, the Health and Wellness Hub offers comprehensive services that treat the whole person – mind, body and spirit. Services include: Health Services • Counseling Services • Student Outreach and Support • Food Pantry • Wellness Coaching • Alcohol and Other Drug Education

CRISIS RESOURCES

Burke 24-hour Crisis Line
1.800.392.8343

National Suicide Crisis Prevention
988

Suicide Prevention Lifeline
1.800.273.TALK (8255)

Crisis Text Line
Text HELLO to 741-741

IMPORTANT UNIVERSITY DATES

October 13, 2023
Fall I ends

October 23, 2023
Fall II begins

November 15, 2023
Last day to apply for degrees to be completed in May 2024

November 18-26
Thanksgiving Holiday

December 11-15, 2023
Finals week
The Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board has identified six core learning objectives: Critical Thinking Skills, Communication Skills, Empirical and Quantitative Skills, Teamwork, Personal Responsibility, and Social Responsibility. SFA is committed to the improvement of its general core curriculum by regular assessment of student performance on these six objectives.

By enrolling in GOVT 2305 – Federal Government, you are also enrolling in a Core Curriculum Course that fulfills the communication, critical thinking, personal responsibility, and social responsibility requirements.

The chart below indicates: (a) The core objectives that are required to be taught in this course per the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB), (b) How the required core objectives will be addressed.

**Core Curriculum Objective Table**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CORE OBJECTIVE</th>
<th>DEFINITION</th>
<th>CORE ASSIGNMENT TITLES</th>
<th>DUE DATE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>COMMUNICATION SKILLS</strong></td>
<td>To include effective development, interpretation, and expression of ideas through written, oral, and visual communication</td>
<td>Module Activities #1-7, Discussions #1-7</td>
<td>See calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS</strong></td>
<td>To include creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, analysis, evaluation, and synthesis of information</td>
<td>Module Activities #1-7, Discussions #2, 3, 4</td>
<td>See calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY</strong></td>
<td>To include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to effectively engage in regional, national, and global communities</td>
<td>Module Activities #4, 5, Discussions #1, 2, 7</td>
<td>See calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY</strong></td>
<td>To include the ability to connect choices, actions, and consequences to ethical decision-making</td>
<td>Discussions #5, 6</td>
<td>See calendar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>